

# Lagos church dogs stray, bite passerby to death

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Abule Egba area

Two German shepherds guarding a Catholic church have gone missing after biting a man, Hashiru Isah, to death outside the church premises in the Abule Egba area of Lagos State.

*PUNCH Metro* gathered that the unguarded dogs left the church premises and strayed onto the street, where they attacked Isah, who was on his way home around 11.30pm on Tuesday, September 27, 2022.

During the attack, the dogs reportedly bit Isah in different parts of his body.

He was rushed to the Orile Agege General Hospital where he died.

A relative of the deceased reported the incident at the Oke-Odo Police Station, from where policemen were drafted to the scene to commence investigation.

A source told *PUNCH Metro* that Isah's family members, who were pained by his death, retrieved his corpse for burial in accordance with Islamic rites.

"The attack happened in the night. The dogs strayed onto the streets and bit him to death. The dogs are still missing; someone took them away. The victim's family members are Hausa; they were not interested in police investigation and went ahead to bury his corpse," the source said.

In his reaction to the incident, the state Police Public Relations Officer, SP Benjamin Hundeyin, said efforts were ongoing to locate the dogs.

He said, "The case file is still open; we haven't closed it. But we can't proceed with any investigation now because the deceased's family has declined to assist with any investigation.

“The corpse of the deceased was released on compassionate grounds. We have also tried to verify things as we keep all options open. The exact circumstances have yet to be established because this recently happened.

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“Findings are still being made. But indications showed that the dogs strayed onto the street and attacked a passerby. The passerby was taken to a hospital, where he later died.

“The general overseer of the church was not around; only one caretaker was at home taking care of the dogs and he has made a statement as we await the arrival of the owner of the premises and the dogs. We are still trying to locate the dogs.”

Reacting to the incident, a Professor of Public Health, University of Ilorin, Tanimola Akande, described the action of the person who took the dogs away as criminal.

Akande said, “We call dogs like that stray dogs; some of these dogs are not vaccinated, and they also get infected with rabies and become wild.

“When they bite human beings, they transfer rabies, a fatal disease. Such dogs should be captured and beheaded.

“In this case, the dogs can have rabies, but rabies does not kill immediately. Usually, the person that is bitten barks like a dog before dying. If the symptoms are not there, it is not likely to be the cause of the death.

“It is the injury that is the cause of the death. The most important thing is that the dogs need to be restrained; there shouldn't be stray dogs. In the developed world, if dogs are outside, somebody is holding them.

“If dogs move anyhow, there are veterinarians that catch such dogs. Some of the captured dogs are killed and some owners will have to pay to get their dogs back. The Nigerian government needs to return to those days when stray dogs are captured and dealt with.”

A veterinary doctor, Funmilayo Alao, said the owner of the dogs had yet to provide them because the case was not reported to the right quarters.

She said, “There is a dog law in Lagos State that could be used to arrest the owner of the dogs. Your dog cannot just bite somebody or step out on the streets. It is because the case was not reported to the right quarters. The case could be reported at the Alausa Veterinary Department.”