

Ritual Murderers On The Prowl In Abia

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Ritual murderers are on the prowl in Abia State, as more corpses believed to be victims of kidnappers and ritual killers are now daily sights on the streets of Umuahia and Aba, thus bringing apprehension in the two major cities.

On Monday, residents of Umuahia woke up to behold the body of an unemployed man in his early 40s dumped at the junction at Eket/Niger Street, after his private part and some other vital organs have been removed.

The man, whose name is given as Okereke, was a victim of some ritual murderers, according to some residents of the town, who expressed shock at the dastardly act that is currently ravaging the towns lately.

Also, the same day, two other

corpses were seen dumped at two different locations in the town, also in a manner suggestive of their having fallen victim to ritual activities. One was dumped at Uzuakoli road while the other was cited near the Old Goods Shed, Umuahia, all with the same telltale marks of ritual killing as the body parts were equally tampered with.

Those behind the dastardly act are yet to be apprehended, but residents maintain that of late, people suspected to be ritual murderers have invaded Umuahia and also Aba, using all manner of tricks to entice and mesmerise their victims and then lure them into safe havens, where they are killed for ritual purposes.

The residents say the ritualists mostly operating with commercial vehicles, usually attract their unsuspecting victims, mostly passengers commuting to different

parts of the state.

Spells are instantly cast on such unsuspecting commuters, who are then carried to some notorious junctions, located at Isiala-Ngwa, where they are reportedly butchered.

A victim, who said he escaped from the merchants of death, told the *Daily Independent* that he entered a bus at the Ngwa High School, Aba junction whose driver pretended that he was coming to Umuahia, unaware that the occupants of vehicle were men of the underworld.

"At a junction after Umuikaa along the Enugu/Port Harcourt Expressway, the driver forcefully made a detour and started moving towards a road which was not tarred and which does not connect to Umuahia. When we protested, he told us, he was going to drop a woman nearby and before we knew what was

happening, some of the occupants of the vehicles who were his gang members, pulled guns and asked us to remain quiet. They drove us to a big house with a big gate and as soon as we entered, we were dragged to the slaughter arena. I managed to run to a corner, saw a platform which I used to scale the long wall and threw myself out and then trekked from there to Umuahia, a distance of about 50km. I arrived to Umuahia at about 1am. It was a horrible experience," he declared.

Contacted the police image-maker in the Abia State, Godwin Chukwuji said the police command is not aware of the reports, but would investigate them.

Meanwhile, about 30 policemen have been dismissed in the state for various crimes ranging from bribetaking, intimidation and harassment of civilians and leaking of information to hoodlums.