

Niger mob burnt woman to death before reinforcement – Police

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File photo: Map of Niger State

By Chika Otuchikere

More details have emerged over the mob killing of a young lady in Niger State over an alleged blasphemous utterance against the Islamic faith.

The Niger State Police Command, which confirmed the killing on Sunday, said the lady, simply known as Ammaye, was burnt to death before security reinforcement could arrive.

The spokesman for the command, Wasiu Abiodun, who released a statement on the incident, said efforts were ongoing to identify, arrest, and prosecute all those involved in the crime.

Ammaye, a food seller, was lynched and set ablaze in Mariga Local Government Area of Niger State by youths over alleged blasphemy against Prophet Muhammad.

According to eyewitnesses, the incident occurred at Kasuwan Garba in the council area, when the lady, a Muslim faithful and well-known food seller, was said to have engaged in an exchange of words with a young man said to be her nephew.

The young man was said to have jokingly told Ammaye that he wanted to marry her to “fulfil the Sunnah”. The lady was said to have made comments considered blasphemous.

This was said to have outraged the young men in the neighbourhood. The matter was taken to the palace of the District Head of Kasuwan Garba, where the lady was interrogated, and she allegedly repeated what she had earlier said.

The District Head was said to have handed Ammaye over to security operatives for further investigation, but a crowd of agitated youths overpowered the security operatives, insisting on her immediate execution.

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PUNCH Metro learnt that before security reinforcement could arrive, the mob, made up of young men, had stoned Ammaye to death

The Niger State Police spokesman disclosed that the tragic incident occurred on Saturday, at about 2:00 pm.

According to him, “A report was received that one Amaye, a female resident of Kasuwan-Garba in Mariga LGA, allegedly made some utterances considered offensive to the Islamic faith. Her comments quickly provoked anger among members of the community.

“Unfortunately, it led to a mob attack, and the woman was set ablaze before the reinforcement of security teams could arrive at the scene,” Abiodun stated.

The spokesman said that while normalcy has since been restored to the area, the Police Command strongly condemns the act of jungle justice and assured that efforts are underway to identify, arrest, and prosecute all those involved in the crime.

Abiodun appealed to members of the public to remain calm, avoid taking the law into their own hands, and allow security agencies to handle sensitive matters in line with the provisions of the law.

The Chairman of Mariga Local Government, Abbas Adamu, who also confirmed the incident, reaffirmed that calm had since been restored to the area.