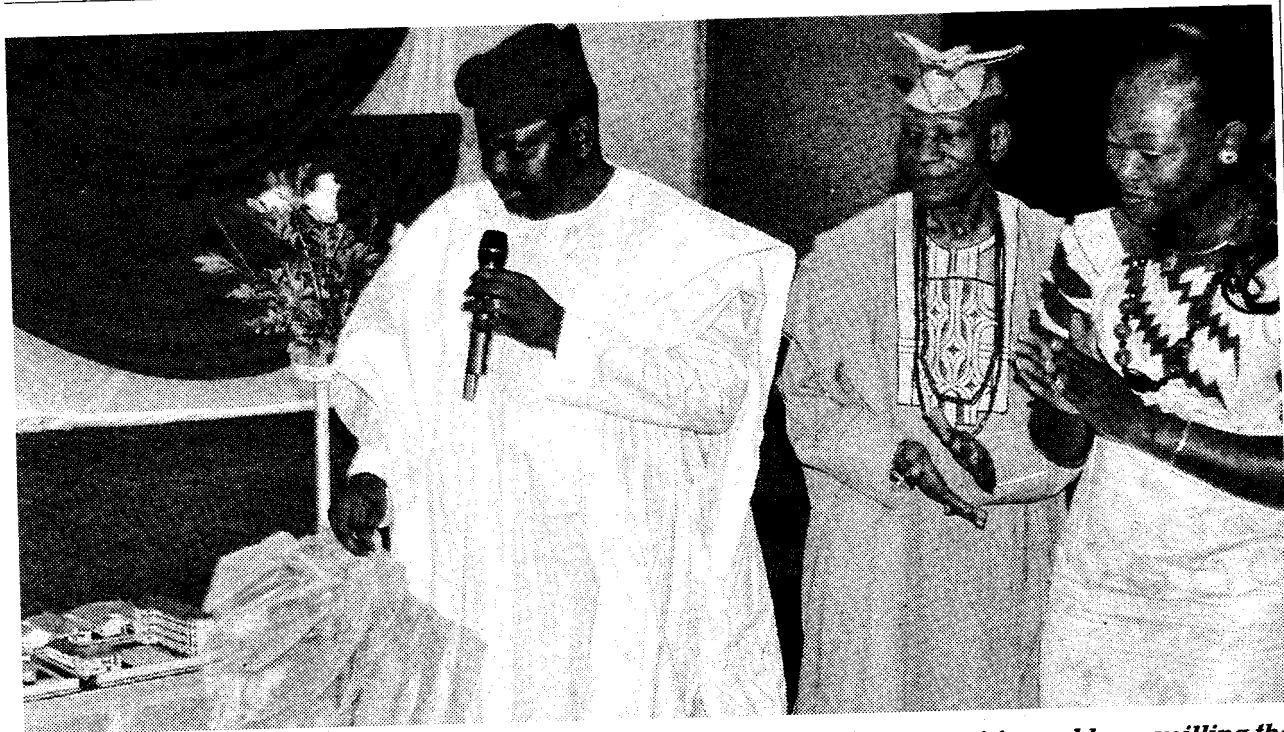


SOUTH-WEST



FOUNDATION: From left; Hon Adejare Bello, Speaker, Osun State House of Assembly, unveiling the prototype of the Foundation, High Chief Eddie Oyewole, Ekarun Olubadan and Mrs. Winifred Ochinyabo, founder, at the inauguration of Matron Angelina Ogbule Memorial Foundation, a center for physically challenged persons in Ibadan, Tuesday. Photo: Dare Fasube.

Tension rises in Akure over killing of 27-yr-old man by policemen

By Dayo Johnson

AKURE—TENSION is heightening up in Akure, the Ondo state capital, over alleged extra-judicial killing of a 27-year old Damilola Agbede, a son of the immediate past Chief Register of Ondo State judiciary by policemen attached to the State Anti Robbery Squad, SARS.

Already, the family of the deceased has petitioned the Inspector General of Police, IGP, and the Ondo state governor, Dr Olusegun Mimiko, over the killing of the young man by trigger happy policemen.

Vanguard gathered that

the deceased was killed at Ijapo area of Akure, the State capital at about 2am last Saturday while returning from a party in the Akure metropolis.

The police in the state said that the deceased was an armed robber who was one of those that had been terrorizing the people of the state for sometime, but the family of the deceased debunked the allegation, describing it was a flimsy excuse.

Speaking with newsmen, the father of the deceased Mr. Olusola Agbede, said that his son was innocent and that his death was one of those extra-judicial killings by the police.

Olusola Agbede, who said that Damilola just arrived from Benin city, Edo state, just completed his United Kingdom papers to further his education.

He punctured the allegation that Damilola was a suspected armed robber and said that "the deceased was quiet and easy going. He cannot even hurt a fly. I want justice for my dead son. This is another sad commentary of police brutality".

In the petition by the family lawyer, Mr Segun Kolade, they alleged that the killing of Damilola was a clear case of extra-judicial killing of innocent Nigerian by men of the Nige-

ria Police.

Titled "Re-cold blood murder of Damilola Agbede by one of the officers of SARS", the Family lawyer said the late Damilola was excused from the party only for his corpse to be found later in his car some meters away from the place.

The petition said: "While at the party, Damilola was excused out by one police officer attached to the SARS office under the guise that the presence of Damilola would be needed outside the party venue by other members of the police from SARS who were at the scene fully armed. Damilola was escorted into his car where the impression was created that he would only be allowed to drive his Toyota Camry to the SARS office along Oda road. The greatest surprise is that, it was the same car that his lifeless body was found after an hour on that night."

But the Police Public Relation Officer, PPRO, Mr Adeniran Aremu, said late Damilola was an armed robber who was shot during a gun duel with men of the SARS.

Aremu said Damilola and two of his gang members were driving along Ijapo road on the early hours of Saturday and when they saw the police, they opened fire on them. It was when they could not withstand the fire power of police that they turned to escape and was hit by the police bullet.

The police image maker said the two members of the gang in the car with late Damilola would soon be arrested to corroborate the police's story.

INEC yet to sign contract for voter registration machines

LAGOS—INDEPENDENT National Electoral Commission, INEC, is yet to sign contracts for the procurement of Direct Data Capture, DDC, machines to be used for registration of voters for the 2011 elections.

Chief Press Secretary to INEC Chairman, Mr. Kayode Idowu, said at the inaugural media owners/editorial forum organized by the commission in Lagos, yesterday, that the contract papers were undergoing due diligence.

Idowu, who represented the INEC chairman, Prof. Attahiru Jega, said the commission would deliver credible elections in 2011, adding: "The 2011 election

will be credible and will be seen to be credible."

He said the media had a crucial role to play in ensuring credible elections and must understand the issue to be able to report properly, stressing: "Without media understanding the issues, the public will also not understand."

A media consultant, Mrs. Dupe Ajayi, said the media should ensure objectivity and balance in their reportage of politics.

Ajayi who contended that media ownership was the current problem with credibility, noted that with politicians being major media owners, credibility of reports could be a problem.

She stressed that media

professionals should be fair gatekeepers.

Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme, UNDP, Mr. Daouda Toure, whose address was read by Ms Toyin Adewale Gabriel, said the body organised the forum to ensure that Nigeria had credible, transparent and globally accepted elections in 2011.

Toure said: "Nigeria has a long and strong tradition of civil society which represents the diverse nature of the Nigerian society. The mass media, in particular, have contributed to this tradition because of their role in the struggle for independence and resistance against military rule."