

Diri pledges justice for family of slain graduate

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From **Femi Folaranmi**, Yenagoa

Governor of Bayelsa State, Senator Douye Diri, has assured the family of slain 26-year-old Daniel Ayama that the state government will ensure they get justice.

Governor Diri gave the assurance on Wednesday, when he visited the family over the killing of the fresh graduate of the Federal University, Otuoke, on May 16 at the INEC Junction in Yenagoa, the state capital.

The family claimed that policemen were responsible for his death, while the police authorities in the state said he was a victim of a cult groups rivalry.

Senator Diri, who commiserated with the family at their residence in Kpansia, Yenagoa, said a thorough investigation would be conducted to unravel the circumstances surrounding his death.

The governor said the state's Special Committee on Security and Human Rights Violations has commenced investigation into the matter and directed the State Director of the Department of State Services (DSS) to be involved in the probe.

“For now there are two sides to the report of Daniel Ayama’s murder, and the government will not take sides. The government is not interested in whether the police were allegedly responsible or if it was a case of cult-related shooting.

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“I know we have a Commissioner of Police, who is responsible, apolitical, and has been maintaining peace and security in the state. But once you have this kind of report, the police need to step aside.

“This is a case of shooting, and we want our law enforcement agencies to be strictly professional. It is sad to hear this type of allegation against a professional body that is expected to ensure peace and security of lives.”

The state’s helmsman also said that the government had taken over the treatment of three other victims, who sustained gunshot injuries during the incident and prayed God to grant the Ayama family the fortitude to bear the loss of their son.

Speaking on behalf of the family, Smart Ayama expressed gratitude to the governor and his entourage for the visit.

Mr. Ayama, who acknowledged that there were protests following the incident, said the family decided against further demonstrations as it would not bring back their son.

He, however, called for justice to be done on the matter for the truth to be unravelled and to put the matter to rest.