

Odumakin: Daughter of Afenifere Leader Killed by Suspected Herders

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- ***Police confirm murder, not sure killers are herders***
- ***Atiku: Enough of killings, peace must return to Nigeria***

By James Sowole in Akure

Mrs. Funke Olakunrin, 58, a daughter of the National Leader of the Pan Yoruba Socio- Political Group, Afenifere, Chief Reuben Fazoranti was yesterday killed by men suspected to be herdsman.

The incident according to the National Publicity Secretary of Afenifere, Mr. Yinka Odumakin happened on Sagamu-Ore Road.

The incident was also confirmed by the Ondo State Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Mr. Femi Joseph, who spoke on phone.

Joseph said three vehicles, a commercial bus belonging to the Young Shall Grow Transport Limited, a Toyota Land Cruiser Jeep, with Registration Number Lagos, AAA 147 FM and a Toyota Camry were involved in the incident.

He said the three vehicles were attacked at Kajola on Ore-Benin Expressway.

Joseph said the woman was in the Toyota Land Cruiser Jeep.

He also said that one man named Gerald Igbooyikha was kidnapped by the gunmen.

The PPRO however, said the police have rescued seven other persons, who were in the bus and they were with the police.

He said: Three vehicles were ambushed by gunmen at Kajola on Benin-Ore Expressway around 2:00pm.

“One woman named Funmi Olakunrin was shot but died before our men could take her to

hospital. The woman was travelling in the Toyota Jeep.

"One man in another Toyota Camry Car was abducted by the gunmen.

"Our men have rescued seven men travelling in the commercial bus belonging to the Young Shall Grow Motors Limited.

"We have begun search for the man that was abducted and to get the hoodlums".

Odumakin in a statement said: "We have confirmed the death of Mrs. Funke Olakunrin (58), daughter of our leader, Chief Fasoranti.

"Eyewitness accounts said she died of gunshot from Fulani herdsman, who shot her at Ore junction in Ondo state earlier today.

"She was coming from Akure when the armed Fulani herdsman came from the bush to attack her and other vehicles

"Her domestic staff in the car with her sustained gunshots too. This is one death too many and a clear we- can- take- it -no-more death".

Odumakin said the killing of Olakunrin was a declaration of war on Yoruba people.

He said: "When they started with the kidnapping process, they started with Olu Falae, a prominent leader in Akure. Whether deliberately or intentionally, this is clearly a declaration of war on the Yoruba. They shall hear from the Yoruba nation."

Narrating how the attack happened, Odumakin said: "Yes. Mrs Funke Olakunrin, was coming from Akure this morning (Friday) to Lagos. When she got to Ore, shortly as she was to hit the express, Fulani herdsman emerged from the bush, started shooting at her car, maybe they wanted to kidnap her or not, shot at her car and she died from gunshot while her maid who was with her in the car sustained gunshot injury."

The Afenifere spokesperson stated that the group would not take the killing lightly and that would only signal an end to the terror reign of the herdsman in the region.

"The people will hear from us. They started with Olu Falae. They macheted him, kept him in the bush for four days before Ondo State government paid a ransom to get Falae out.

"With this, this is the beginning of the end of their kidnap in Yorubaland," Odumakin said.

Former vice president Atiku Abubakar described the killing of Olakunrin as "one death too many."

A statement from his media aide, Maxi Paul Ibe, reads: "I condemn, in the strongest possible terms, the killing of Mrs. Funke Olakunrin, daughter of Chief Reuben Fasoranti, the Chairman of Afenifere. This is one death too many. I call on the security services to initiate speedy and thorough investigations to bring her killers to book and stem the epidemic of insecurity in our land.

"My prayers and deep compassion go to Chief Reuben Fasoranti, his family and the entire membership of Afenifere. My family and I stand shoulder to shoulder with you at this trying time, even as we pray for the repose of Mrs. Funke Olakunrin's soul. Peace must return to Nigeria, by every means possible. Enough of this. Enough of this!"

In his own reaction Ondo State Governor, Rotimi Akeredolu condemned in strong terms, the murder of Mrs Olakunrin.

The governor in a statement signed by the Commissioner for Information, Mr Donald Ojogo, said the sad development once again heightens the level of fear that has pervaded the nation even as it represents a despicable commentary in all ramifications.

"On behalf of the State Executive Council, the Governor sympathizes with our foremost leader and indeed the people of the State over this dastardly act", he said.

The governor appealed to the people to remain calm and allow the Police to unravel the perpetrators of this murder.

He said: "Already, the Commissioner of Police has been directed to comb all forests of Ondo State to bring to book, these bloodthirsty murderers. There is no hiding place for such in Ondo State".

Former aviation minister, Chief Femi fani-Kayode said: "I have just spoken to my brother Yinka Odumakin and he has confirmed to me that the daughter of our very own Baba Fasoranti, the leader of Afenifere, was slaughtered by herdsmen in Ore today. This is the final straw. The Yoruba must act now. We must defend our people! I call on my brother, the Aare Ona Kakanfo of Yorubaland, Gani Adams, who I just broke the shocking news to and who is presently in Mali, to come home quickly, rise to the occasion and, in consultation with others including our traditional rulers, organise the defence of the Yoruba people and determine what our next line of action will be."