

Police launch manhunt over Oyo masquerader killing

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Police emblem. NPF

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The Oyo State Police Command says it is still on the trail of four suspected accomplices after arresting a masquerade over the killing of a 24-year-old man, Sefiu Kehinde, who was allegedly hacked to death with axes and cutlasses during a masquerade procession in the Labiran area of Ibadan.

The state's Police Public Relations Officer, Olayinka Ayanlade, disclosed this in a follow-up conversation with *PUNCH Metro* on Monday.

Ayanlade had, in an earlier statement, confirmed that the incident was reported at the Mapo Divisional Police Headquarters on Sunday after the deceased's family raised the alarm.

He stated that Kehinde was allegedly attacked at about 4 p.m. by the Asoleke masquerade and some of its followers, who reportedly inflicted severe machete and axe cuts on him.

The statement read, "Earlier the same day, at about 4:00 p.m., she received a distress call from her elder sister, informing her that a masquerade, identified as the Asoleke and its followers, while parading through the Labiran area of Ibadan, allegedly attacked her younger brother, Sefiu Kehinde, with axes and cutlasses, inflicting severe injuries on various parts of his body."

Ayanlade stated that officers from the Mapo Division, led by the Divisional Police Officer, responded immediately after receiving the report and rushed the victim to a hospital.

“Upon receipt of the report, a team of police operatives led by the Divisional Police Officer, Mapo Division, swiftly mobilised to the scene.

“The victim was immediately evacuated to the hospital for urgent medical attention, where he was unfortunately confirmed dead on arrival by the medical doctor on duty,” the statement added.

The PPRO said the crime scene was processed and documented before the deceased’s body was released to his family for burial in accordance with Islamic rites.

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He confirmed that the masquerade had been arrested, while efforts were ongoing to apprehend four of his followers allegedly involved in the killing.

“Meanwhile, the masquerade, Asoleke, has been arrested, while four of his followers, alleged to have committed the crime, are still at large,” the statement said.

The state Commissioner of Police, Abimbola Ayodeji Olugbenga, has directed that the case be transferred to the State Criminal Investigation Department for further investigation.

Reacting, the police assured residents that efforts were ongoing to arrest the fleeing suspects and urged members of the public to provide credible information that could assist the investigation.

“The Oyo State Police Command remains committed to the protection of lives and property and will continue to take decisive action against all forms of criminality across the state,” the statement added.

PUNCH Metro reported on January 15 that the Anambra State Police Command arrested a masquerader accused of unleashing unprovoked violent attacks on residents during a festival in Awgbu, Orumba North Local Government Area of the state.

The arrest had followed the circulation of viral video clips showing the masquerader chasing and assaulting passers-by, disrupting a public function and creating panic in the community.

Footage from the scene had shown the masquerader going on a rampage—forcefully pushing riders off motorcycles, chasing people on sight and destroying equipment—while being cheered on by followers.

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