

CAN mourns as kidnappers kill RCCG pastor, seven churchgoers rescued

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The Christian Association of Nigeria in Ogun State, on Sunday, expressed sadness over the killing of a pastor, Kayode Oluwakemi, by kidnappers who abducted seven worshippers all of whom had been rescued in the state.

PUNCH Metro gathered that the churchgoers were conducting a vigil at the Redeemed Christian Church of God, Desires of Nations Parish, when the kidnappers invaded the premises of the church at Abule-

Ori, in the Obafemi Owode Local Government Area of Ogun State, killed the pastor and kidnapped seven worshippers.

Reacting to the development, the General Secretary, CAN, Dr Stephen Adeyemi, urged the government to step up efforts to stop insecurity around worship centres in the state.

He said, "It is a very sad incident. And sincerely, this brings to mind a kind of question that, is it now a sin for the worshipers to gather to worship God? We are talking about being in the church, our sanctuary.

We are talking about worshipers gathering in the temple to pray, praise and sing and all these attacks are coming to the children of God right in the house of God.

"Sincerely speaking, it is worrisome and it is already creating fear in the kind of society we find ourselves in. It is like saying that we are not safe. This has happened before; now it is happening again, under a new government.

"It means we need to cry to the government the more. I believe that this problem has a solution. We are crying to the government.

The government needs to look into this issue of insecurity. How these people come freely into the house of God, operate and go away like that. The government needs to help us with this."

The State So-Safe Corps Commander, Soji Ganzallo, while confirming the incident, said his officers killed one of the kidnappers, adding that the abducted victims had been rescued.

Ganzallo, in a statement by the So-Safe Corps Director of Information and Public Relations, Moruf Yusuf, said, "The special

operation team of the corps in the Owode-Egba Zonal Command, under ACC Jimoh Omoniyi, received a distress call that some of the members of the Redeemed Christian Church of God, Desires of Nations Parish, under Ogun Province 22, Abule-Ori, in the Obafemi Owode LGA were attacked during a vigil, while seven members of the church were kidnapped and the pastor killed.

"The seven victims were rescued unhurt while one of the kidnappers was killed and many of the suspects sustained serious injury during a

gunfire exchange."

Also confirming the incident, the state Police Public Relations Officer, Omolola Odutola, said one of the pastors of the church, Adesina Oyeseun, reported the case to the police.

She said, "The hoodlums were shooting sporadically, as a result, a pastor, Kayode Oluwakemi, 56, sustained bullet wounds in his chest and unfortunately died on the spot. The kidnapped victims have regained their freedom. An effort is in progress to arrest other fleeing suspects that are still at large."