

OPC member shoots guest to death at party over seat

From Afeez Hanafi, Lagos

When Ope and his girlfriend attended the birthday party of a friend in Iwaya, Yaba area of Lagos last Thursday, he had no hint he would never return to his residence in Abule-Ijesha, a neighbouring community.

Said to be in his late 20s, Ope's life was cut short allegedly by a member of Oodua People's Congress identified simply as Rotimi, who reportedly shot him and fled the scene.

City & Crime learnt that chaos broke out at the event when another guest challenged Ope's girlfriend for sitting on his seat.

An argument reportedly ensued between Ope and the guest who

reportedly left in anger to invite Rotimi.

A resident, who spoke to our correspondent on condition of anonymity, said Rotimi stormed the venue with a gun and shot Ope as the altercation intensified.

The resident said, "It was an overnight party. A boy was celebrating his birthday. Ope, who used to live here (Iwaya), and his girlfriend also attended the party. He was a friend of the host.

"As the party was going on, someone approached his girlfriend and asked her to vacate her seat. The man claimed he had been sitting on that seat before he stood to get something. They were arguing over it when the victim intervened. The man left and returned a few minutes

later alongside Rotimi who was holding a gun.

"All of a sudden, he shot the victim and ran away immediately. There was blood everywhere. Sadly, Ope died on the spot."

A community leader, who gave his name as Baba, said he was shocked when he learnt about the incident the following morning.

He said, "The incident happened down Ajoke Street, at the back of the OPC office. I learnt the victim was not up to 30 years old. His corpse was taken to the front of the OPC office and police later came to remove it.

"They have been looking for him (Rotimi) since the incident happened. The DPO from Sabo Police Station and his team came here. It was a misunderstanding over

a seat that led to this."

The Police Public Relations Officer in the state, SP Benjamin Hundeyin, confirmed the alleged murder, adding that the police had launched a manhunt for the suspect.

He said the case had been transferred to the State Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department, Panti, Yaba, for further investigation.

The PPRO stated, "The incident actually happened. The case has been transferred to the state CID, Panti, because it is a homicide which the division cannot handle.

"We are making progress in arresting the suspect at large. The police already have leads. We know the identity of the suspect and we are getting close to arresting him."