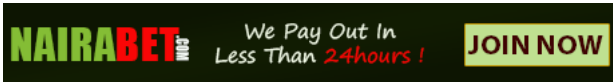


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How Babangida, gang member killed rider to steal his bike (/how-babangida-gang-member-killed-rider-to-steal-his-bike)

February 14, 2016

Written by: Oluwatoyin Malik



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THE innocent blood of an Idoma man, simply known as Idileru, who was inflicted with machete cuts by a gang of okada snatchers in Kishi town, Oyo State, seems to be out for revenge, as his suspected killers have been arrested by operatives of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) of Oyo State Police Command.

The suspects — Usman Babangida, Tunde Bello and Arda John — had attacked the okada rider along the road to Kishi town late in 2015 and robbed him of his motorcycle. Not done, two of them, Babangida and John, reportedly attacked the victim with a cutlass, allegedly on the instruction of Babangida, because he knew Babangida very well. His pleas to Babangida not to kill him were ignored.

Disclosing the incident that led to the arrest of the suspects, the state Commissioner of Police, Leye Oyebade, said that a few weeks after killing their victim, the gang ambushed one Abubakar Buba on December 2, 2015 along Burugoma village, Kishi, and dispossessed him of his Bajaj motorcycle with registration number KSH 948 QC.

On receiving the report, Oyebade said his command's Special Anti-Robbery squad in Oyo/Ogbomoso axis began an immediate investigation which led to the arrest of the suspects. The police commissioner added that the motorcycle was recovered from Babangida who had converted it to personal use.

He said that the suspects had confessed to the crime and would be arraigned in court at the conclusion of investigation.

Babangida, an indigene of Kishi, who spoke with Crime Reports in an interview, confessed to have been involved in bike snatching. According to him, "we used sticks to threaten our victims but we killed one of our victims by inflicting machete cuts on him.

"We snatched the motorcycle of our dead victim at Budo Sabi along Kishi road. It was around 8 p.m. That evening, on our way from Kishi back to the settlement where we lived, we saw the motorcycle rider along the road. He was drunk. On getting home, we picked a cutlass and torchlight; and went back to the spot where we saw the okada man. It was Tunde who used his motorcycle to drop us at the spot.

"On sighting us, he ran into the bush. John and I went after him and inflicted machete cuts on him until he died. Please I want the government to forgive us because I was propelled by the devil to commit the act. The devil has put me in trouble."

Another suspect, John, an Idoma from Benue State, also confessed thus: "Babangida, Tunde and I worked as a gang to snatch motorcycles. But we fell into trouble when we did the third operation. We were on our way home from Kishi market when we saw a man who fell down from his motorcycle.

"Before we got home, Babangida sold the idea that we should return to the spot to snatch the bike from the rider. We departed and he went to his house to pick a cutlass. Tunde took us to the spot but said he would not wait to do the operation with us because he was drunk. He dropped us and left.

"On getting there, we forcefully took the motorcycle from the victim and I told Babangida that we should leave. But Babangida said that the man knew him at okada park in Kishi where both of them used to work as okada riders. He also called my attention to the way our victim was appealing to him by saying 'my friend, don't do this to me'.

"Babangida expressed his fear that the man would expose his deed, saying that he had to kill him to cover up. Both of us joined hands to inflict machete cuts on the man until he died. Feeling restless after the act, Babangida zoomed off with the bike, leaving me behind. I had to run into the bush and walked through bush paths until I got home.

"After that, we snatched another okada from a Fulani man, but instead of selling it, Babangida decided to be using it. Tunde and I warned him against this because we knew that since we lived within the same community as our victim, we could be found out if the bike remained with Babangida. But he refused to heed our advice, boasting that nothing would happen.

"Unfortunately, the owner of the bike saw it and told some people that it looked like his. He gave its spare key to someone who used it to unlock it while Babangida was at an eatery. When it was noticed that the key could open the bike, the police were alerted and we were arrested."

John said that his gang had snatched about five motorcycles, from which he got a total of N25,000 after selling four of them, while Babangida kept the fifth one for his use. He further disclosed that it was Babangida who brought the idea of forming a gang.

The third suspect, Bello, also from Kishi, said: "Babangida is the one who put me in this trouble. I am a farmer. He sent John to me to join him in robbery. Though I tried to resist the temptation, Babangida assured me that he had a lawyer who would save us if we fell into trouble.

"I went to two operations with him and John. I got N5,000 from the first one and N10,000 the second time. I had already confessed my deeds to my father and promised never to be involved again. It was about two months after the last operation that Babangida was arrested and he pointed me out."

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