

Crime

Taiwo Jimoh

Confusion in Ogun community as body of slain security man 'disappears'

The once peaceful Iraye village in the Sagamu Local Government Area of Ogun State is gradually turning to a theatre of war after the remains of 44-year-old Temitope Ariyo, who was declared missing on January 19, 2022, after an attack on the community by suspected land grabber was later found in a sack.

The body of the deceased security man, a father of five children was discovered in a forest already mutilated and carefully packed in a sack.

It was gathered that when the information on the discovery of the remains got to his family members, the wife and some other family members with the Divisional Police Officer in charge of Igode and nine other operatives went to the scene, but they couldn't evacuate the body due to the non-availability of health workers from the local government in the area.

The policemen and family members reportedly took pictures of the dead body and left it, with the intention of coming back the following day to evacuate it.

Our correspondent also learnt that unfortunately, before the family members and the policemen got to the scene the following day, the corpse of the deceased in the sack had already been moved away by some suspected hoodlums in the community.

According to Chief Habeeb Balogun-Kalejaiye, the Late Temitope Ariyo was in the village to inspect his building under construction when he was abducted on January 19, 2022.

He said on the fateful day after inspecting his building, he was about leaving the village when about suspected hoodlums on motorbikes accosted him along with two other people and attacked him with machete, after he was shot on his legs, he was whisked away and since then he did not return.

"Some Policemen stationed in Iraye by one of the companies that bought land in the village to protect their company also witnessed the brutalisation, while some of the policemen that were sent from Abuja to make peace in the village two of them were also attacked and seriously injured by the hoodlums.

"On Tuesday February 1, 2022 news filtered in that the decomposing body of the deceased had been located inside the forest of Iraye and some of his family members, the deceased wife and Igode Divisional Police Officer and 10 other operatives led by the DPO went to the scene, but due to the absence of government health workers in the entourage coupled with the very strong pungent smell emanating from the decomposing body the remains of the deceased could not be moved on the fateful day till the following day.

"The following day when the government health workers were on ground to evacuate his remains, we couldn't find it at the scene again, I strongly believe that the police have been compromised, because nobody knew when we went to the scene where the corpse was dropped, all I want for him is justice, because he left five children behind and his wife is also young to bear such a burden. We want lasting solution in the village."

Chief Balogun-Kalejaiye added that it is pertinent to note that contrary to the assertion of Oba Mosudi Owodina Mawelu that Ariyo was killed in Iraye by some security men, he was indeed killed by some hoodlums.

Adding that the claim of the monarch that his crown was retrieved from him and two others persons was not true.

"Saheed and Lookman are responsible family members of Mayunbe and Bolumade Royal Family of Iraye and they are the owner and the



Ariyo's mutilated body was found inside a sack before it disappeared

custodian of the said Ancestral Crowns with verifiable evidence. Also the Palace the Oba claimed was damaged was never in existence, what he claimed to be a Palace was just an abandoned building that had long been abandoned since 1980 and the place has been covered by weeds, it was recently the grass was cut when policemen from Abuja were coming to inspect the palace."

The distraught widow of the deceased, Beauty Ariyo called on the Inspector General of Police, Usman Baba Alkali to order a full scale investigation into the attack and ensure that the killers of her husband do not go unpunished.

She narrated that: "On Wednesday, my husband left our house in Fakale near Sagamu, he told me he was going to Iraye, before leaving for Iraye he went to meet with some of his family and I went to my own work."

"It was in the evening on the fateful day that someone called me that some people had attacked my husband where he went to inspect his house under construction. They reportedly shot him in both legs and used broken glasses to cut his face before they whisked him away to unknown destination."

She added that: "I was also told that the hoodlums dragged him on their motorcycle and took him away when they discovered that he was gasping for breath. People should please rise up and assist me, I have five children and I cannot take care of them on my own. My husband must not die in vain."

"It was on February 1, 2022 that the information got to us that my husband's corpse was found in a forest at Iraye, immediately I and some family members, Igode DPO and 10 other police operatives went to the scene, his body had been mutilated and packed in a sack, but due to the odour emanating from the scene the policemen couldn't move to where he was placed."

"We left the scene and promised to return the following day with the help of some health

officials from Sagamu Local Government Area. Unfortunately his corpse has been taken away from the scene. We had to trace the foot path of those who carried out the operation after a while we were unable to trace it anymore."

According to an eyewitness, 76-year-old Owoduni Bakare, he was almost killed by the hoodlums, but he was rescued by a woman trader who rushed him into her house for protection.

Another resident of the village, Mrs. Fausat Olatunji said: "Many of us were playing at the backyard, when we heard gunshots. We initially went down the road to check what was happening and came back to our various houses."

"I immediately locked the doors of my apartment, but the hoodlums broke the window glasses before breaking into our house."

"The first time when they came they asked us where was Ariyo, but we told them that we didn't know but suddenly, one of them who was wearing dreadlock took a broken glass and went straight to where Ariyo was hiding and cut him in the face. They dragged him outside and shot him in his two legs. He was struggling when one of them, who claimed to be his (Ariyo) in-law stood on his head and threatened to kill him."

Corroborating other witnesses, Mrs. Monsurat Olayinka said: "We stood in our house watching them when they dragged his blood-soaked body on one of their motorcycles and they eventually took him away."

Chief Habeeb Balogun Kalejaiye added that this is the second time in two years that armed hoodlums had taken over the village and turned into a ghost community where people couldn't reside nor do their business in peace.

According to Otunba Kamoruadeen Lamina, in 2012 his company bought about 40 acres of land in Iraye village and they have all necessary documents to support the lands he bought.

He said in 2014 one Engineer Noal sued him with one Otunba that he was not the rightful



Late Ariyo

owner of the land and the matter is still pending in court. "The family is divided into two factions what they are fighting over is none of my problem."

"Last week Monday January 31, I was surprised when I received a phone call about crisis at Iraye village, I was still in Abuja then, when I heard that one Eleda and Adamo went to the village and attacked the policemen deployed there and one Temitope Ariyo was also killed in the process, I directed them that the matter should immediately be reported at Igode Police Station and the Divisional Police Officer, but the DPO said they cannot say whether Ariyo was dead or not, but they could only declare him missing. But after 14 if they didn't see him they would then swing into action."

"Early February, the deceased wife came back to me that some vigilance members in the village called to inform her that the remains of her husband had been found in a forest at Iraye village. Ariyo's wife and other family members went back to Igode Police Station to report the discovery."

Otunba Lamina also debunked claims that he knew something about the disappearance of the village monarch's crown: "I don't have anything to do with their crown. I am from a royal family."

"It was Iraye Royal Family that has issues with themselves and should settle it among themselves, but I only went to the village to buy land for farming, now I am unable to use the land I bought from them anymore because of their crisis. I want to appeal to those fighting to be patient until when court will decide on the case over the ownership."

"That doesn't mean that they should now hire land grabbers' thugs to kill and destroy people's properties, which led to the death of Ariyo. Some policemen who were sent from Abuja were also attacked and I have the evidence, I also don't know anything about the village hospital attacked, I have always assisted people who are sick financially."

"The late Ariyo is a family man with five children; I don't know the kind of country we are living where human lives have no value. I am ready to spend any amount to get justice for the deceased wife and his children that he left behind."

When contacted to confirm the story, the Ogun State Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), DSP Abimbola Oyejemi didn't pick his calls and also didn't respond to text message sent to his phone.

JULIANA FRANCIS

CRIME EDITOR

ebere20@gmail.com

08023684524