

# TRAGIC!

## Police woman allegedly raped and murdered by bandits in the presence of police husband

**Ayodele Ale**

**S**uru is the Yoruba word for patience. But if there was one virtue lacked by residents of Suru Street, opposite the secretariat of Agege Local Government, Lagos, in the early hours of Thursday, January 4, it was patience.

The residents were simply inconsolable as they took turns to view the mutilated corpse of Cecilia Mbang, a female police officer attached to Elere Police Station, in her matrimonial bedroom.

"*Oluwa o, Eyi po ju o* (God, this is too much)," wailed Cecilia's landlord, Mr Mufutau Desiye. "I cannot stop wondering why they did this to such a nice woman," he lamented.

Most shocking to Cecilia's neighbours was her alleged violation by bandits who invaded her residence at Number 17, before they shot her dead in the presence of her husband, Mr John Mbang, who is also a police officer.

"The robbers, numbering three, took turns to rape her, while some of the clothes in the house were packed on top of her husband, who was forced to lie face down," a resident of the building said.

Palpable fear pervaded the entire house when Saturday Punch visited on Thursday, as some tenants were yet to venture out of their rooms. Some of them prayed fervently for divine intervention.

A young lady who resides in the house said, "I think they suspected that the woman would recognise them. They kept telling her that they knew her and the police stations where she had worked, and that they were there to deal with her."

Some accounts said, after they had finished assaulting Cecilia sexually, they attempted to rape a young girl who lives with her and her husband. But she pleaded with the bandits not to rape her younger sister as she (the sister) had just undergone a surgery. "Even her husband had to plead that since they had finished with her, they should please leave the small girl alone," a neighbour said, pleading anonymity.

"And when it appeared that the robbers were determined to rape the young girl, Cecilia made to obstruct them. That was when they gripped and pumelled her. They then tied her to the bed and fired a shot that hit her in the eye and scattered her brain.

"They did not touch the husband at all.



•Cecilia Mbang

They only used clothes to cover his eyes while they were raping his wife," the source added.

After this, the bandits were said to have ransacked the room and picked some of the couple's belongings, before moving to other rooms and buildings in the vicinity.

Jimoh Olaniyan, an octogenarian who was led into his apartment with a gun, narrated his gruelling experience at the hands of the armed robbers to *Saturday Punch*. "I got out around 4 am to urinate, and was about entering the house when they asked me to stop. One of the tenants in the house was also pursued into her room, where they made away with a hand-

set."

Narrating his ordeal, Adeyinka Daramola, another neighbour who was also a victim of the robbery attack, said, "I heard the sound of a kick at the door around 3am, and I quickly woke my wife up because she was fast asleep. I suspected that armed robbers were around. It was my first experience and it was so scary. You need to see the kind of sophisticated guns they were dangling. They were young boys between the ages of 20 and 25."

According to him, he had to tell his wife that it was better to cooperate with them. "The two of us were lying on the bed when they came in. They said, 'Hello, we are

special armed robbers,' and I replied, 'You are welcome.'

"I told them that they came at a time there was not much money in the house, but they replied that they would waste me and waste my wife if I did not cooperate. They collected our money and handsets."

The bandits were also said to have ransacked the room of one Femi, who was asked to surrender his laptop. When he told them that he did not have one, they collected his mobile phones and other valuable things they could find in the room.

They were said to be proceeding to other rooms when a member of the gang, who was keeping vigil outside, signalled to them that the neighbours were trooping out.

At that point, the robbers took to their heels, leaving behind a pair of bathroom slippers one of them wore to the place.

It was after the robbers had escaped that the havoc they did in the police officers' room became known to the neighbours. "Given the way the husband was behaving after they left, it was quite clear that he was no longer himself," said a former councillor in Ogun State and resident of the street, Hon Ogundairo Biliami.

The tragedy, as learnt, may have compounded the misfortune of Cecilia's husband, who was said to be recuperating from a motor accident he had recently. "The accident affected one of his legs and he has not fully recovered," a neighbour said.

There were no clues on the whereabouts of Cecilia's husband when *Saturday Punch* visited the house on Thursday, but colleagues of the deceased at Elere Police Station were said to have been contacted; while her body was deposited at the Ikeja General Hospital mortuary.

Desiye said concerning the deceased and her husband, "They have been living here for close to 10 years and the couple have been so nice. She prepared food for me during Christmas. They have become more like my children. You would hardly know that they are police officers, and they hardly had disagreements. But anytime a disagreement occurred, I was usually the first to be contacted."

The spokesman of Lagos State Police Command, Mr Bode Ojajuni, a Superintendent of Police, said the case was yet to be reported at the command headquarters.

"We are yet to be informed about it. As soon as it is reported, we will investigate it," he said.

