

VIGILANCE GROUP ON RAMPAGE

■ Gang members turn terror in Adamawa

From **Billy Graham**, Yola

A seemingly illegal vigilance group, known as Tabital Pulaku Jode-Jam, is hot and on rampage in Adamawa State. Accused of complicity in a number of extra-judicial killings in Mubi, the group appears to have derailed from the universal objectives of employing people to police their communities.

In Mubi and its environs, the group, led by Jauro, Nuru and Mustapha, has arrogated to itself, the powers to arrest, hold courts, deliver and execute judgments. These clearly are breach of the Constitution.

That is not all. As their hands are soiled, so are their pockets soaked with lucre. They are accused of sundry cases of extortion of their victims.

A recent victim told *Daily Sun*: "One fateful morning, I was on my way to the market when three people approached and arrested me. They took me to a place called Bladega, their base in Mubi.

"They asked whether I know why I was brought to their office, I said No. I told them there is one issue that I have in court, which has been there since May last year.

"Not long after that, I saw the complainant. He is the man with whom I have a case in court, Alhaji Ibrahim. The case is pending at the high court.

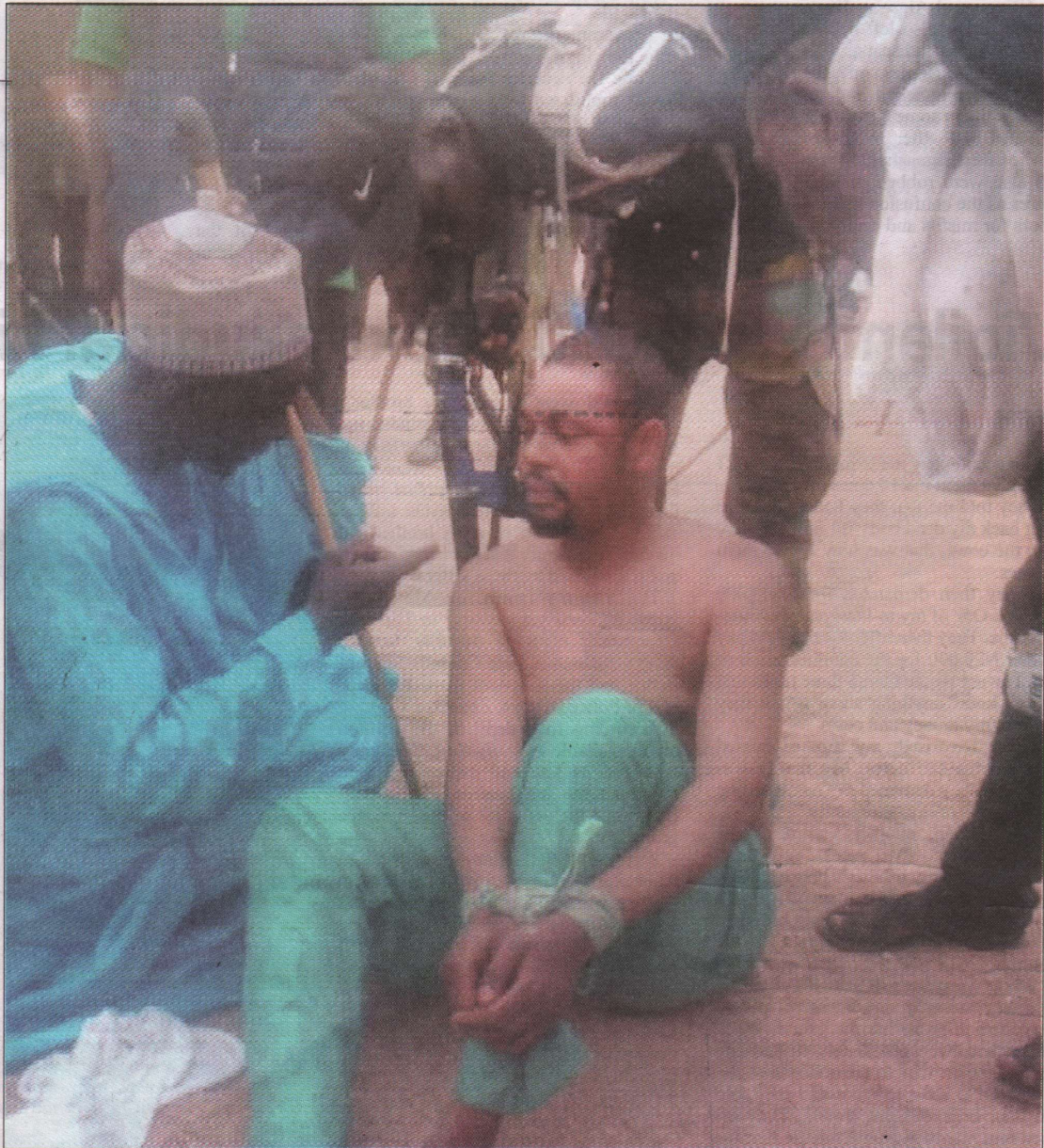
"The complainant claimed that I had bought 14 stolen cows, the reason he took me to court. But since the court is not reliable, he had no option than to bring the matter to an honest organization to help him recover his stolen wealth.

