

Mob or jungle justice is one of the sad aspects of the Nigerian identity. It comes fast and easy from angry street people against perceived criminals. It comes with no trial and no attention to fairness against the victim. More often than not, the result is instant capital punishment. The lull in the act was few days ago swept aside by incidences in different parts of the country. **CHIDI NWACHUKWU, AHURAKA ISAH and Olakunle Olasanmi** write.

“On getting to the Bus Stop in Obalande, we decided to enter separate buses. James went before me. I entered the second bus. On getting to Oshodi, I saw people beating him up, but luckily, I intervened. I was told that a woman, claimed he stole her money. She was also having mint

The spate of jungle justice leading to the loss of lives and properties in the country calls for sobriety. Its causes and possible measures which authorities and stakeholders can explore to curb the incidence of mob attacks and unlawful execution of punishment on alleged wrong doers or offenders of crime in the country.

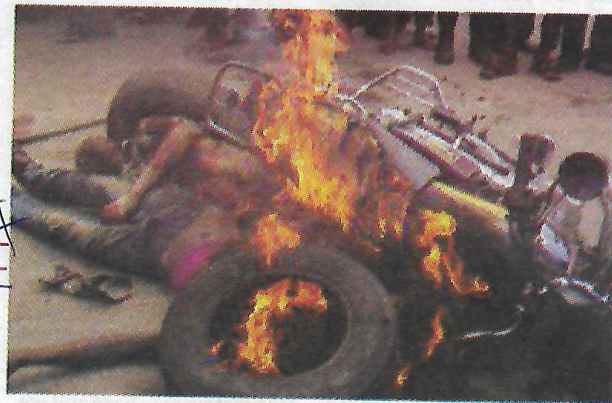
On October 30, 2017, three suspected armed robbers were killed in a mob action in Akure, the Ondo State capital for attempting to steal two motorcycles. The suspects met their untimely death as the owners of the motorcycles raised the alarm during a struggle with the robbers.

Some youths around Hospital Road, Akure where the incident happened quickly mobilized to the scene and beat the three suspects black and blue. Though the suspects were later rescued by the police, they died before getting to the hospital.

About three weeks ago two suspected motorcycle thieves were lynched by angry mob in different locations in Minna, the Niger State capital. Before the news of the Minna mob justice broke out, a man had been lynched in Onitsha, the commercial city of Anambra State for attempting to steal yam.

In July this year, a suspected robber was set ablaze by irate youths in Nkpor, near Onitsha, following alleged robbery attack on a businessman along Owerri-Awka Road in the city.

Eyewitnesses said that the alleged



Victims of jungle justice

robbery victim had just withdrawn money from a nearby bank when he was attacked by the suspect and two others operating on motorcycle. It was said that the robbers dispossessed the victim of money he withdrew but quickly raised the alarm which attracted passersby, who gave the robbers a hot chase and apprehended one of them while his accomplices escaped. The suspect was immediately set ablaze by the angry youths before the arrival of the local security operatives in the area.

Perhaps the most gruesome mob justice that still assails the sensibility of many Nigerians is the beheading of Gideon Akaluka in Kano by irate Islamic mob who later hoisted his head

on a spike and used it to make victory laps in the city. Akaluka was so cruelly beheaded on allegation of desecrating the Qu'ran.

In June last year, Muslim youths in Kano beheaded woman, Bridget Patience Agbaheme, a petty trader from Imo State. Mrs Agbaheme was beheaded by the militant Muslim fanatics in the market over an accusation that she "insulted" Prophet Mohammed.

Way back September 18, 1977 in Michika, Borno State Mr Peter Tizhe and his friend, Mr Zira Tumba, left the then Teachers College, Gwaza, Borno State for Michika, Michika local government of Adamawa State. They just wanted to go home and meet their

identified me," explained Tumba.

In June 1981, in the city of Lagos, Samaila had gone to the bank with his friend, James, to withdraw a thousand naira.

"I divided the money into two halves." He added that, "on getting to the Bus Stop in Obalande, we decided to enter separate buses. James went before me. I entered the second bus. On getting to Oshodi, I saw people beating him up, but luckily, I intervened. I was told that a woman, claimed he stole her money. She was also having mint. But when I removed the other half of the total sum, the serial number revealed that he did not steal her money and what she claimed was not up to the whole amount. That was how the woman was beaten to death. It is really a sad situation.

Five years ago, in Alun, a locality in Rivers State, four undergraduates, Ugonna Obuzor, Toku Lloyd, Chiadika Biringa, and Tekena Elkanah, all students of the University of Port Harcourt were all lynched to death after they were falsely accused of theft of a laptop computer in the community located in Ikwerre local government area, Rivers State, Nigeria on 5 October 2012.

They were condemned and beaten to death in the community member, even before anyone heard their side of the story.

Today, the people who set them on fire, are yet to face justice.

Nigeria, like most nations in the world, has been exposed to "jungle justice" or "mob justice", which is still prevalent in Nigeria, has posed a serious challenge for law enforcement in the country.

In his verdicts, the late Justice Oputa was a sage, a critic, a historian, a philosopher, an accountant and a scientist. This explains why he was nicknamed Lord Denning of Nigeria, Socrates of the Supreme Court and philosopher-judge. In one of his verdicts, he said: "Justice is not a

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