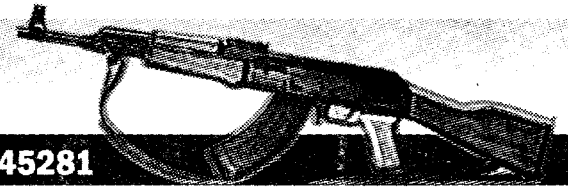




CrimeGuard

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Police Brutality

Man, 50 found dead after scuffle with Police

By Ifeanyi OKOLIE

TENSION heightened penultimate Saturday at the Ijora Badia Police Station after a handful of mob attempted to burn down the station in protest of alleged extra-judicial killing by some policemen attached to the station. But for the quick intervention by some anti-riot policemen drafted to save the station, the entire police station would have been burnt down by the Protestants who claimed that a 50-year-old man was allegedly dragged out of his house by some unidentified policemen and was later found dead.

Residents of Ijora Badia could not hold back their tears at the sudden discovery of the lifeless body of the aged man identified as Mr. Afolabi Akinlolu was also reported to be a banker. They quickly mobilized youth of the area and chased after the alleged killer of one of them. They equally accused the police of incessant raids and harassment of residents, adding that a yet to be identified woman was killed in like manner

last year.

Dusts raised by this recent incident were still very high when Crime Alert visited the scene. Eye witness account said that the late father of four was an easy going person that would not want to hurt a fly, stressing that he had never visited the police station for any reason. Residents, therefore, questioned what happened between the easy going man and the police that led to his sudden death.

Resident speaks

One of the respondents who gave her name as Mrs. Coker Olubumi, landlady to the deceased at No 20 Ireti Owosani street, Badia, described the incident as shocking. According to her, Akinlolu and his son who just returned from the Naval Training School sat at the front of their one storey build and was about going out when the incident occurred. "He was just putting on a red shirt and he told his son that he was going in to prepare for a wedding ceremony at 2.00pm. I was in my shop with my husband, the landlord when some people ran in



•Mr. Afolabi Akinlolu

to say that some policemen had entered the building and they were about taking somebody away. I left what I was doing and ran upstairs because Akinlolu stayed on the first floor. On getting there, I saw the police forcing Akinlolu to follow them. So, I went to the policeman pulling him and asked what was his offence. But the man only told me that he(the

deceased) saw them and ran into his house which raised suspicion.

"The Police murdered my father"

But the son to the deceased, Gbolahan Akinlolu, maintained that his father was murdered by the police. He said, "The whole thing was a like a film to me after I ran to Badia police Station and I was told he was not brought there that I should go to 'Area B'. But on my way back home, I was called that he was dead. Looking the way he was taken away and every body was begging them to free him and they refused; it showed clearly that some thing was up. May be someone had that intention of killing him. Police used to come to our area but not with three vans. They surrounded everywhere as if an armed robber was in the building. Even when I was called that he was dead and I called my other relatives that reside in Badia as well and we went to the spot where he was dumped, I asked people around how he died. A lady who sells around there told me that the police van got to that spot and she saw them pulling a man out of

their van that could not stand properly and he fell and was convulsing. She further told me that when they saw this, they yelled at the policemen to take him to the hospital, at least to save his life; they told me that the police stood watching my father die before they zoomed off. Meanwhile, this was somebody they dragged out of his house.

Police react

When contacted, the Lagos State Police Command Public Relations Officer, Mr. Frank MBA, stated that some policemen from the Area B command were on patrol of the area because they were reports of clashes between rivalry groups in the area. The police in the course of their duty arrested him, but when they discovered that he was innocent, he was set free. According to him, "Originally, the case has been treated as a sudden and unnatural death. However, the claims and counter claims surrounding his death as a matter of fact, made the police officers extend their investigation even beyond sudden and unnatural death.