

Bloodbath in Lagos community: Two killed, policeman, others injured over land dispute

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By Evelyn Usman

There was bloodbath at Whitesand, a community between Festac in Amuwo Odofin area of Lagos and Isheri-Oshun area , as hoodlums numbering over 50 , attacked some persons, last Thursday.

As you read this piece, two persons who had their skulls ripped open by the armed hoodlums, some of who were reportedly clad in military and police uniforms, are lying stone dead in the morgue, while others among who were a policeman and a surveyor, who sustained varying degrees of injuries are still nursing their wounds.

Those who were killed were identified as: Oluwoyo Debo and Daniel Chibuzor.

Crime Guard gathered that the attack was as a result of a misunderstanding between two families from Amuwo Odofin and Isheri –Oshun, over land boundary. Crime Guard also learned that those attacked were invited to Whitesand on the pretext of a peace meeting on the disputed boundary, only to meet the unexpected.

Narrating what transpired that fateful day, head of the Kuje Amuwo Royal family, Chief Ligali Suabu Hassan, said, “For some time now, we have been having issues with the Fagbile family in Isheri Oshun over boundary issues on our land but we have never experienced anything like what happened last week.

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“We have our surveyor and they have their surveyor too but they hired an agent to be selling the land for them.

“The two families met and agreed to invite a neutral surveyor, who has a vast knowledge of the boundaries of all the communities in Amuwo-Odofin, Isheri Oshun and other parts.

“Before the agreed date for the boundary resolution, we wrote a letter to the police at FESTAC division to give us policemen who would serve as witnesses.

“When our people got there, they saw policemen and soldiers around and they felt assured that there wouldn’t be any problem.”

Attack

“But to our surprise, there were hundreds of hoodlums there too and before our people could think of what to do, the hoodlums descended on them and began to use different weapons on them, right in the presence of the policeman who accompanied our surveyor to the site.

“A member of the family who escaped death by the whiskers, Alhaji Monsuru Akande, said ‘despite the fact that I told them that I had come to buy land there, they kept attacking me with charms and machetes’.

“There were over two hundred hoodlums and there were soldiers and policemen around, who watched them unleash mayhem on us.

“We went there in two vehicles and were expecting policemen whom we had earlier written letter to, to join us when the hoodlums approached our vehicles and ordered us to come down.

“I told the driver to wind up all the glasses in the vehicle but they showed us guns which were carefully tucked under their shirts. Others came out from where they were hiding and there was nothing we could do.

“I told the driver to escape but they caught up with us and descended on us. We ran into different directions but they still caught up with us.”

Police delay

“To my surprise, the same policemen who were watching us from a distance still came to pick those of us who were injured, to Isheri Oshun police station, instead of taking us to the hospital. Policemen from Zone 2 Command, Onikan, came to pick us from Isheri Oshun, to their command.

“It was when they saw the degree of injuries on Daniel and Debo, that they allowed them to be taken to the hospital. But first, they took them to FESTAC police station for medical report before they were taken to the hospital.

“Unfortunately, Debo died later that day while Daniel died on Saturday”.

Call on IGP

Determined to get justice for those killed, Counsel to the Kuje Amuwo family, Bayo Omoniyi in a petition to the Inspector General of Police, IGP Ibrahim Mohammed, dated March 19, 2020 demanded an investigation to be carried out to know why there was no response from the Police in spite of previous report on the attack.

Part of the letter read: “Recall that we had recently cried out over the menace of armed bandit attacks, which had become a recurring decimal in the area and sought the deployment of armed personnel to ensure safety of lives and property in the area in respect of which your office has graciously approved the deployment of mobile policemen to secure the area”.

Some alleged principal actors in the attack were mentioned in the letter, with a call to the IGP to investigate their culpability.

We are not responsible

But a member of the Fagbile clan who spoke to Crime Guard on the condition of anonymity, said his party did not have a hand in the attack.

Though he admitted there was supposed to be a meeting between both parties that day, he maintained that “we were preparing to come when we heard that some hoodlums were attacking some persons there. Perhaps we were their targets”.

Police arrest two

Meanwhile, Lagos State Police Command said it had begun investigation into the attack with a view to bringing the perpetrators to book.

Already, two persons, according to the command spokesman, DSP Elkana Bala, had been arrested in connection with the attack.

He said, “There was an attack on some people but the police at FESTAC division was only contacted when there was an issue and they quickly deployed officers to the scene.

“Two injured persons were rescued and were rushed to the hospital by the police. One of them died that day and the other died later. Two persons have been arrested in connection with the attack and investigations are ongoing .”