

News

January 31, 2026 by [Toba Adedeji, Osogbo](#)

Osun Imam, 3 others arrested as family disrupt Jumu'ah prayer after worshippers lynch car painter



The Chief Imam of Ummu Hanni Adigun Memorial Central Mosque, Ogo-Oluwa area, Osogbo and three others have been arrested by the **Osun State** Police Command after worshippers lynched a car painter, Najeem Hammed to death.

Following the incident, family members of the deceased disrupted the Jumu'ah prayer at the mosque on Friday.

It was learnt that Najeem, a car painter whose workshop is located at the Jaye area of Osogbo, had gone to the mosque along Ogo-Oluwa area to pray around 6 am on Friday when the incident happened.

A source around the mosque who pleaded anonymity told our correspondent that after the early morning prayer, the Imam was preaching when Najeem felt irritated by the words, hence he threatened to attack the clergyman.

“Najeem attempted to use the microphone rod to hit the Imam, but he dodged it. The worshippers took him up, which he resisted. He was dragged outside the mosque, mobbed and left inside the gutter in front of the premises, bleeding.

“Some members of the mosque notified the police at Ataoja Police Division, and they came to carry him from the scene to the police station. He died along the way as a result of the assault.”

When our correspondent visited the mosque around 1 pm, the family members of the deceased were protesting in front of the mosque while the Imam was preaching ahead of Jumah'at prayer, stating that the service can not be held after Najeem was killed in the premises a few hours ago.

Subsequently, Police operative stormed the mosque and whisked the Imam away to the Ataoja Divisional Police Division, as the family members and sympathisers later took over the mosque's entrance, preventing worshippers from gaining access.

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They equally threatened to burn the mosque if any prayer is rendered or any attempt is made to open the mosque.

A family member simply identified himself as Nurudeen, disclosed that "Najeem was beaten to death at the mosque by the worshippers after an altercation ensued in the mosque. He was going to Ibadan this morning, but visited the mosque for Subuhi prayer when he was mobbed to death.

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"When we called to ask about his journey, a policeman picked up the call and told us that he had an altercation with some people and was held at Ataoja police station. When we got there, that was when we realised that he was dead."

Bloodstains were sighted on the fence of the mosque and the plank of wood in front of the mosque.

When contacted, the Osun State Police Command, through its Public Relations Officer, Abiodun Ojelabi, confirmed the incident.

He clarified that the victim was not attacked inside the Mosque but around it. We have arrested the Imam and three others connected to the incident. Further investigation has been launched to unravel the actual cause of the incident.

According to him, the incident happened this morning around 6 am. No suspect has been arrested, but information is on high gear to get those who perpetrated this evil act arrested. The DPO and other Tactical Teams have been deployed to maintain law and order. The corpse has been deposited at the Osun State Teaching Hospital."

Ojelabi insisted that the deceased was mobbed around the Mosque and not actually inside the Mosque.