

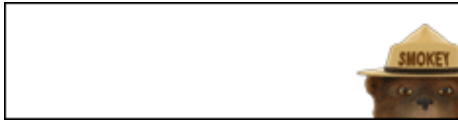


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Despite the unrelenting effort of the Ogun State Police Command to rid the state of criminals and to protect the lives and property of residents, the state almost on a daily basis in the last four months has been in the news for crime related issues. Olayinka Olukoya writes on the crime diary of the state.

Of course, Ogun State is not the only state in the country where criminal activities are being perpetrated, but the state, in the last few months, has remained in the news for different cases of crime almost every week since the beginning of this year.

This is not to say that the State Police Command under CP Ikemefuna Okoye, is not doing enough. Residents of the state, no doubt, give kudos to the police for rising to the challenge of flushing out criminals from the state through its effective policing.

However, despite the fact that the police is not leaving any stone unturned, there is need to point out crimes committed by some residents which are worthy of mentioning.

The latest of such criminal act was the setting ablaze of a man believed to be of unsound mind, who was burnt to ashes by an irate mob at Kugba area of Abeokuta, on Tuesday evening. Reports had it that the victim was alleged to have sprayed a secondary school girl with a substance that made her to lose consciousness.

Worried by this development, the mob took the law into their hands before the arrival of the police at the scene. The police said the killing of the alleged insane man was a case of jungle justice and frowned at it in its entirety.

This was coming on the heels of an attack on the house of a retired police officer at Ijaye area of Abeokuta, on Tuesday. The house was attacked following a rumour that it was a ritualists' den. The entire area was thrown into confusion as angry residents, mostly youths were ready to destroy the house.

The prompt arrival of the police and officials of other security agencies brought the situation under control, as the house in question was thoroughly searched and nothing incriminating was found to justify claim that the house was a ritualists den. It was purely a false alarm that could cause a breach of peace.

About 18 suspects were arrested by the police for raising false alarm and have since been arraigned before an Abeokuta Magisterial Court.

A Nigerian was recently arrested by the police in Ogijo area for being in possession of over 1,000 passports photographs of young boys, a photo camera and some forms. Upon interrogation, the suspect was unable to explain his mission in Nigeria.

Also, a 70-year-old man, identified as Baba Ijemo, committed suicide by hanging at his Olorombo residence in Abeokuta, the state capital, some weeks back. The septuagenarian did not leave any suicide note behind, but one wonders why such an old person could take his life by hanging.

While residents were yet to come to terms on this ugly scenario, the people of the state again woke up in disbelief when the police uncovered a ritualists' den at Iyana-Egbado, in Ewekoro Local Government Area of the state. Some suspects were arrested while so many fetish items were recovered at the scene.



Adelani Ayomide, arrested for being in possession of 18 human skulls.



A man who raped a middle aged woman and beheaded her two-year-old son in Owode-Egba in Ogun State

Also, a pastor was arrested in Olorunsogo area of Abeokuta for raping a girl of school age. The 34-year-old man claimed to be "testing" the virginity of his victim. As if that was not enough, the police also arrested five persons who were in possession of human skull and parts of human flesh at Joju area in Sango-Ota area of the state.

The police, not resting on its oars, raided some so-called black spots in Sagamu, Ijebu-Ode, Ilaro, Ota and Abeokuta and arrested about 110 suspects last Thursday. It had earlier in the year carried out such exercise and recovered 38 bags of Indian hemp.

Of recent, a baby-making factory was also uncovered in Akute area in Ifo Local Local Government where eight pregnant women, including teenagers were rescued. The rescued pregnant women at the time of this report are under the care of the state government. Two of them had been delivered of a baby boy and girl.

Last month, a house-help committed murder by beheading his boss, a

retired Chief Magistrate in the service of the Ogun State Government, late Mrs Olufunmilayo Timehin, at her residence in Laderin Estate. The accused person has since been arraigned in court.

It is in the same state, last January, that a 50-year-old woman, a Beninnose, was ganged raped and later slaughtered by some people. While the police were still investigating the matter, another Beninnose man raped a middle-aged woman and beheaded her two-year-old son thereafter at Owode Egba area in Obafemi Owode Local Government of the state.

The height of these criminal activities perpetrated by the unscrupulous elements was what could be termed "Murder in the Cathedral", as a 70-year-old popular businessman in Ijebu-Igbo, in Ijebu-North Local Government Area was shot dead inside St. John's Anglican Church, Oke-Sopen, on the Lord's day.

The man, Chief Tola Okunneye, who was until his death, the Baba Ijo of the church and the Chairman, Police Community Relations Committee (PCRC) in the area, was killed by bullets by his assailants in the middle of the service.

Another crime that shook the state was that of a serving policeman who killed his wife, his landlady and four others at Obantoko area of Abeokuta in Odeda Local Government Area of the state sometime in March.

The late policeman, identified a Sunkanmi Ogunbiyi, killed his wife, who until her death was a policewoman under the state command.

One Adelani Ayomide was arrested with 18 human skulls in Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area also in March. The police are still investigating the matter, even as a soldier killed two people during an argument at Agbado area in Ifo Local Government Area in February.

A man also beat his daughter to death in Ogbere, Ijebu East Local Government also in February. The suspect after committing the act has since been at large.

Also, a 47-year-old man, Tosin Awotedo defiled a 10-year-old girl, in Ijebu-Ode, in February, while five people were in police net for gang raping and robbing a woman on Papalanto-Ilaro road in January.

Speaking on this development, the command's Public Relations Officer, Olumuyiwa Adejobi, told the Nigerian Tribune that the command was battle ready to ensure the safety of lives and residents of the state. He added that it (command) had been able to record success in the area of effective policing because of the relationship that existed between it and the people of the state.

Adejobi, a Deputy Superintendent of Police, said the command would not leave any stone unturned to ensure adequate security, adding that it had to re-strategise on the need to improve on the present sound security system.

He also stressed the importance of embracing robust intelligence-driven policing while appealing to residents on the need to cooperate with the police in the fight against any criminal acts.

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