

BENUE/PLATEAU TRUST

Regional news from **BENUE
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Ritual killing of girls in Jos stirs apprehension among residents

From Dickson S. Adama, Jos

Jos, the Plateau State capital, has been thrown into worry since the Christmas and New Year festivities following the series of killings in different parts of the city of young girls.

Dead bodies of such girls were dumped after vital organs were removed from the bodies, leading to the conclusion that the killings are ritually inclined. This disturbing occurrence in Jos has stirred apprehension among the people.

The recent incident was that of Miss Plagnang Solomon of Congo Russia Community in Jos whose body was found around Rayfield by PRTV and Jennifer Anthony whose body was found in a hotel on Zaria Road, after being declared missing for days.

Both girls had their eyes plucked and other organs of their body removed and their private parts tampered with. It has been said in several quarters that the killings are the handiwork of 'Yahoo Boys' who are believed to have invaded Jos from other parts of the country where the clampdown on them has been tough.

The perpetrators lure the girls with money and then kill them for ritual purposes. And coupled with the hardship in the nation and the quest to get money quick, these girls give in to the money spent on a lavish scale by the killers; the money they don't get to actually enjoy, observers said.

The first case was that of Plagnang Solomon of Congo Russia area of Jos North. She left home after the Christmas celebration and was not seen again. Then information began filtering in that there was a decomposing corpse of a girl in Rayfield area by PRTV.

That was when her family members, who got the information rushed there only to find out that it was her.

In the case of Jennifer Anthony, she was found dead in Domus Pacis Guest House, along Zaria Road, Jos North Local Government Area.

She was declared missing few days before her corpse was found. It was gathered that she confided in one of her friends of an outing with her boyfriend.

The Plateau State Command of the Nigeria Police Force in collaboration with its counterpart in Benue State thereafter apprehended the main suspect said to be the mastermind behind the murder, Moses Oko.

A resident of Lamingo area of Jos, Patience John, said the issue was devastating especially as it involved young women who had the future ahead of them.

She called on girls to engage themselves in meaningful ventures as that would minimise the possibility of their falling into wrong hands.

On her part, the Project Officer, Country Women Association of Nigeria (COWAN), Plateau State Branch, Abigail Ishaya, said government should not treat the matter with kid gloves because the perpetrators of the nefarious acts have left other states to Jos and are already expanding their network in the state.

Meanwhile, *Benue/Plateau Trust* spoke with members of Plagnang's community as well as her family members, who said they were saddened by what happened to the young woman.

The Admin Officer of Congo Russia Facebook page, Chuwang Ahmadu Rajan, said the issue must be treated very seriously by the authorities because the ritualists are taking advantage of the girls and tricking them with money to their early graves.

Rajan called on women to be contended with whatever they have and be less materialistic so that they don't run into the hands of men with evil intentions.



■ Plagnang Solomon

Plagnang's elder brother, Sunday Solomon, said she left home on December 24 and they did not hear from her until they found her corpse eventually.

He said they first saw her picture on Facebook but could not determine if it was her because the picture was not clear, but after they confirmed it was her, they sprung to action until she was buried.

In the meantime, these incidents have continued to generate intense reactions in several quarters and on social media. While some blame the girls for allowing themselves



■ Jennifer Anthony

fall victims due to their covetousness, love for money and materialism, others strongly opined that this is not the time to apportion blame as it may not be the girls' fault entirely.

Those of the latter opinion said since the ritualists seem to be looking for female organs in order to perform their money or whatever ritual with, it doesn't matter if the girls they use are their girlfriends or not as they could attack any vulnerable girl they don't even know, kill her and remove her organs.

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