

# Hotels of Horror: Shocking tales of

Across Nigeria, chilling stories have emerged of hotel guests who checked into rooms, only to disappear without a trace—or worse, to be found mutilated. In the shadows of these horrific incidents, disturbing accounts suggest that hotel employees, driven by greed, coercion, or even direct complicity, play vital roles in aiding the murderers, either by unwittingly or intentionally facilitating such grisly crimes. **VICTOR AYENI** writes on the dark underbelly of Nigeria's hospitality industry



Century Home Hotel

Photo: InfoDaily

The morning of March 21 began like any other when Pastor Sunday Ogofotha bade goodbye to his family and set out from his house in Lagos to his home state, Delta State.

A native of the Owhegbo community in the Isoko North Local Government Area of the state, he had planned to attend his brother's burial, which was scheduled to take place in the village the next day.

On arriving in Otowe late that day, the cleric lodged at Century Home Hotel in the Owhegbo community and settled in for an evening of tranquility, hoping to wake up the next day to attend the burial event.

Sadly, that day never came, as Sunday did not make it out of the hotel alive.

The next day, as the Ogofotha family gathered for the burial service, Sunday was nowhere to be seen, and his phones were switched off.

By the second day, apprehension had crept in, and the family began to frantically call one another to inquire about the cleric's whereabouts.

Fortunately, on Friday evening, Sunday had informed his wife of the name of the hotel where he was lodging and his room number — a piece of information that ultimately exposed the evil minds that orchestrated the cleric's murder.

## Uncovering a gruesome murder

Some worried family members reportedly called Mrs Rhoda Ogofotha to ask if her husband had returned to Lagos. But their hearts sank when she informed them that he had not yet returned from the trip.

Her efforts to reach Sunday on the phone abortive, as his phones had switched off since Friday evening — an unusual practice that raised some suspicion.

Saturday PUNCH gathered that Rhoda called her in-laws and informed them of what her husband had told her before they lost communication.

With this information, the family members went to Century Home Hotel to ask about Sunday's whereabouts, but the hotel manager, Godwin Iboirode, claimed that he had checked out. This prompted the family to leave the hotel in disappointment. However, they returned there again, this time with firm conviction that someone was hiding something.

Our correspondent gathered that when the Ogofotha family members re-visited the hotel, a heated argument erupted when they insisted on searching all the rooms — a suggestion which the hotel management allegedly tried to resist.

By this time, the case had attracted the intervention of the community vigilance group, which forcefully broke the door of a particular room and entered it to find a gory sight: Sunday's

dead body tied to the bed with multiple stab wounds.

## Shocking confessions

When the case was reported to the Delta State Police Command, the hotel owner, Joseph Ogbole; the hotel manager, Iboirode; the security guard; and two other staff members were arrested.

An investigation revealed that Sunday had been murdered on Friday night, and his killers, alleged to be hotel staff, also took his ATM cards and withdrew money from his bank account the next day.

A source in the community alleged that the hotel had been a haven for suspected kidnappers and murderers.

"Pastor Sunday is not the only victim of their murder. Sometime last year, there was a story of a POS girl named Bethel who was said to have been killed in that hotel, too. Only God knows how many other people have innocently lodged there and fallen victim to them," the source told Saturday PUNCH.

In a video footage posted by Tony Talks Crime, a woman believed to be the wife of the security guard confessed that her husband had murdered the POS lady and buried her on the hotel premises.

According to her, her husband allegedly killed the lady because she accused him of using a fake alert to withdraw N10,000 from her account. Bethel was said to have recovered her money, but the man vowed to kill her in retaliation.

"My husband called her into the hotel; she is a friend of his. That day, he called her on the phone and took her into a room. It was around 7 pm one evening. I don't know how he killed her because I was in our room. It was when he came out around midnight that he told me he had killed her," she said.

