

Police probe alleged killing of three by Osun Amotekun

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File copy: Osun State Security Network, codenamed Amotekun Corps

By Bola Bamigbola

The Osun State Police Command has begun investigating allegations that men of the Amotekun Corps killed three residents of Akinlalu in Ife North Local Government Area during an operation on Tuesday.

Residents accused the operatives of storming the town, shooting indiscriminately, and later taking away the bodies of those killed.

They claimed four people eventually died, while about 10 others sustained gunshot injuries and were rushed to hospitals in Ipetumodu, Gbongan and Yakoooyo.

An indigene of the town, Kamardeen Babarinsola, told The PUNCH that the violence was linked to a dispute involving suspected cocoa thieves arrested by villagers.

He said Amotekun operatives came to take custody of the suspects on Monday but clashed with them on the way to Akinlalu.

“During that incident, one of the suspected thieves and an Amotekun operative were injured. The matter was resolved the following morning after a meeting with the youth leader,” Babarinsola said.

“But in the afternoon on Tuesday, between 12 and 1pm, Amotekun men returned to Akinlalu and shot sporadically. Women, children and youths they saw on the road were shot. Instead of going to the house of those involved in the Monday incident, they attacked everyone they saw.

“About 14 people were shot, and four later died. The operatives hurriedly left the scene, then returned to forcibly take away those critically injured. All the four eventually died, including two brothers. Those killed are Oyebamiji Ibrahim, Sefiu Oyebamiji, Desmond and Abiola Olutayo.”

Another resident, Jeleel, who said he witnessed the incident, claimed the operatives arrived in three vans and opened fire on unarmed residents.

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“They shot at people without provocation. We have reported to the police in Ipetumodu and we want those involved to be identified and punished,” he said.

In its reaction, the Osun State Police Command confirmed that three people were killed and assured a thorough probe.

The police spokesperson, Abiodun Ojelabi, said, “On Tuesday, one Oyebamiji Kamorudeen informed the police that Amotekun operatives came in large numbers to the community in retaliation for two pump-action guns earlier reportedly snatched from them.

“During the invasion, they shot sporadically which caused serious bullet injuries. It was further alleged that three persons lost their lives during the shooting and their corpses were taken away by Amotekun operatives.”

Ojelabi added that police recovered 13 expended cartridges at the scene, evacuated injured victims to hospitals, and restored calm to the community.

“All claims and counterclaims — including allegations of murder, assault, gun snatching, wounding and impersonation — will be carefully investigated to ensure justice,” he said.

But the Osun Amotekun Corps denied targeting residents. Its spokesperson, Idowu Yusuf, said three people died during a gun battle with hoodlums who had earlier ambushed its men and seized rifles.

“Tragically, while en route to Akinlalu, the team was ambushed by armed assailants suspected to be the same group terrorising the community. Two service rifles were seized. Reinforcement was sent, but at the Akinlalu junction, the road was barricaded and the operatives were attacked. This triggered a gun battle that lasted over an hour.

“In the aftermath, three lives were lost, including individuals believed to be among the attackers. Three suspects were arrested, while two rifles and other items, including uniforms, were recovered from their hideout,” Yusuf said.