

Linus Oota, Lafia

Entering the premises of Fatima Zulumki's residence in Lafia, one could easily read the mood of her younger sister, Margarete Ataan and other family members. They were sad and it was, therefore, difficult to get her (Ataan) to talk to Daily Sun, though she later consented.

As she sat dejectedly on the dining chair in the sitting room, tears rolled uncontrollably down her face before she could utter any words. She sat back on the chair, cleared her throat before narrating the misfortune that had befallen her family.

“Zulumki lost her husband three years ago. He died in a ghastly motor accident while returning from Kano on a business trip. Together with her two kids, they continued the struggle of life in his absence. Interestingly, she refused all enteritis to contract a new marriage, noting that it was too early to remarry.

“June 2, 2019 was a normal day for my sister, Zulumki Fatima. A business woman, she started the day without any inkling or fear that danger of any sort awaited her and went to supervise a project in Nasarawa Council Area of the state.

“Before her departure, she happily played with and wished her children well. She even promised to be back at noon. Her penchant for hard work and efficiency however made her keep late nights while on the site. This was to ensure that things are done the way they should be.

“When she left the site, she was satisfied that the day had gone on well. Driving out of the site at about 7:30pm, she was in high spirits. She drove slowly and steadily which her characteristic ease, until the moment she was intercepted by some people who drove ferociously and blocked her way. They ordered her out of her car at gun point and zoomed off with her. That was the beginning of her trouble.

“Later her captors established contact with the family and demanded for N20 million ransom. But after a series of negotiations, they settled for N10 million. They wasted her life in a location in the bush before the delivery of the ransom could be arranged and they directed our family members to the scene where the murder was executed. They had tortured her to death, we presumed.

“Before she lost her husband three years ago, she worked with him in the business of selling clothes and later, expanded it by establishing a block industry. I'm not aware if she had problems with anybody. She left the house with a promise to

come back and that was the end. She was kidnapped and murdered in her cold blood.

“The kidnappers were not patient to wait for us to source the money. When we finally got the money, they directed us to a place to drop it and only for us to get there and meet the dead body of my elder sister. The death of my sister is a huge loss to her two kids who are still in school. The children will now grow up without a mother and a father.

“But everything put together, we are leaving everything in the hands of Almighty God. We are very sure that God knows all the killers. He know the faces of those who committed the crime, their names, where they are, what they have done,” Ataan said.