

Family cries for justice as OPC members kill Lagos security guard, suspects set free

Samson Folarin 24 March 2021

Kindly share this story: [f](#) [t](#) [w](#) [in](#)



• Victim's family tackles mortuary over missing wrist

The family of a Lagos-based Togolese, Frank Afanvi, explains to **SAMSON FOLARIN** how members of the Oodua People's Congress lured him from a church in November last year and tortured him to death over alleged theft of a car battery

Lured from church

The family of 38-year-old Frank Afanvi were smarting from his alleged murder by members of the Oodua People's Congress when they discovered that his wrist also disappeared from the Lagos Mainland Hospital's morgue.

They said neither the police nor the mortuary attendants provided any answer to the family on the missing body part, arousing suspicions of possible ritual use. The victim's brother, Peter, lamented that the police at the State Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department, Yaba, bungled investigations into Frank's death. He alleged that those behind the killing were released without any charges. *PUNCH Panorama* gathered that Frank, a French teacher, ran out of job due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Togolese was said to have become a security guard on Abiola Farm Estate, Ayobo, in a desperate bid to fend for his wife and four children. Our correspondent learnt that he was arranging instruments in preparation for a Sunday service in his local church in November 2020 when he received a call to for his first salary. **READ ALSO: NDLEA seizes UK, Australia-bound cocaine, heroin in courier firms** According to his brother, the excited Frank left his wife and kids in the church, Christ is Able Apostolic Mission, Amule, Ayobo, and ran off to meet his employers.

Peter said at the end of the church service, everyone became apprehensive when he did not return. "While we were returning from evangelism, we saw three motorcycles. One of us spotted Frank on one of them; he had been beaten to a coma. We ran after then demanded what he did wrong. "The OPC man told us that he stole a car battery where he was working. After some minutes, we traced them to their base on Alaja Road, Ayobo. "When we got there, we saw him with the OPC gang and some community members, torturing him. We pleaded that they should leave him and we could negotiate with them. I also quickly sent someone down to the Ayobo Police Station to bring the police.

"But while the man was going, it started raining and he could not make it to the station. The OPC leader, Waliu, demanded N150,000 from us for bail, including carton of beer and some alcoholic drinks," he added.

The victim's brother said he called their pastor, who asked them to return to raise the money.

Frank was, however, taken to another location, where he was allegedly subjected to another round of torture.

Peter said by the following day, they were informed that he had been taken to the Ayobo Police Station.

"When we got there, the police told us that he was in a hospital. They did not want to break the news of his death to us because of his wife. They later said some members brought his corpse the previous night, alleging that he stole a car battery.

"The police said they arrested and detained all of them, including some community leaders and transferred them to the State Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department, Yaba, on November 29," he added.

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE: [Daughter narrates how father strangled wife in Ondo](#)

'Frank was framed'

The brother said some residents informed the family that Frank was framed because the OPC wanted to take over his security job.

Peter noted that the OPC in the community believed that they were entitled to the estate he guarded and wondered why "a foreigner" who was also not a member of their group would take their job.

He claimed that the battery thief who allegedly framed Frank confessed that the OPC members promised to release him if he mentioned the name of the deceased.

Peter expressed shock that despite evidence, the SCIID released the suspects.

"The Ayobo Police Station transferred nine suspects to them. But Pantti released almost all of them. They connived with a journalist who promised to help us, an OPC, and released seven of them.

"The remaining two that they claimed to have arraigned, I saw one of them, Waliu, two weeks ago on the street. I called ASP Musa, the Investigating Police Officer, told him to give us details of the case and the court name, but he did not respond," Peter said.

Wrist disappears from morgue

Peter also wondered what happened to Frank's corpse at the morgue.

He said during a visit to the morgue in January 2021, he discovered that his wrist was missing.

“It was a complete body that we saw the first time. But when we went there with a doctor from LASUTH for the autopsy, his wrist was gone. I challenged the mortuaries, but they did not answer me. The doctor was also angry. He told them that if the police brought an incomplete body, they would have indicated that in the form they filled while lodging the body. We need answers,” he added.

READ ALSO: Controversy surrounds apprentice's death in custody over businessman's missing N14m goods

The police from the SCIID were said to be witnesses of this.

The Head of Public Affairs, Lagos State Ministry of Health, Tunbosun Ogunbanwo, said those in charge of the morgue were investigating the missing wrist. He said a response would soon be released on the matter.

Frank was hard working – Neighbours

PUNCH Panorama gathered that Frank was born in Lagos.

While his parents returned to Togo in the early 80s due to the executive order mandating migrants without proper documents to leave the country (Ghana Must Go), Frank remained in Lagos with his uncle.

After his murder, his wife and children were said to have relocated to their village in Togo.

Frank's neighbours testified to his good conduct, saying they could vouch for his hard work and honesty.

