

Anger as traditional ruler's son dies in police cell

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Youths of Onicha Local Government Area of Ebonyi State yesterday attacked Abaomege Police Division after the son of a traditional ruler, identified as Kelechi Ineke (26), allegedly died in police cell.

The incident occurred on Easter Sunday afternoon. The deceased was the son of the traditional ruler of Abaomege community.

Angry youths burnt down a house at the police station, believed to be where some policemen reside. They also attacked the station, forcing policemen who were on duty to scamper into safety.

Ineke was arrested over allegation of being a member of a cult group. He was also alleged to have threatened and assaulted somebody. When his family members went to the station to secure his bail, the Divisional Police Officer (DPO) in charge of

Abaomege Police Division, allegedly denied him bail, insisting that his case was a serious one.

A day after, one of Ineke's relatives went to the station to see him, only to be told that he was dead. The relative reported the matter to the village and angry youths quickly mobilised and attacked the police station. Sources from the community alleged that Ineke was tortured to death by policemen.

The state Police Command Public Relations Officer (PPRO), ASP Loveth

Odah, who confirmed the incident, absolved the police of blame in the victim's death.

Odah said Ineke used

a rope from his boxers to hang himself on the cell door.

She said: "About 3:40p.m. of April 1, 2018, a sergeant on duty visited the cell and found out that Kelechi Ineke, detained for a case of cultism, assault and threatening violence, committed suicide. He used a rope from his boxers to hang himself. He tied the rope to the cell door. One of his family members came to the police station and found out what happened.

"The youth mobilised and attacked the police sta-

tion. They burnt a house at the back of the police station, which may be where some policemen working in the station are living. The main building, which is the police station, was vandalised. I don't think violence is a good approach when things like this happen. We have not found what really happened. The body of the deceased has been deposited at the mortuary. The matter is being investigated. I learnt that the youth's annoyance was because the deceased was denied bail. They said there was an approach for him to be bailed, but the DPO said that cultism was a serious offence. He said that he couldn't grant bail."

Odah disclosed that the state Commissioner of Police had decided to query the DPO over the matter.

There is still tension in the area as at the time of filing this report. Several policemen have been massively deployed in the community to prevent further breakdown of law and order.



Lifeless body of Ineke