

Kunle Falayi

X A midnight prayer session in the apartment of Mrs. Solomon Otuoche, ended in tragedy last Saturday after armed robbers invaded Iyewo Estate, Akesan, along the Igando-LASU Road in Alimosho Local Government Area of Lagos and shot the woman for raising the alarm.

She died on the way to hospital. Another woman, identified as Mrs. Emeka, who was shot in both legs in the same house in which Otuoche was attacked, however, survived.

A landlord on Ola Oluwa Street, Iyewo Estate, Mr. Austin Nwudu, told *Saturday PUNCH* that he first noticed the robbers as they entered the area from the top floor of a two-storey building in which his apartment was located.

He said, "I live upstairs and saw all that happened on that fateful day. I started hearing the barking of dogs in the neighbourhood about 2am and this probably woke me up.

"It was strange because the dogs did not stop barking. As I looked through my window, I saw armed men (with guns) in my neighbour's compound, banging at the door of a tenant downstairs. They succeeded in entering the apartment."

The house the robbers entered on that night is just two houses away from his.

As his wife gathered the children to hide them in a room, he furiously called other landlords in the area.

He said, "My wife gathered my children, locked them up in a room and started praying. I called my neighbours, the Rapid Response Squad hotline and the Divisional Police Officer of Igando.

"A policeman later informed me on the telephone that their team had arrived at our gate. We called our security man to open the gate. The policemen started shooting into the air and other landlords started shouting, 'Thief, thief.'"

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Robbers shoot, kill prayer

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However, while the police shot into the air, our correspondent learnt that the robbers, who were operating at No. 8, Ola Oluwa Street, became impatient.

Two shots went off in the house and the robbers escaped afterwards, the residents told *Saturday PUNCH*.

A resident of the area, who pleaded anonymity, said the policemen were able to gain entrance into the compound after the robbers had left.

"It was when they got in that they saw the two women in a pool of blood. The policemen took the women to Igando General Hospital. Mama Emma did not even get there before she died," the resident said.

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learnt that Mama Emma incurred the wrath of the robbers because she raised the alarm.

Residents said the woman who survived was shot because the robbers were angry that



shoot, kill prayer warrior during vigil

she failed to stop Mama Emma from shouting.

The corpse of the deceased was later taken to a private mortuary at Akesan.

Sunny, who lives in one of the apartments in the building where the women were shot, said he was lucky that the robbers did not get to his apartment before they left.

"I heard a strange noise in our building that night and I peeped out of my apartment to see what the noise was all about. That was when I saw the heavily-armed men numbering about seven.

"I rushed back into my apartment and started to shout, 'Thief, thief.' My hope was that other residents of the area would help to raise the alarm. I was happy they did because the robbers left soon after.

"The other woman who survived the shooting just got married. She was in the deceased woman's apartment for a night prayer session," Sunny said.

Our correspondent learnt that

robberies are regular occurrences around Igando, Akesan and Obadore.

"People are often killed in robbery attacks around here. The police DPO at Igando needs to arrange for a police post around here. The Commissioner of Police needs to see to the establishment of the post to cover Akesan and Obadore areas," a resident said.

A police source told our correspondent that the problem associated with policing the area had to do with the fact that the area under the jurisdiction of the Igando division is too large.

The telephone lines of the spokesperson for the police command in the state, Ngozi Braide, indicated they were switched off when our correspondent called her on Wednesday.

But the DPO of Igando, Mr. Olugbemiga Adeoye, confirmed the incident on the telephone on Wednesday.

"The residents need to notify the command headquarters for a police post to be stationed in Akesan. It is not really in my place to arrange that.

"At the moment, I don't know if they have raised any letter to that effect or made any request at the police

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