

How SARS tortured me, killed 30 others, Evans tells court

ALLLEGED kidnap kingpin, Chukwudumeme Onwuamadike alias Evans yesterday narrated to an Ikeja high court how he was allegedly tortured by members of the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Intelligence Response Team and the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS).

Evans narrated his experience during the continuation of a trial-within-trial at an Ikeja High Court where he is facing trial on a two-count charge conspiracy and kidnapping.

He is facing trial before Justice Hakeem Oshodi alongside five other members of his gang.

Before Evans' testimony, a five-minute-33-second video recording was played in the courtroom.

The video recording showed Inspector Idowu Haruna, a member of the IGP Intelligence Response Team, sitting beside Evans, cautioning him and taking his statement.

Evans defence counsel, Mr Olanrewaju Ajanaku, however disputed the validity of the recording by claiming it was heavily edited.

Evans, while being led in evidence by Ajanaku, described himself as a businessman dealing in haulage and ornaments and resident at No. 3, Fred Soyebode Street, Magodo Lagos.

In vivid detail, Evans described how he was tortured by police officers after his arrest.

He said: "Inspector Idowu Haruna (member of IGP Intelligence Response Team) took me to Abuja and brought me back to Lagos where I was at the Inspector General (IG) Guest House at Obalende, Lagos.

"Sunny, the 2 1/2 C (second in command) to Abba Kyari Mr Christian Ugu, Mr Phillip and other police of-

■ **Adebisi ONANUGA** ■

ficers working with them were there.

"Idowu Haruna brought about 25 sheets of paper and asked me to sign. That day, my mind told me not to sign because it might be my death warrant.

"Mr Phillip put his hand in his pocket and brought out a brown hospital card. He showed it to me and told me to sign it, saying, 'Do you think that we are joking here?' He said if anything happens to me here, this card covers everything.

"Mr Phillip said the police would not be held responsible. And before I knew it, Mr Christian slapped me, and that was how they started beating me," Evans told the court.

The alleged kidnap kingpin gave more details to the court how the police officers tortured him and made him witness executions in a bid to get him to admit to his crimes.

He said: "Mr Christian Ugu was smoking. He quenched the cigarette on my hand. My Lord, look at my head where they beat me. My Lord, look at my hand.

"They took me to the backyard of the I.G's guest house. I sustained injuries on my head and body and Mr Phillip asked the policemen to walk on me. When I started bleeding, he said, 'You think we are joking here?'

"At the backyard, I saw some people that I was paraded with. They were wearing leg chains. Some of them had bullet wounds on their legs and Mr Phillip ordered Idowu Haruna to bring a big brown cello tape, handkerchief and polybags.

"Idowu Haruna forced a handkerchief into the mouth of one of them. He used the cello tape to tightly tape his mouth and face and put a



• Evans

polybag over his head and cello-taped it. He used another poly bag and cello-taped it the second time and they left the man on the ground.

"The man on the ground was shaking. He pissed (urinated) on his body. He pooped (defecated) on his body, and after a while, he went quiet.

"Idowu Haruna went to the man and stepped on his body, and he was irresponsive. Then he told me, 'Can you see? I have travelled him.'

Evans told the court that four persons were executed in the same manner by the police officers in his presence.

"I was brought before them and I started begging, asking them what they wanted me to do, and they told me to cooperate with them. I said okay, I would do anything they wanted me to do.

"Phillip asked them to take me to the house and he asked if I knew the method of killing and I said no. They said that it is called 'Saddam Hussein'.

"He said that there is no way an autopsy can predict the cause of death of the five people they had just killed and that those people had travelled."

Evans said after witnessing the execution, the 25 sheets of paper were brought for him by the police to sign.

He recalled trembling

with fear, saying that Mr Sunny, the second in command to Mr Abba Kyari, the Head of the IGP Intelligence Response Team, asked Inspector Haruna to offer him a can of cold Fanta.

"When the Fanta was given to me, I drank it. After a few minutes, they brought the 25 sheets of paper for me and I signed them.

"Some things were written on some of the sheets of paper while some were blank. That was how I was forced to sign the confessional statements."

On cross-examination by Ms Titilayo Shitta-Bey, the Lagos State Director of Public Prosecution (DPP), Evans confirmed his name and the names of his parents and denied knowing the officers before his arrest.

He said: "I am 38 years old. I was born on April 29, 1980. My mother's name is Mrs. Chinwe Onwuamadike and my father is Mr Stephen Onwuamadike.

"I did not know Inspector Haruna, Abba Kyari before my arrest. I am the one in the video. I was cautioned in the video, but after the cau-

tionary words, I was forced to sign.

"The story I told the court was never an afterthought. SARS killed more than 30 people in my presence. The killings took place at the IG's Guest House in Ikoyi.

"On the day I was arrested in my house and I was taken to Ikeja SARS Station, journalists were there. They had beaten the hell out of me in my house. I was interviewed by the journalists on Sunday, a day after I was arrested.

"When I was taken to the station, there was a field. I was in a car while I was waiting for Abba Kyari to come.

"When he came, he told me to beg for forgiveness in my interview with journalists and also to inform the world I had cancer which I don't have. The police killed one Felix Chinemeri in my presence."

While he was being re-examined by Ajanaku, his defense counsel, Evans said that he had not spoken to journalists before he made his alleged confessional statement to the police.

Earlier during proceedings, Inspector Idowu

Haruna was cross-examined by Ajanaku.

He told the court it took more than an hour to obtain Evans' statement.

Haruna denied that Evans changed his clothes because of bloodstains from torture before the video of Evans giving his confessional statement was made.

He denied editing the five-minute-33-second video of Evans giving his statement to the police.

"I never threatened to kill the first defendant (Evans) and I never created fear in him by killing people in his presence," Haruna said.

Evans is standing trial alongside Uche Amadi, Ogechi Uchekukwu, Chilaka Ifeanyi, Okwuchukwu Nwachukwu and Victor Aduba.

They were arraigned on August 30, 2017 on two counts of conspiracy.

Evans and co-defendants pleaded not guilty to the charges preferred against them by the state.

Justice Hakeem Oshodi adjourned the case until November 23 for continuation of defence in the trial-within-trial.

I was not disengaged by NIA, I retired voluntarily

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find attached NM's acceptance letter of our client's letter of voluntary resignation."

The ex-director demanded immediate retraction of the story and an apology.

A July 30, 2006 letter to Mr. Ibrahim Ibrahim by the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, confirmed the voluntary retirement of the ex-Assistant Director.

The letter, which came from the Directorate of Inspectorate, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Abuja, was titled "RE: VOLUNTARY

RETIREMENT and signed by J. S. Shu'aibu (Director) for: Permanent Secretary

The letter said: "Yours dated 4th May 2006 on the above subject refers, please.

"I am directed to convey to you, the Permanent Secretary's acceptance of your voluntary retirement from the Service with effect from 30th July 2006.

"In view of the above, you are kindly requested to surrender all government property in your possession, including identity card(s) to the Security Department and obtain clear-

ance from your Director before your final disengagement.

"Please, accept the Permanent Secretary's good wishes in your future endeavours."

EDITOR'S NOTE: As a reputable newspaper, the said publication was not intended to defame, hurt, injure or cast aspersions on Mr. Ibrahim Ibrahim, a former Assistant Director with the National Intelligence Agency (NIA). We apologise for the use of "disengaged" and "extreme religious views" attributed to him in the story.