In his confession, Iboirode, in a video posted on X by the Delta State Police Public Relations Officer, Bright Edeaf, on March 29, claimed that after Sunday lodged at the hotel on March 21, he was approached by two young men who wanted to see the cleric.

"One of them was dark-skinned, and the other was fair-skinned. They told me they wanted to take something from him (Sunday), and I said 'okay.' Later, the guys told me that when they collect the thing from the man, they would give me N5m.

"The dark-skinned guy, named Johnson, later came out of the room, but I didn't see the fair-skinned one, named Clement, come out. After an hour had passed, I went to check the room. When I got to that particular room, I found out that the door had been locked with a padlock. Clement had left through the exit door inside the room that people could use to leave the building.

"Later, in the evening, I began to perceive some odour from

the locked door. I knew the man inside was dead, and I was afraid. I decided to escape. I ran to a woman's house to spend the night, and when it was morning, I came out to find out how the issue was. That was when the vigilantes and community boys attacked me," he said.

Saturday PUNCH gathered that the hotel was owned by Iboirode's uncle, Oghole, who claimed to be unaware of his nephew's criminal activities.

Oghole was said to have recruited Iboirode to help manage the hotel, but he was implicated by the community for complicity in Sunday's murder, which ultimately led to the hotel being razed by angry residents.

Iboirode further disclosed, "I encountered Johnson and Clement before, around December last year, and they gave me N300,000. That time, they brought one girl to the hotel, but since that time, I have not seen the girl," he added.

According to the police, a POS machine belonging to the girl believed to be Bethel was found in Iboirode's house during a search initiated by detectives.

"Johnson was the one who handed over the POS machine to me. I don't know whether it was the guy or the girl who owned the POS machine. But I can confirm that Sunday was murdered in his room by Clement and Johnson," he added.

Edeaf noted that the two suspects and the manager of the hotel have been apprehended, but they are still "investigating to unravel what eventually happened because, to the best of our knowledge, they have not given us the full details."

The PPRO confirmed that Ogofotha was stabbed "multiple times until he died," but "he was able to reach out to his wife to tell her where he was before they no longer heard from him. This is why information is vital; telling your loved ones where you are is key."

## Shallow graves in Anambra hotel

In January, another grisly discovery was made on the premises of Udoka Golden Point Hotel and Suites in Umueze, Anambra State, when more than 30 shallow graves were uncovered.

Decomposing bodies, expended live bullets, and shrines were also found by security operatives who raided and subsequently demolished the hotel situated in Oba Idemili in the North Central area of the state.

"It was a sad thing that the hotel was used for kidnapping and possibly ritual purposes. The upper floor of the facility had 30 partitions for curious use, as well as a shrine. And that is not your everyday hotel; certainly, no government or authority would have approved of such a use.

"Since it's used for kidnapping operations, it's automatically forfeited to the government, so that is the law that has been



Sophia



Adegoke



Isaac



Ogofotha



Awuda



# how staff collude to murder guests

activated. I am not aware if the owner of the hotel has turned himself in to the police. If he did so, maybe today, but he has to answer for his activities. There is no way he can extricate himself from the criminal activities that were happening in the hotel when it was in use.

"We are disturbed and worried about this because it may not be the only facility where you can have such activity. In the last two or three weeks, several buildings used for kidnapping activities have been brought down, the state Commissioner for Information, Dr Law Mefor, said.

## Killed for ritual, others

As the story of the hotel murders in Delta and Anambra states spread across social media, there were different explanations for what the motive of the murder could have been.

"It is ritual killing," Wisdom Ovie, a father of two, told our correspondent. "If you investigate, you will see that some of these hotels kill people for money rituals. This used to be more common in the 90s when they killed people in hotels and no one knew about their whereabouts. There was one like that in 1996, the Otokoto ritual killings in Owerri, Imo State."

## Infamous Otokoto killing

The Otokoto killing occurred on September 19, 1996, when an 11-year-old schoolboy and groundnut hawk, Anthony Okoronkwo, was drugged and killed by 'money ritual' murderers inside a hotel.

