

# Police promise to arrest parents who beat four-year-old girl to death

Hakeem Gbadamosi | Akure

AS public outcry continues to trail the death of a four-year-old girl, identified as Testimony Toke Babalola alleged to have been beaten to death by her parents in Ondo State, police in the state on Saturday said detectives were on the trail of her parents.

The state Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Mr. Femi Joseph, who disclosed this to **Sunday Tribune** on Saturday, assured that the parents of the girl would be apprehended.

Though findings by **Sunday Tribune** on Saturday revealed that the parents of the girl were arrested by police in Ikare, Akoko, but were said to have been prevented from being whisked away by the people of the community.

According to a source, the people of the community threatened to lynch the policemen who came to arrest the girl's parents.

The source said it took the intervention of the community leaders, who intervened in the matter and promised to hand over the couple to police in Akure on Monday.

However, the leadership of the Nigeria Association of Women Journalists (NAWOJ), Ondo State chapter, at the weekend led by its chairperson, Mrs Doris Olumoko, disclosed that the girl might have been tortured to death by her

parents.

According to Olumoko, the union's visit to the church where Testimony's parents worship revealed that the young girl had been subjected to series of torture before she died last Wednesday.

Also confirming the development, the parish priest of St Mary Queen of Angels Catholic Church, Akure, Reverend Father Mathew Ologun, said he got to know about the two months ago through the church's children's caregiver, who noticed scars all over the body of the young girl.

He said the father of the girl, one Mr. Felix Babalola, was invited but claimed that the girl was possessed with evil spirit and was undergoing deliverance, which was responsible for the bruised body.

According to him, the father claimed that the girl had been pampered by her grandmother, who she was residing with in Ikare and had to withdraw her from the old woman.

Efforts by **Sunday Tribune** to trace the parents of the young girl proved abortive as the parents took to their heels immediately the girl was pronounced dead.

It will be recalled that the mother of the girl rushed her daughter to Ondo State University Teaching Hospital (OSUTH), Akure annex for treatment on Wednesday night where she was pronounced dead.

## Fish out killers of slain