

# Midnight murder in Makurdi

From Rose Ejembi,  
Makurdi

**When on September 22, 2017, the family of Adawa went to sleep in their country home at Mbayongo, a sleepy village in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State, they had no inkling that the angel of death was lurking around to take the life of their father and breadwinner, Clement, before dawn.**

**The messengers of death in the guise of about eight gunmen stormed the home of the 57-year-old retired civil servant, robbed his family of cash, phones and other valuables, and then, led him and his wife, Fransisca, 54, to a forest. While the wife managed to escape death by the whiskers, Clement was unlucky. He died as a result of severe torture in the hands of the merciless gunmen.**

Fransisca was still traumatized when *Daily Sun* visited their Owerri Street, Makurdi residence. But the deceased's second son, Cephas, said the gunmen stormed their Mbayongo home at about 1am and gained access through the back door, which they pulled down:

"On September 23, at about 1am, unidentifiable gunmen numbering about eight stormed the house at Mbayongo in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area, about 50 kilometers to Katsina-Ala, the council headquarters. They gained entrance through the back door and then headed straight into my parents' room."

He said after collecting all the money his parents had and their phones, they went into his wife's room and collected all she had too and then into the room of the last born of the family, Ushahemba, where they collected his phone and took away the herbicide they were used in their farm. Thereafter, they locked



Fransisca



The deceased, Clement

the alarm, prompting neighbors to mobilize in search of his parents. Eventually, they found the corpse of his father dumped close to his house, while the mother was found unconscious in the forest:

"They found my father dead at about 6.45am close to the house. It looked like they killed him somewhere and later brought the corpse close to the house. My mum was found in the forest around 7.20am. When they discovered she was still alive, they carried her on a motorcycle to the main road which is about five kilometres from the scene, to a waiting vehicle which conveyed her to a private hospital at Katsina-Ala town, 50 kilometers from Mbayongo." Cephas, who was in Makurdi when the incident occurred, said he was informed via a phone call the next morning and he rushed to Katsina-Ala to convey his mother from a private hospital to the Benue State University Teaching Hospital (BSUTH), Makurdi on the same day. She spent six days at the hospital:

"My belief is that they meted out the same punishment they gave my mother to my father because when they found his corpse, his neck was swollen; his eyeballs bulged out and his tongue

of ill treatment. The last time I saw him was on September 12 but a few days before his death, my dad had called me on phone and requested for recharge card, which I sent to him. He later called to confirm that he got the card".

A graduate of Industrial Chemistry from the Federal University of Agriculture, Makurdi (FUAM), Cephas relieved his last moments with his father: "I never had a premonition of his sudden death. The day he requested for recharge card was my last discussion with him. I told him that the zinc on the roof of our house in Makurdi was leaking and needed repairs; he said he would soon be back. That was the last call I got from him.

"After my father retired from the state civil service, he had to relocate to the village to farm because he was having financial challenge as his pension was not forthcoming and his gratuity was not yet paid. That was why he relocated temporarily to the village.

"He had only spent about a month in the village when the incident happened. It is difficult to say it was purely a robbery case going by the manner in which the gunmen operated. He was buried on October 11. In fact, my fa-

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