"My response was that, to the best of my knowledge, I know this case was in the court. And there was no way I should be dragged to another court for hearing on the same matter.

"They asked me to pay for the cows but I responded defiantly that I would not. Their leader reminded me that they had already killed 11 people in their own form of swift kind of Justice and I would be the 12th if I don't comply.

"That was when they stripped me and beat me until I lost consciousness. The beating, according to my doctors, has affected my kidney.

"Knowing fully well that they could make me their 12th victim, I decided I was going to give them what they asked. They mobilised 12 members of their vigilance group, all with



One of the gang members

Vigilantes accused of extra-judicial killings, extortion

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guns to accompany me to my farm so that I could give them the 14 cows they wanted.

"They told me that they had an order to bring back my dead body if I failed to give them the cows, that was how I gave them 14 cows.

"They then demanded for N600,000 from me. One of my in-laws paid the money for me. They thereafter asked me to pay another N20,000 for the administration of oath. I swore by the Quran three times that I didn't know anything about it, but they still kept my money and cows.

"I was terrorised, my mother fainted upon hearing the news. My family was confused. They damaged my name among the members of my community."

Nuru Usman, another victim of the group, recalled: "Two weeks ago, these people invaded my brother's house at Dazalain Mubi. They took him away. It is like they immediately started beating him, and before we could know it they had already shot him.

"While we were still grieving over the loss, they stormed our house, dispersed everyone and broke into his house. When it happened, we immediately rushed and reported the incident to the police in Mubi.

"The DPO went to them and they told him their boss was not around. They assured him that they would release him the following morning. But painfully he didn't see the following day.

"When I went to pick my brother's corpse, about 40 of them surrounded me with guns and whips, threatening to maltreat me. After his death, we went back and reported his death to the police. Since then, the matter is before the state CID.

"I just want justice for my brother and his family, a family that has been tortured and traumatised by these killers."

The victim's family on March 14, 2019, addressed a petition to Director, Department of State Security Service (DSS), Adamawa State Commissioner of Police and the Assistant Inspector General of Police (AIGP), Zone 3.

According to a copy of the petition made available to *Daily Sun*, the family lamented its fate and expressed desire to attract the intervention of the public against the activities of the vigilance group.

Victims of the group were listed as Abubakar Sarkin Shanu Gella, Rilwan Usman, Umaru Pakanaiza, Bello Usman Kippa, Adamu Udajo Mubi, Ahmadu Abdu, Bello Babajo and Ahmadu Alhaji Kawu Ba'jaule.

The AIG, Haruna Huzi Mshelia, acknowledged that the matter was mentioned before him when he took over and that he directed the state police command to immediately look into the matter with a view to addressing it:

"There is no way police would authorise anything like that, but we would look into the matter."

