

I saw as vigilantes killed my two siblings –Survivor of Taraba killings

Justin Tyopuusu Jalingo

The survivor of the recent brutal killing of two brothers in Taraba State, Mr Emmanuel Lortile, has narrated how his two brothers, Zeeyum and Tersoo, were allegedly murdered by some vigilantes in the Takum Local Government Area of the state.

Emmanuel and his slain brothers who were indigenes of Katsina-Ala in the neighbouring Benue State, told journalists in Jalingo that he had conveyed his brothers to Fete, a village in Taraba, on a fishing expedition when they were arrested.

According to him, they arrived in Fete at around 1pm on Wednesday, May 1, 2019 and were rounded up by some youths of the area who searched their bags and only found fishing materials on them.

He explained that some Jukun youths, who knew them, testified that they were not criminals, but others started beating them.

"Not satisfied that we were not criminals, they took us to the palace of the Chief of Fete town who



•Taraba CP, Alkasim Sanusi

also did not find anything incriminating in us, but asked that we should be taken to Takum to prove our innocence because of the level of insecurity in the area.

"We were there at the palace till 6pm when a white Toyota Hilux van with four occupants arrived at the palace. The occupants in vigilante uniform quickly disembarked. They beat us up, tied our legs and hands and took off to Takum," Emmanuel added.

He said midway into the journey, the van stopped along the bush and the men spoke to one another in Jukun language, threatening to deal with them.

Emmanuel said, "I heard them say 'we will deal with these Tiv people.' They brought down Zeeyum and Tersoo from the vehicle and shot them dead. When it was my turn, I pleaded with them to allow me to pray before they would kill me and they reluctantly obliged.

"The moment the person, who held me by the shirt released me, I jumped down from the vehicle and ran away. They shot sporadically to get me but God saved me."

Emmanuel alleged that the van used by the vigilantes belonged to the Caretaker Chairman of Takum LGA, Shibani Tikari, and that the chairman knew the driver.

But in a swift reaction, Tikari said as the chief security officer of the local government, he donated van to vigilantes and hunters to fish out kidnappers and armed robbers terrorising the council.

Tikari admitted that the driver was an employee of the local government.

According to him the state government had mandated 12 local governments battling kidnapping and armed robbery to conduct two weeks' security operations, using vigilantes and local hunters to fish out the criminals.

He said, "It was this arrangement that made me to release my Hilux to the vigilantes for the operation which has been on for the past two weeks. From the briefing I received from the Divisional Police Officer of Takum, the vigilantes engaged and killed two armed robbers and were on their way to Takum to inform the police when some villagers reported to the army that my vehicle was seen dumping corpses and they were arrested.

"That was how people began to say all sorts of things. The corpses are in the morgue in the Takum General Hospital and the police are doing their investigation. I have not been able to hear from those arrested because they are in police custody.

"I am not going to be deterred in providing security and good leadership in Takum because God has brought me to the office for a purpose."

Ex-convict, two others nabbed for killing pastor

Bola Bamigbola, Osogbo

The Osun State Police Command has nabbed an ex-convict Adeoye Sina for



with Ogedengbe when he was killed, said when the pastor became unconscious after taking the ritual, Adeoye instructed him and Ahmed Omonla, who is at large, to kill the pastor

Customs seize