The young lad was reported to have been lured into the hotel by a gardener, Innocent Ekeanyanwu, who offered the boy a cold beverage and carried him into the hotel after he became unconscious.

The 11-year-old was said to have been decapitated, had his liver removed and penis severed. His dismembered body was allegedly buried within the hotel premises.

## Gory murders

Like feral animals on a rampage for blood, so were the attackers of Olamide Akinolu, who eventually snuffed life out of him in November last year.

The unidentified individuals descended on the 30-year-old, who had gone to the hotel to meet a man to whom he had paid ₦50,000 to rent musical instruments in Wadoye, Ife Local Government Area of Ogun State.

While the Ogun State Police Command did not disclose the motive behind the assault, sources told *Saturday PUNCH* that Akinolu began vomiting blood after the alleged attack.

"He sustained serious injuries and was taken to the hospital, where the doctor pronounced him dead. This prompted a group of people to organise an attack on the hotel."

"The hotel manager was injured, and several instruments were damaged during the violence. Our officers were dispatched to the scene to restore order. Meanwhile, the body has been taken to a mortuary in Olambe for examination and autopsy," the state PPRO, Omolola Adetola, disclosed.

A year earlier, a similar incident had occurred in a hotel in Awka, Anambra State, when the lifeless body of a graduate of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Chinyere Awuda, was found abandoned near its swimming pool.

The 30-year-old was allegedly beaten to death on July 15 after she was accused of picking up money being sprayed during a birthday party at the hotel.

At her burial, the parents of the deceased, Mr and Mrs Patrick Awuda, lamented that their daughter died an "undeserved death."

"She was our fifth child. The news of her sudden death came to us as a rude shock. We never expected that her promising life with a bright future would be cut short in such a manner."

"We heard that she was beaten to death by a group of boys, and her corpse was found near an abandoned swimming pool in the hotel where she went with her friends to celebrate someone's birthday."

"Although the police said the autopsy proved she drowned, we believe she was killed as they have refused to release the CCTV footage of the incident. What can we do? We have left vengeance to God. We are going to miss our loving and caring daughter," they said.

## An unsolved murder

In a more bizarre incident in 2022, several suspects were arrested after a student from Delta State's University of



Science and Technology, Ozoro, Adegor Sophia, was found murdered in a hotel room.

Edafe said some management staff, including the hotel manager, had been arrested in connection with the death of the student.

According to the police, although Sophia's body was not mutilated, her arms and legs were tied, indicating that she was alive when she was restrained.

About two months earlier, in the Federal Capital Territory, a 21-year-old lady, Esther Isaac, was also reportedly murdered in a hotel in the Gwaninpa area.

Esther's brother, Emmanuel, in an interview with *Saturday PUNCH*, accused the police of humiliating him and alleged that the hotel management had tried to cover up the crime by claiming that their CCTV was faulty the day Esther lodged in the facility.

He said, "We live in Calabar, and I tried calling her two numbers and left her a message on WhatsApp, but she did not respond, which was unusual. I kept calling. Later, a police officer, Inspector Dajunma, picked up the call and told me my sister was dead."

"He asked me to come down to their division in Abuja. I was in Abuja the following day, and the police officers tried to work things out, but the hotel owner shouted at me."

"They asked if I had anyone, and I told them that it was myself and my late sister; we lost our parents a long time ago. They took advantage of my situation. Inspector Dajunma said maybe the case should be transferred to another place, so I left for Calabar. I came back to the station to ask for an update, but the police officers shouted at me."

In her response, the FCT police spokesperson, Josephine Adeh, denied the allegation levelled against the police by the deceased's brother.

"The allegation against us is wrong and unfair. The case is, however, under investigation," Adeh said.

On November 5, 2021, an Abuja-based chartered accountant, Timothy Adegoke, travelled to Ife-Ife, Osun State, to write his Master of Business Administration examinations at the Obafemi Awolowo Distance Learning Centre.

