

CRIME FEATURE

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With OLUWATOYIN MALIK

How we killed our last victim, sold his tricycle for N300,000 —Robbery suspect

By Oluwatoyin Malik

ONE of the two robbery cum murder suspects arrested by detectives from the Ogun State Police Command, Famorijo Damilola, has said that the reason he decided to kill a man whose tricycle he wanted to forcefully collect was that he refused to release it.

Damilola, aged 34, and the second suspect, 31-year-old Akinbayo Emmanuel, his first cousin, were arrested by the detectives almost two months after they allegedly killed one Amos Oyemечи Chukwuka, in an attempt to rob him of his tricycle.

The command's spokesman, SP Abimbola Oyeyemi, who disclosed the killing, said that the corpse of the victim was found at a riverbank at Agoro area in Ijebu-Ode.

Damilola, who said he hails from Ile-Ife in Osun State but live in Ikorodu, Lagos, where he grew up, spoke about his background: "I'm 34, married with four kids. I'm an auto technician, popularly known as mechanic. I have a first cousin, Akinbayo Emmanuel Abiodun. Our mothers are siblings from Modakeke Town but married from Ile Ife. My cousin is also a mechanic. He lived with my mother before he married, but we both live and work in Ikorodu."



• The suspects

How we began robbery operation

"We started in December 2021. It was a friend popularly called 'Mefa' (six), also a mechanic, that brought the suggestion. However, he was killed during a clash between two cult groups in Ikorodu early in 2022. He was a cult member. We used to relate and he would give us money to spend."

"One day, as we were discussing, he suggested to us that we should be robbing owners of tricycles and motorcycles to make money. He told us to lure riders to quiet areas by pretending to be passengers. He said we should frighten the riders with cutlass to make them surrender easily. He, however, told us to use the cutlass to kill stubborn ones who refused to surrender their bikes or tricycles. He also connected us with a buyer of the tricycles and bikes."

"Whenever we went for the operation, we would sell whichever of the two products we got, wait for a couple of months to make sure no one was after us, and then strike again."

We usually operated at Agoro area in Ijebu Ode. It was Mefa who described the place to us. He used to follow us to operations before his death.

Our last robbery operation

On December 13, 2022, my cousin (Abiodun), and I went to Ijebu Ode in

Ogun State to forcefully take a tricycle from its owner.

As usual, we left Ikorodu for Ijebu Ode in the morning. We got there between 11am and 12noon. We boarded the tricycle at Obalende and told the rider to take us to Agoro area, which is a quiet area with few buildings.

"When we got there, we ordered him to get down but he was very heady. He told us that he could not surrender his possession to us. That was when I started inflicting machete cuts on his head. As I did, he started running and shouting but no one came to his rescue. Thereafter, he fell down and we moved off with the tricycle. We sold it for N300,000."

"In our past experiences, our victims usually ran away in fear, abandoning their possessions as

we pursued them with the cutlass. However, our last victim did not yield to our threat. He refused to allow us take possession of his tricycle."

"The last operation was the fourth tricycle that we would forcefully take from their owners. The motorcycles were about six. After taking possession of one, we usually sold it for N150,000 which we would share equally. If we got a tricycle, we used to sell it for N300,000. Mefa was usually the one to give us our shares of N50,000 or N70,000, but after his death, I would give my cousin N130,000 while I would take N170,000."

Those killed in operation

"Though we used machete on

other victims during our operations, they usually ran away. We only heard of our last victim's death."

How we were arrested

My cousin was the first to be arrested, after which the police also came to my house to pick me, but didn't get me. I eventually went to the police station to surrender myself."

Cousin's confession

"I am father of two. We learnt about robbery as a result of bad friendship we got entangled in. Mefa used to sell marijuana and we used to go to his hemp joint to smoke, though I later stopped it. That was how we got acquainted with him."

"We already know that what we

did was bad and is against the law, but we plead for forgiveness. We will never do such a thing again."

According to SP Oyeyemi, before the suspects' arrest, policemen attached to Obalende divisional headquarters, Ijebu Ode, were alerted to a dead body, later identified as a tricycle rider, on December 13, 2022.

With the information, the PPRO said that the Divisional Police Officer in charge of Obalende Division, SP Murphy Salami, led his detectives to the scene, where it was discovered that the deceased was inflicted with machete cuts which led to his death, while his tricycle was taken away.

From that point, according to him, the police started investigation, in order to crack the crime and unravel those behind the act.

Their efforts paid off two months later when one of the suspects, Damilola, residing at New site, Awosan Fakale, Ikorodu, Lagos State, was arrested with the deceased's phone.

Following this, his accomplice and cousin, Abiodun, was apprehended at his residence, Road 1, Block A, Maya, also in Ikorodu.

"On interrogation, the two suspects confessed to the crime."

"In their statements, they confessed to being a two-man syndicate who specialized in snatching motorcycles and tricycles. They confessed further that they always carried out their robbery operation in Ijebu ode and its environs."

"According to them, on the 13th of December 2022, they lured the victim, Amos Oyemечи Chukwuka, to carry their farm products from Agoro area to the town, and they agreed on a price."

"However, on getting to Agoro/Ikangba road, they stopped him and snatched the tricycle from him. It was when the deceased tried to struggle with them that they macheted him to death and dragged his corpse to the riverbank where they dumped him."

"They informed the police further that they have snatched up to eight tricycles in Ijebu Ode area, and that their standby buyers reside in Ikorodu," SP Abimbola said in a statement.

Recovered from the suspects were two phones of the deceased, as well as the cutlass used to kill him.

The image-maker said that the state Commissioner of Police, Frank Mba, directed that the suspects be transferred to the State Criminal Investigation Department for further investigation.

Whenever we went for the operation, we would sell whichever of the two products we got, wait for a couple of months to make sure no one was after us, and then strike again.