

TheMetroSection

An unidentified suspected ritualist dies in the grave of man buried just two hours earlier

Dead in another man's grave

We all rushed to the cemetery, only to see a person lying half inside the grave, the upper part of his body buried in the grave as if trapped by the soil... Only his buttocks and legs were outside the grave

From John Akubo, Dutse

PEOPLE in the normally calm, ancient city of Kazaure, the Jigawa State capital, were thrown into an uproar on Saturday, when what seemed like an act of God, saw to the mysterious death of a suspected grave ritualist.

The unidentified man thought to be in his 40s was alleged to have been exhuming the body of one Sirajo Buhari, a few hours after he was buried at Unguwar Mahauta Cemetery.

It is still not clear how the man himself died even before he completed his evil intention. Eyewitnesses said he was found lifeless; half of his body from head to abdomen in the grave, while from his waist and legs were outside.

A Chief Nursing Officer at Kazaure General Hospital, Alhaji Umar Yakubu, who was also an elder brother to late Buhari, narrated to *The Guardian* what happened.

He said his late brother had an accident along Kano-Kazaure Road and had been in coma for three days before he died on Friday night at General Hospital in Kazaure as a result of the injuries he sustained.

He said because Sirajo passed on quite late, they could not bury him that very Friday but had to wait until Saturday morning when all the arrangements for burial in accordance with Islamic rites were completed.

About two hours after we returned from the cemetery, and as we were busy receiving sympathisers who were on a condolence visit, we were stunned to hear from some young boys that somebody was digging out the person we had just buried.



The suspected grave robber

"We all rushed to the cemetery, only to see, to our greatest surprise, a person lying half inside the grave, the upper part of his body, head, arms to his abdomen buried in the grave as if trapped by the soil. Only his buttocks and legs were outside the grave", Yakubu said.

He continued: "Within a short time, thousands of people had gathered at the graveyard and we immediately informed the police and the emir's palace. They ordered that the body be immediately removed, and it was later taken by the police to the Kazaure General Hospital".

He said after the body of the suspect had been taken away, he and other members of the family had to check the grave to ascertain whether anything had been tampered with. "Everything was intact as the suspect had not reached the corpse before he was swallowed by the sand."

When *The Guardian* visited the town, many of the residents were in groups discussing the issue, which they described as unprecedented in the history of the town. Many of them also saw it as an act of God, a lesson to people who usually tamper with graves for rituals or other purposes.

An eyewitness told *The Guardian* that he was on his way to the market when his friend told him that a man suspected to be a ritualist was found dead, trapped and half-swallowed by sand while attempting to dig up the corpse of Sirajo Buhari popularly known as Arasco.

"When I heard the story, I could not believe it, but quickly rushed to the graveyard. As I arrived at the scene, I saw this figure of a man with half of his body sunk into the ground."

"I was shocked to my marrow."

He said a mob had gathered by the time the body of the suspected ritualist was removed from the hole in which it was trapped.

"The angry mob attempted to seize the corpse, but the police, with support of representatives of the emirs, managed to calm them down and took it to the hospital."

The eyewitness explained further that after the suspect was confirmed dead, the mob went wild, overpowered the police and the local authorities, confiscated the body and burnt it to ashes near Mayaki Primary School located close to the hospital.

The Emir of Kazaure, His Highness, Alhaji Najib Adamu, who spoke through Makaman Kazaure, Alhaji Umar Adamu, described the incident as "an extraordinary happening".

He said when the news reached the palace, officials were sent to liaise with the police to ensure the incident did not cause any social unrest in the city.

The spokesman of the State Police Command, Abdul Jinjiri, an Assistant Superintendent of Police, confirmed the incident.

He said they were able to take photographs of the man before the mob overwhelmed the police, took the body and set it on fire. He said despite the fact that his men were overwhelmed by the mob, they succeeded in snapping the picture before he was burnt.

"The person is not an indigene of Kazaure, according to our investigation, but the Command is carrying further investigation to trace his origin and also fish out anybody that had a hand in such wickedness," Jinjiri said.

Group seeks support to empower youths as workshop ends

By Kenechukwu Ezeonyejiaku

A FOUR-DAY seminar and workshop for Lagos State Public School Students in Ikeja II Constituency organized by Lola Akande in collaboration with Centre for Building the Youths For Positive Life (CEBYPOL) has

dents were encouraged to represent the theme in any way they understood and interpreted best, either in essay writing, drawings, paintings and poems all depicting Lagos.

Delivering her welcome address, the President and Chief Executive Officer of CEBYPOL,

tion leaders.

According to her, the quest to assist young people is driven through experience shared and observations through interactions with some of them.

"It is through these interactions that we came to realize that some of these youths in

with their behaviours, poor parental background, teenage pregnancy, drug and child abuse among others.

This year's programme with the theme, *'Nigeria Today: Creating a Compelling Future Against all Odds'*, which was organized in collaboration with Lola Akande, representing Ikeja II Constituency,

be in the 70s and 80s. "Now in Nigeria, it is quite difficult for young school graduates to secure jobs in the teeming population of job seekers because government cannot provide jobs for every graduate."

"It is in this light that we decided to introduce these young people to some skills

the centre from last year added that 10 of those people were called from the streets engaging in degrading and abusive tasks to survive due to abusive guardians.

She then called for support from well-meaning individuals and organizations so that the dream of shaping the lives of young ones, by either sponsoring some of their