Moments after he checked into Hilton Hotels and Resorts, a hotel owned by Dr Ramon Adedoyin, the father of three, placed a phone call to his wife to let her know he had arrived at his destination.

Unfortunately, that was the very last phone conversation Adegoke had with his wife.

On November 6, 2021, Adegoke's wife repeatedly tried to reach the 37-year-old on the phone, but his calls were never answered.

Sensing that something was amiss with her husband's silence, she alerted her in-laws. Two days after friends and family members could not reach Adegoke, and he was missing

at the examination venue, he was declared missing.

After an intense search by the police, on November 15, 2021, the accountant's lifeless body was found in a shallow grave very close to the Hilton Hotel and Resorts, where he had lodged.

After Adegoke's body was exhumed, there were blood stains on different parts of his body. The shirt he wore was soaked in blood, and his shoulders and head were half-covered with a grey bed sheet.

The discovery subsequently led to the arrest of Adedoyin and six other staff members of the hotel.

Roheem, Adedoyin's son, who also had a hand in Adegoke's death, was identified as the fourth murderer. He is, however, still at large.

When the suspects were charged in court and the hearing began, one of the receptionists who was on duty on the night of the murder, Adesola Adededeji, narrated how the hotel management attempted to cover up Adegoke's death.

While testifying before the court, Adededeji said that after the accountant was killed, she was instructed by Roheem, who was the managing director of the hotel at the time, to fabricate another receipt that would not reflect Adegoke's name.

An autopsy report later revealed that Adegoke's death was caused by severe haemorrhage secondary to severe traumatic injury.

After close to two years of intense court arguments, battles, and intrigues, Adedoyin, Aderogba, and Oyetunde were sentenced to death by hanging by the Osogbo High Court on May 30, 2023.

In January 2025, the Court of Appeal in Akure, Ondo State, upheld the death sentence earlier handed out by the Osogbo High Court.

## 'Murders rampant in remote areas'

The belief in money rituals – an occult economy in which money can be magically produced from ritual murders – is rife in Nigeria.

This has been said to be the motive behind some violent murders reported across the country.

However, a Clinical Haematologist, Timothy Brown, pointed out that if there were a string of killings taking place in hotels, it would have to be in seedy motels in remote towns or villages.

"These can't be something happening in urban areas where many people are conscious of internet usage. In this age of the Internet, such crimes will quickly spread, and people who commit such things need secrecy."

"Again, for people to murder clients in hotels, there has to be more than one person involved. However, it would be more linked to organ harvesting rings," he opined.

Meanwhile, a psychologist, Olubunmi Onipele, explained that some individuals are known as serial killers because they commit a series of murders over an extended period and often develop a method of selecting their victims.

"Many of these serial killers are psychopaths, and one can trace the roots of their condition back to early childhood. They may have witnessed extreme violence or suffered abuse or neglect, and these causes of trauma can lead to deep-seated psychological issues. These issues can manifest in violence and the urge to murder," she noted.

## Safety expert weighs in

Speaking with *Saturday PUNCH*, a safety and security expert, Stanley Ihakpe explained that people need to research hotels and check their websites, reviews, and ratings to assess their safety before lodging.

"Verify the hotel's location and surroundings to ensure it's in a safe area," he advised. "For corporate organisations, a formal risk assessment must be carried out by the business's safety and security team ahead of the visit by the employee, and the report must be reviewed by top management."

"This review will determine the risk rating of the hotel or range of hotels. For a responsible organisation, it is best to have a list of hotels that have been risk-assessed and considered safe for employees. This must be communicated to all relevant staff as an advisory before each trip."

Ihakpe also advised people to avoid showing off expensive assets where possible and to always inspect their rooms.



Udoka Golden Point Hotel

Photo: TVC News



CP Oghfemi Abaninwanda



CP Ikioye Orutugu