

Abducted community leader murdered in Plateau

Isaac Shobayo September 15, 2025





OMOLUABI PARAPO REJECTS CULTURAL APPROPRIATION OF YORUBA HERITAGE

Across history, cultural erasure has often followed a familiar pattern: it begins with distortion of narratives, progresses into appropriation, and ultimately leads to the subjugation of an entire people. Unfortunately, this sequence is unfolding today within Yoruba society.

From the rewriting of history to the misrepresentation of traditions, Yoruba culture has become a frequent target of distortion. As a people, Yorubas are naturally peaceful, tolerant, and committed to the prosperity of all Nigerians. Yet, this very openness is too often mistaken for weakness.

A recent example is the planned exhibition by Uzo Njoku, which adopts a Yoruba theme without due acknowledgment of its origins. Her "An Owambe Exhibition" not only misrepresents the correct spelling — Owambe — but also risks diluting the authenticity of the tradition itself. Such seemingly small distortions are often the first step in broader cultural misappropriation.

Furthermore, Ms. Uzo Njoku describes Owambe as a "Lagos culture" without recognizing the people to whom Lagos and Owambe truly belong. Indigenous Lagosians are Yorubas, and the Owambe tradition is shared by all Yorubas, not just a select group. To frame it merely as a "Lagos culture" risks severing Lagos from its Yoruba roots and reinforcing the false narrative that Lagos is culturally separate from the Yoruba nation.

Equally troubling is the reported use of Igbo inscriptions on merchandise tied to the exhibition. Fabrics such as Aso Oke and Adire are exclusively Yoruba heritage items with no historical or cultural connection to the Igbo language. While art is indeed a form of expression, it must remain authentic to its source. Otherwise, it becomes a tool for distortion and the advancement of false agendas.

Omoluabi Parapo will not stand idly by while Yoruba history and heritage are rewritten, distorted, or misappropriated in any form. Our collective heritage — encompassing language, history, attire, artifacts, creativity, and innovations — is the product of centuries of sacrifice, resilience, and divine blessing from Eledumare. It is our duty to protect it and hand it down untainted to the generations to come.

We affirm that art should foster love, peace, and inclusion, but never at the expense of authenticity. Yoruba identity must not be erased, diluted, or claimed by others. It is ours, and we will defend it.

OBABINRIN ADERONKE OKELEYE
President, Omoluabi Parapo Conservative Group

ADIO SALAWUDEEN
Team lead, Research and Policy Committee.

The abducted Ward Head of Shuwaka (Sarkin Shuwaka) from Kyaram District, Garga Community, Kanam Local Government Area of Plateau State, Mallam Hudu Hassan Barau, has been murdered by his captors, suspected to be bandits terrorising the council.

According to a community source, the Ward Head was abducted from his palace seven days ago and taken into the bush, with security personnel unable to rescue him before he was killed.

A statement by the Kanam Development Association, signed by its Chairman, Barrister Garba G. Aliyu, and Secretary Shehu Kanam, confirmed that the Ward Head was kidnapped seven days ago and killed on Sunday by the bandits who abducted him.

The statement noted that his lifeless body was recovered from the bush near Wanka Forest in the local government area on Monday morning, adding that the gruesome killing has further heightened panic beyond the affected community.

“We are consumed by grief and outrage as we received the tragic news of the death of one of our community leaders, Malam Hudu Hassan Barau, the Ward Head of Shuwaka (Sarkin Shuwaka) from Kyaram District, Garga Community, Kanam Local Government Area, Plateau State, who was brutally abducted about six days ago and killed by bandits yesterday.

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“His lifeless body was recovered from the bush near Wanka Forest this morning. We are still grappling with the shock and pain of this senseless killing and the continued bandit attacks across communities in the Garga area.”

The Association stated that the heart-wrenching incident is a stark reminder of the persistent insecurity and banditry that has plagued communities in the state for far too long, adding that despite repeated pleas and warnings, governments at all levels have failed to take decisive action to address the menace.

It emphasized that the people of Garga and surrounding areas are living in constant fear and urged leaders at various levels to take immediate and concrete steps to ensure safety, protect lives, and enhance security.

The Association specifically called on Governor Caleb Mutfwang to declare a state of emergency in the Garga Community of Kanam Local Government Area and to deploy adequate security personnel to tackle the banditry menace.

At the time of filing this report, the Police Public Relations Officer of the Plateau State Command could not be reached for confirmation.