

Man dies exhuming fresh dead body in Jigawa

From Auwalu Umar, Kano

A tragedy struck Kazaure town in Jigawa State when an elderly person died mysteriously while exhuming a fresh corpse that was buried early morning yesterday. Consequently, there was nearly a violent crisis as residents of the ancient town came out in thousands with local weapons, overpowered the police and angrily set ablaze the lifeless body of the suspect.

The suspect, *Sunday Trust* learnt in Kazaure yesterday, was among the mourners who took the corpse to the graveyard for burial. When the corpse was interred and the mourners were all returning home, the suspect was said to have stayed back at a near stream where he pretended to be washing his hands.

And when everybody left the graveyard, he returned and started digging out the buried corpse and in the process the grave collapsed with half of the suspect's body (from top down to abdomen) stuck and he died instantly.

Sunday Trust also learnt that the identity of the suspect could not be immediately traced because neither the residents of the town nor the police could claim knowing the person. It was gathered that when a search was carried on his body after he was removed from the collapsed grave nothing was found apart from charms and amulets round his waist.

An eyewitness, who simply gave his name as Abdulrahman, told *Sunday Trust* that the whole town became upset when a report that a corpse of a 38-year old trader, Sirajo Buhari of Unguwar Gabbas ward in Kazaure, was exhumed by somebody suspected to be a member of a secret cult only



Body of the suspect before it was burnt to ashes in Kazaure yesterday

two hours after it was interred.

He explained that the trader had an accident on his way back home from Kano last Wednesday when his vehicle rammed stationary truck full of firewood at Kantudu village, some kilometers away from Kazaure. The man was said to have lost his teeth with his jaws badly injured in the road accident and was immediately admitted at Kazaure General Hospital for intensive medical care, he said.

The man, according to him, gave up the ghost on Friday evening but his funeral was delayed till yesterday in the morning when his body was finally interred at 7:30am at Masallacin Edi cemetery, just a stone-throw from the Emir's Palace.

The eyewitness also said only two hours after mourners returned

to the deceased's residence after the burial some local farmers rushed to the bereaved home of the late trader to inform his family members and other sympathizers around that Buhari's grave was dug out and an unknown person was found stuck in it.

No sooner the informants finished narrating what they had actually seen at the cemetery than the news spread to all parts of the town, he said. "And before you knew it everybody, including women who are hardly seen inside graveyards, could be sighted around the place to witness the strange incident", he also said.

Early callers at the graveyard could not go close to the trapped person as everybody was afraid of the unknown and until when some courageous and young men arrived at the scene the stuck dead

body of the suspect was removed from Buhari's grave", he said.

The man's body, according to the eyewitness, was removed in the presence of Kazaure police area commander, police officers and Wamban Kazaure Alhaji Sanusi Tafida Adamu who represented Emir of Kazaure Alhaji Najib Husseni Adamu.

He said the police who wanted to convey the suspect's body to Kazaure General Hospital for medical examination were overpowered by angry youths who seized the dead body. They dragged the corpse on the streets after pelting stones at it and later burnt it to ashes at Kanti area of the town on Daura Road, he said.

When *Sunday Trust* visited the scene where the corpse was being burnt there was no presence of security personnel or elders from

the town to stop burning of the corpse as they were afraid of the angry youths. Failure by the police and elders from the area to stop the youths however saved the situation, it was gathered.

"The police in the area were diplomatic in handling the incident otherwise the situation would have degenerated into a full scale crisis. The intention of the police trying to take the corpse to the hospital was to thoroughly examine the dead body of the suspect in order to see if they could trace his identity", a police source said.

Our correspondent also overheard sympathizers at the Emir's Palace as saying that soon before the incident there was a report that a grave of a woman was found opened and it was suspected that some parts were removed from her body.

Speaking on the incident, Wamban Kazaure Alhaji Sanusi Tafida Adamu told *Sunday Trust* that the ward head of Unguwar Gabbas informed him of the development and soon afterward he told the emir and the police for necessary action. He said he was at the graveyard when the lifeless body of the suspect was removed from the grave and thanked God that the incident did not snowball into a crisis.

Police Public Relations Officer of the Jigawa State Police Command ASP Abdul Jinjiri confirmed the incident, saying the command had already begun investigation into the case with a view to identifying the dead suspect.

Jinjiri also admitted that the police in the area were overpowered by the surging crowd of angry residents of the town, a factor, he said, which led to the burning of the suspect's body.