

# Search for missing toddler: Ritualists' den uncovered in Ogun

• Human parts litter site as suspect flees

From **Segun  
Olatunji, Abeokuta**

**THE** mysterious disappearance of a 20-month-old-toddler, Opeyemi Ogundele during christening of another baby on Sunday afternoon, has led to the discovery of a suspected ritualists' den in Inukosegba area, Akorede Estate, Mile II in Abeokuta North Local Government Area of Ogun State.

The den is located opposite the house where the aborted christening was earlier scheduled.

The owner of the suspected ritualists' den which emitted putrid stench of decomposed human flesh, High Chief Ifayemi, (other name withheld), an Ifa priest is, however, on the run.

Angry residents who stormed the area yesterday, vandalized the building, claimed that various human parts including hands, a woman's breast and intestines as well as fetish objects were discovered inside the den, a three-bedroom bungalow with two detached rooms housing a shrine.

Various clothes, bras, pants and other apparels said to belong to women who might have been killed and used for rituals by the suspected ritualists and masquerade regalia were also found inside the building.

Also found were children's clothes, bags and make-up kits said to belong to victims.

Fetish objects, including a human effigy made of wood, padlocks wrapped in black and white threads and assorted charms as well as other ritual items, were also retrieved from the place.

The State Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) operatives were stationed around the building to maintain security as people from far and near trooped to the area to catch a glimpse of the den.

Narrating her ordeal, mother of the missing toddler, Elizabeth Ogundele, told *Crime Watch Today* that she had gone to the area on Sunday along with her child to attend her niece's ceremony, but later discov-

ered amid preparations for the event that her son had gone missing.

The distraught 26-year-old mother said she had gone to celebrate the birth of a new-born baby with her brother, Olusola Osunleke, who resides in the area.

"I was helping my brother's wife prepare for the ceremony when I noticed that my son has disappeared. I searched for him everywhere because some tenants said they saw him earlier playing outside. But all our efforts proved abortive as he was nowhere to be found.

"I ran outside the house into the streets, still searching and that was when I encountered two persons at Ifayemi's house. I asked if they had seen my son, they denied and started giggling. So, I left them and continued to search for him," she said.

Ogundele stated that it was in the process of the search that the den was later discovered.

Shedding tears, she pleaded with the police and Nigerians to help



**IGP Solomon  
Arase**

find her child who would be 20 months tomorrow, to save her from her agony.

But while confirming the incident, the Commissioner of Police, Abdulmajeed Ali, said there was no link between the disappearance of the toddler and the discovery of the den.

Ali, however, assured that the police have commenced investigations into the matter and would make their findings public.

He said, "Actually, the boy was kidnapped yesterday but the site that was discovered has no relationship with the boy and other human parts that were found at the site.