“I have spent 14 years in this community and not once did I hear that he stole anything. I met him on this street. Instead for him to steal, he would beg. He used to say that if he would steal, God should kill him. There is no menial job that he would not do to feed his family.

"He used to be a teacher, but he became a guard because of COVID-19. His children have become fatherless and his wife, a widow. The people who killed him died to die," a neighbour said.

We didn't torture him, says OPC leader

The leader of the OPC, Ogunbayo Waliu, when contacted by our correspondent, insisted that the deceased was a thief.

Waliu also claimed that Frank died after falling off a motorcycle, saying he was not tortured.

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE: [Rivers boat helmsman detained for five days by IGP team demands justice](#)

He said, "A car battery thief was caught by landlords. The landlords called the OPC to come into the matter. When the thief was interrogated, he said he (Frank) was one that gave him the battery.

"He (Frank) also confessed to the crime and said they always removed car batteries together. So, we asked him to take us to where he usually sold the batteries. He took us to the place when he pushed those on the motorcycle with him. All these are documented at the police station. Nobody tortured him."

The OPC official refused to disclose the circumstance under which he came out of prison custody.

However, video and documentary evidence obtained by our correspondent revealed that Frank was beaten to a stupor by a mob suspected to be members of the gang. A clip seen by *PUNCH Panorama* showed moments the mob flogged the deceased, as another kicked his head, while he begged for his life.

Surprisingly, the co-accused battery thief was left untouched by the gang.

A copy of the autopsy report obtained by our correspondent also indicated that Frank's death was primarily caused by "16 multiple injuries", and secondary "cervical sharp pain."

The autopsy, dated January 25, 2021, was signed by one Dr O.J. Olayiwola of the Department of Pathology and Forensic Medicine, Lagos State University Teaching Hospital, Ikeja.

The Police Public Relations Officer, Muyiwa Adejobi, confirmed the case, adding that two suspects were charged with murder.

"After the autopsy, the family came to the police to report that the wrist of the corpse was missing. They were advised to report that to the authorities. It is not an issue for the police to deal with; the mortuary attendants can answer that. But for the suspects, they have been charged to court," he added.

Controversial release

Our correspondent obtained a copy of the charge sheet, which indicated that 46-year-old Waliu and one Mukaila Salami, 42, were arraigned before the Magistrate's Court for Frank's murder on December 10, 2020.

The Chief Magistrate, Mrs A.O. Adedayo, also ordered that they be remanded till January 12, 2021 pending the release of legal advice from the Directorate of Public Prosecutions.

Our correspondent learnt that the men were remanded in the custody of the SCIID, Yaba, pending when their COVID-19 results would be out for their transfer to a custodial centre.

When our correspondent contacted the Investigating Police Officer, Assistant Superintendent of Police, Musa Olorode, on how the accused persons got out despite facing murder charges, he declined comment.

But an officer aware of the matter expressed surprise at the development, saying it had stirred rumpus at the SCIID.

"The two OPC men were charged to court because they were those clearly indicted. The community leaders claimed that they released the suspects to their families around 10am, but they held on to the suspects till 8pm. They were charged with murder and remanded. While we were awaiting the DPP's order, we heard that they had been released. I don't know how it happened," he added.

The senior officer said a statement obtained from Frank's co-accused showed he admitted to stealing the battery and implicated the deceased.

The officer said the 16-year-old battery thief was released because he was a police principal witness and a victim of the torture.

PUNCH Panorama contacted the DPP to know if it was aware that the two defendants were released.

A senior official of the DPP said the agency never gave such an order.

He confided in our correspondent that the legal advice had also not been released because the police did not attach the autopsy report to the case file.

"It is what we are waiting for to issue the legal advice. We are communicating with the SCIID about it as we speak," the source said.

Frank’s brother, Peter, said he collected the autopsy result in January, wondering why the police had yet to get it and forward to the DPP.

The police spokesperson, Adejobi, said suspects remanded could not be released without a court order.

He said, “It’s a murder case; they cannot be released. Once a case has been brought to court, police do not have powers for administrative bail again. So if they are in police custody again, it is either they are in the correctional centre or court granted them bail and they perfected the bail conditions.”

Copyright PUNCH.

All rights reserved. This material, and other digital content on this website, may not be reproduced, published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed in whole or in part without express written permission from PUNCH.

Contact: theeditor@punchng.com

Tags: LAGOS SECURITY GUARD OPC MEMBERS

Kindly share this story: [f](#) [t](#) [w](#) [in](#)

Download PUNCH NEWS app:



Recommended Stories



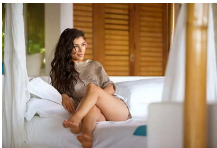
US: Videos showing Asian Americans being attacked provoke outrage and fear



Apply Now! Canada Welcomes Over 300,000 New Immigrants in 2020.



Taribo West under fire for prophesying Trump's victory



The Cost of Real Estate in Miami Might Surprise You

