

# Police exhume body of 56-yr-old pastor buried in shallow grave

The Police in Rivers State at the weekend exhumed the remains of a 56-year-old pastor identified as Friday Olakada, who was killed by kidnappers and buried in a shallow grave.

Olakada, until his tragic death, was the General Overseer of a Pentecostal church known as God is God Ministry, located in Agbonchia community in Eleme Local Government Area of the state.

The victim, a father of six children, was abducted at Eleme Junction on May 14, 2021 and moved to Lorre community in Khana Local Government Area where he was later killed and buried after ten days after his assailants had collected a ransom from his family.

Speaking in the forest where the victim's remains were exhumed, the Rivers State Commissioner of Police, Eboka Friday, said the suspects killed their victim to cover their tracks after receiving a ransom of N500,000.

But he said with the help of technology and technical expertise of his men, the culprits were tracked and arrested.

He said: "On the 14th of May, 2021, a young man by name Friday, who was a pastor and owned a church at Eleme, was kidnapped by four young men who took him all the way from Eleme to this village called Lorre in Ogoniland, and along the line they entered into negotiation and demanded a ransom from the family. We didn't get to know about the case immediately.

"The culprits demanded

• *Suspects: how we killed him, stole his car*

Mike Odiegwu, Port Harcourt

N500,000, which was paid by the family. But after they (suspects) had collected the money, they still went ahead to kill the man because one of them said maybe the victim recognised him. They killed him 10 days after they kidnapped him on May 14, 2021.

"With the help of technology, we were able to track all of them and get them arrested and they confessed to the crime and brought us to the shallow grave where they buried their victim. We saw that the flesh of the victim was gone. We were able to recover the bones from the grave."

One of the suspects, a 27-year-old identified as Prince Oda, said the victim grabbed his hand, prayed for him and pleaded to be released but they insisted on killing and burying his lifeless body in a shallow grave to evade arrest.

Oda said that with the assistance of their girlfriend who is currently at large and three other accomplices who had been nabbed by the police, they were able to carry out their evil scheme.

He said: "We put the man in a vehicle from Eleme Junction to a compound here in this place. I and my friends, Ledum, Boy J whose real name is Goodluck. As for this other guy, I have forgotten his name, but he is here, we are four in number.

"When we brought the man here, he grabbed my hand and prayed and told me to let him go. I started begging Ledum and Boy J to release him and I later left. After



• The suspects with policemen in the background

a while, I returned and removed the shirt of the man. He was wearing a white long sleeve with one jacket. I beat him and used a brick to hit him and tied his hands because my friends told me that the man recognised them and if we didn't kill him, he would expose us.

"We wanted to snatch his car initially. While we were in our compound discussing, one of these my friends and another small girl that brought the man and his car refused to let the man go. They said if they left him to go, he would recognise them."

Another 33-year-old suspect identified as Lenye said that they lured the victim to where he was murdered because they wanted to steal and sell his car.

He said: "Goodluck my friend told me that someone needed a Sienna car, and I asked how and he told me that the person wanted to buy it and pay us money. He told me that he had a Sienna in mind and that he had discussed already with the owner.

"He (Goodluck) told me that Ledum would bring a girl that would join me to hire the Sienna and bring him here to pick some property here in Lorre community, while he (Goodluck) and Prince would come here with a bike (motorcycle).

"I didn't know this place, so he directed that I come here with the girl and we would meet them in the community. After we got here, the man's car was taken to Onitsha."

The immediate younger brother of the victim, Woko Olakada, said he

became worried after the wife of the victim called him on the phone and told him that his husband was yet to return to the house.

He said: "On the 14th of May, the wife of my brother called and said that his husband had not returned to the house, and I said maybe he went somewhere and they caught him and held him down.

"We are all feeling very bad about this incident and we know that the government knows what to do in this incident.

"I commend the entire Rivers State Police Command, especially the Anti-Kidnapping Unit, for what they have done so far by tracing the kidnappers."