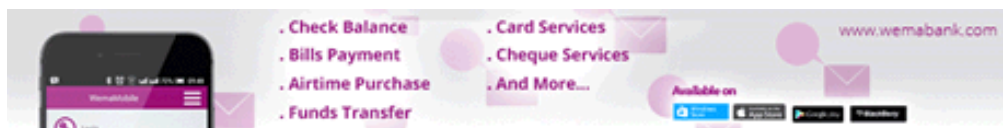


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Man dies during church deliverance in Benin

JULY 9, 2015 : ALEXANDER OKERE 6 COMMENTS


Osayande Ekhatore

| credits: Alexander Okere

There was confusion on Okwanga Street, around Uselu Quarters, in the Egor Local Government Area of Edo State on Tuesday when a 45-year-old man, Osayande Ekhatore, died during a deliverance session at a Pentecostal church in the area.

It was gathered that the man had been taken to the church, Hope Ministry, also known as Holy Ghost Deliverance Centre, by his relatives for spiritual cleansing on Monday, due to an undisclosed ailment.

He was also said to have indicated interest in the spiritual exercise.

It was, however, learnt that tragedy struck when some residents heard a loud cry from the church only to discover the lifeless body of the deceased on the floor of the church.

The death of the man was said to have attracted a loud crowd of curious residents and mourners.

Some angry youths were said to have stormed the church and vandalised property.

One of the residents, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said Osayande "probably fell on a hard object", as there were blood stains on his head.

"I think he must have hit his head somewhere. I saw blood on his head when his body was placed in a vehicle," the resident said.

The father of the deceased, Pa Ekhatore, said he knew that the deliverance session had gone wrong when his late son was thrown to the ground, with his hands and legs tied.

"They tied him up and threw him to the ground. Then, they poured a bucket of water on his body.

"When his mother queried the action, they said that was the usual practice. Then, they said they wanted him to rest; but after about five minutes she came out crying that Osayande was dead."

Osayande's sister, who did not give her name, lamented that her brother was "beaten to death by his deliverers".

She said, "They beat him to death. They removed the clothes he wore, bathed him and gave him another

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clothes."

The Resident Pastor of the church, Mrs. Isoken Ekundaye, denied beating the sick man to death.

"We don't kill here. We don't beat here. If they bring insane people, we heal," Ekundaye said.

When contacted, the Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Stephen Onwochei, said the pastor had been arrested.

The police spokesperson added that the case had been transferred to the State Criminal Investigation Department for investigation.

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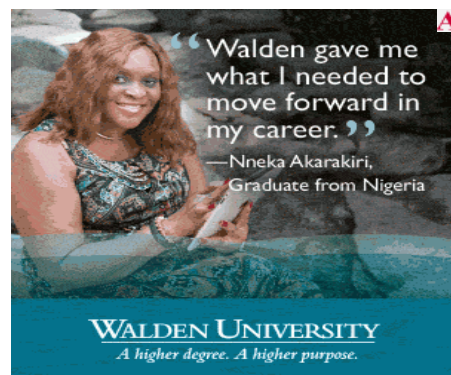
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