

# Security guard hacked to death at Ogun church altar

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File Copy: Ogun Commissioner of Police, Lanre Ogunlowo

By Uthman Salami

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Residents of Akute-Odo, a community in Ifo Local Government Area of Ogun State, were thrown into shock and panic on Monday morning after some assailants invaded Christ Crusaders' Deliverance Ministries and brutally murdered the church's security guard, popularly known as Baba Iwo.

A *PUNCH Metro* correspondent, who visited the area on Tuesday, gathered from residents and video clips circulating in the community that the attackers struck inside the church, where Baba Iwo was allegedly hacked to death on the altar.

Some of the videos shared on Tuesday showed the lifeless body of the guard lying on the altar, with the rug beneath him soaked in blood. In one clip lasting less than a minute and seen by *PUNCH Metro*, the deceased, dressed in Ankara fabric, had his neck almost severed.

A resident, identified only as Ajoke, said the incident occurred around 1am on Monday when there was no power supply in the area.

She explained that Baba Iwo, who was outside the church at the time, became suspicious after noticing movements within the premises.

“With his cutlass in hand, he told another security guard who works in a nearby area that he wanted to go inside the church to inspect what was going on,” she said.

Ajoke added that when the inspection took longer than expected, the other guard became alarmed.

“When he peeped through the entrance of the church, he saw Baba Iwo lying helpless on the altar. He also noticed someone suspected to be one of the attackers hiding behind one of the doors, and that was when he raised the alarm,” she said.

Another resident, Moses, told *PUNCH Metro* that the attackers appeared to have attempted to sever the victim’s head but were prevented by the swift intervention of youths in the community.

“If you see his head, the neck was almost completely severed. I believe they tried to cut it off several times, but for the quick intervention of the youths, they would have succeeded,” he said.

Although the exact number of the assailants remains unclear, one suspect believed to be directly involved in the attack was apprehended while attempting to flee and was later handed over to operatives of the Ajuwon Police Division.

In another video seen by *PUNCH Metro* on Tuesday, the suspect was seen with visible bruises, a bloodied nose and a swollen face as residents restrained him while awaiting the arrival of the police.

One of those involved in the arrest, identified as Dare, said two residents sustained injuries during the struggle.

“It was very difficult to arrest him. Although we heard there were three attackers, only one was caught while trying to escape. We chased him while shouting ‘thief, thief’.

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“When he realised he might be caught, he also started shouting ‘thief’ until we eventually overpowered him near the tollgate. Before we subdued him, he injured two of us with the big cutlass he was holding,” Dare said.

Another eyewitness, identified only as Tife, alleged that the suspect made disturbing claims while being questioned by residents.

“He said what they do is cut people’s heads. The police need to conduct a thorough investigation. If he truly said there were three of them, the church’s CCTV footage should be checked to confirm whether the others escaped,” she said.

Tife also alleged that the suspect damaged streetlights while fleeing.

“As he was running, he was breaking street bulbs so that he wouldn’t be recognised. A thorough investigation is needed, and the church should provide its CCTV footage,” she added.

When contacted on Tuesday, the spokesperson for the Ogun State Police Command, Babaseyi Oluseyi, said the case had been transferred to the State Criminal Investigation Department for further investigation.

He said the body of the deceased had been released to his family in line with Islamic rites, noting that investigations were ongoing.

“The body was released to the family because they are Muslims. The investigation is ongoing, and we cannot speculate. The investigation will reveal the details,” Oluseyi said.

He added that certain aspects of the probe would remain confidential until its conclusion.

“There are things in the investigation that must be kept discreet. When the investigation is concluded, our findings will be made known,” he said.

The incident has further heightened concerns over the deteriorating security situation in the area.

The attack occurred less than a week after a gospel artiste, Matthew Ogundele, and three members of his crew were found dead inside a music studio in the same community.

The other victims were identified as Itunu Ogundele, Joseph Sanya, and a blogger, Matthew Awosanya, popularly known as JoesTV. They were reportedly invited to perform during a three-day birthday praise programme organised by another gospel artiste.