

Mob lynches father of 4 over false alarm of school bag theft

By Emem Idio

YENAGOA—FAMILY members and staff of Bayelsa State Council for Arts and Culture have come out to deny that Mr. Stephen, killed by a mob for allegedly trying to steal a school bag from a shop, was a thief.

The father of four, a native of Amassoma in Southern Ijaw Local Government Area of the state was a driver with the Council before he was mobbed in a shop at Yenizue-Epie suburb of the state capital.

It was gathered from an eyewitness that the deceased had gone to a shop to buy a school bag for one of his children. He picked a bag and was haggling with the seller, when his phone rang.

One Abobos, who claimed to have witnessed the discussion between the deceased and the school bag seller, said the deceased did not steal the school bag, rather that he was distracted from the shop after receiving a call from his wife, and that the shop owner raised a false alarm that led to the death of the victim.

Apparently, in the confusion, he threw away the bag and tried to run but was caught by the mob and lynched.

However, when the mob found N15,000 in his pocket, reasoned that he couldn't have been a thief and was a victim of false alarm, they quickly tried to resuscitate him by rushing him to a hospital, but he died before they could get to the hospital.

The wife, Mrs Stephen, said she was the one he was calling before he was attacked and that she told one of his sons that it was like the father was in trouble from the sounds she heard.

The deceased's son, Prince Izonbodei Stephen, said his father has always told them to work hard, saying the allegation of stealing was shocking.

His colleagues from Bayelsa State Council for Arts and Culture also said that the deceased did not exhibit any criminal trait, adding that she does not believe that deceased

stole the said school bag.

Meanwhile, the school bag seller, Tochukwu Daberechi, who claimed to have been present during the mob action, denied any business conversation with the deceased, adding that it was

a neighbour behind the shop that alerted them of the missing school bag.

The said neighbour denied raising any alarm or having knowledge of any such incident.

Gunmen abduct 16 miners in Kaduna

KADUNA Police Command, yesterday, confirmed that 16 miners were abducted by armed bandits at Birnin Gwari Local Government Area.

According to the police, the miners were returning from a mining site in a truck when they were intercepted by the gunmen.

The incident occurred at Pole Wire bush, close to Bogoma village of the troubled Birnin Gwari town.

Among those kidnapped, according to a statement signed by the state police spokesperson, Yakubu Sabo, was one Isa Tanimu.

He said the command has already deployed officers to track down the suspects. He said the suspects have started communicating with families of those abducted demanding ransom.

"We received information that on September 25, at about 6:30p.m., bandits intercepted a truck in the bush of Pole Wire conveying local miners who were

returning from site to Bogoma village.

"They kidnapped one Isa Tanimu and 15 others all of the same village. Teams of policemen have been dispatched to the scene alongside the command anti-kidnapping unit for surveillance with the view to rescue the victims and arrest the criminals.

"The latest information available is that a link has been established with them (kidnappers). They have started demanding for ransom," he said.

Mr. Sabo said the police is making 'a discreet effort' to track down the abductors.

Birnin Gwari is one of the areas most troubled by armed bandits in Kaduna State. Scores of people have been killed and several houses burnt by the bandits who also kidnap for ransom in the area and neighbouring communities.



An estate affected by flood at Granada village, Ajaokuta Local Government Area, Kogi, yesterday. NAN PHOTO.