

Murder At Dawn In Oshogbo Community

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The people of Ita-Olokan in Osogbo metropolis were thrown into mournful mood on the eve of the New Year when Nigerians and other people around the world were in a moment of joy and happiness for being alive, hale and hearty.

It was a period that both Christians and Muslims around the world celebrated together, as Muslims' Eid-el Kabir, Christians' Christmas and New Year celebrations were marked almost at the same time. While many celebrated the events at beer parlours, drinking and winning to express their joy and happiness, many visited churches to give glory and thanks to Almighty God for His guidance and protection.

The story was however different with the family of Fausat Salaudeen, a cocoa merchant residing at Ita-Olokan area of Osogbo. Fausat, who was also aware of the significance of the period, was fasting on the fateful day to seek the face of God, but alas, she was gruesomely murdered by one Dayo Oluwafemi, a 30-year-old young man from Ilesa.

Reports said Oluwafemi was aware of Fausat's success story in her cocoa business, and so he approached her that he had some cocoa beans to sell at a village called Oko-Awo via Kajola along Ilesa road. She took with her N18,000 with the understanding that she would balance Oluwafemi later.

Both Oluwafemi and Fausat set out on a journey to Oko-Awo, along Ilesa road at about 5.30a.m. in the suspect's taxicab, but she could not return. Mid way into the village, Oluwafemi demanded from Fausat all the money on her to buy the cocoa beans. But she insisted that until she saw the product, she would not release the money.

Along the line, Oluwafemi turned against her, overpowered the victim, using the knife she had hoped to use to open cocoa pods to snuff life out of her.

The cat was let out of the bag when the relatives of the deceased went to Kajola to look for their breadwinner. The search party discovered that Oluwafemi, who claimed to be married with three children, had run away when they got to his residence and they subsequently reported to the police.

The move paid off when he (Oluwafemi) was arrested at Old Garage in Osogbo, where he was attempting to board a bus to Sagamu in Ogun State. After a brief investigation with police, he took the search party and the police to Kajola and showed them the shallow pit where he buried the body of Fausat.

He confessed to the police that he actually committed the act.

The suspect, who said it was the devil that forced him to commit the dastardly act, added that he thought the deceased had on her huge sums of money up to N50,000 or N100,000.

He confessed that he slaughtered the deceased with knife inside her bag. According to him, one herbalist at Igbona, also in Osogbo, had predicted that he would never make it in life because some people within his family are behind his problems.

He explained further that in order to controvert the prediction, he decided to set eyes beyond his normal taxicab business to seek quick money.

He also told newsmen while being paraded by the police that he used the N18,000 collected from the deceased to bury her and drink beer with some of his friends at a popular relaxation point in the city.

"If I knew she had only N18,000 on her, I wouldn't have killed her. I regret my action," he said.

The mother of the deceased, Mrs Mariam Badmus, 75, who was weeping profusely, told our reporter when he visited her at her Ita-Olokan residence in Osogbo, saying her daughter was fasting when the incident happened.

The old woman lamented that it would have



• Oluwafemi

been better if the incident that befell Fausat happened to her.

Also, the sons of the deceased, Abideen and Ramoni, said their mother wished them good when she was to leave for the journey of no return. The two are calling for justice, urging security operatives to conduct thorough investigations into the matter and ensure that the culprit is brought to book.

State Police Commissioner, John Moronike,

said the suspect would be taken to court immediately the command completed investigations on the matter.

State Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Joshua Olayemi, however, urged residents to always be wary of the calibre of the people they do business with. He added that the police had discovered that the suspect was a wanted person for alleged rape, which he committed in the same village in December 2006.