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...As police round up 5-man gang

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SHARES    VIEWS

**Tony John, Port Harcourt**

**The gruesome murder of three university undergraduates in Rivers State and the circumstances surrounding the incident were too pathetic. The conventional and social media were awash with reactions.**

These probably attracted the attention of President Muhammadu Buhari, who gave the police authorities a marching order to ensure the perpetrators of the dastardly act were arrested.

The arrest of the five members of the kidnap gang by the Rivers State Police Command led by Chief Superintendent of Police, CSP, Edward Shadar, Commander, Anti-Kidnap Unit (AKU), has given hope to families of the victims who have demanded for justice.

The victims, Fortune Obemba, Nelson Nwafor and Joy Adoki (only female) were abducted on April 1, in Choba, Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of the state by the gang. They were killed and buried in a shallow grave in a bush in Eteoo community, Eleme Local Government Area of the state.

Mr. Bright Obemba, father of Fortune, one of the victims, said he was devastated when the news got to him. The man, who was at the headquarters of Rivers Police Command, Moscow Road, Port Harcourt, said he still finds it difficult to believe that he has lost his only son.

In an interview with Sunday Sun, Fortune's father, who spoke in tears during the parade of the arrested five-man gang, said his son had never been involved in any recorded criminal case.

He narrated that his son was lured to death when he paid his friend (Nelson) a visit, who incidentally happened to be the targeted victim.

Mr Obemba regretted that his only son, a 100-level Civil Engineering student of Rivers State University (RSU), would be gruesomely killed without any offence. He, however, commended the federal and state governments, as well as police authorities for the prompt arrest of the perpetrators.

He expressed: "I will first of all thank the President of Nigeria, Muhammadu Buhari, the Rivers State Governor, Nyesom Wike, Rivers Commissioner of Police, Joseph Mukan and the Commander of Anti-Kidnapping Unit. I appreciate all of them for the efforts made leading to the arrest of my son's killers.

"My son was a good boy. I have never seen him involved in criminal activities. But on the said day he followed a friend (Nelson) and today, I cannot see my only son again.

"I am begging the government, police to ensure there is justice in this case. I have lost so many things and now, my son.

“No amount of money can bring back my son, he was my only son. My son until his gruesome murder was a student of Rivers State University, studying Civil Engineering”, he lamented.

Mr. Obemba recalled: “It was on April 7, 2020, when my son didn’t return home which was unusual. I started calling his mobile phone, but no response. I called his friends who told me that my son went to the barbing salon with Nelson and his (Nelson) girlfriend.

“So, I want Nigerians to pray for me and family. The perpetrators must pay for the crime they committed. My son would have clocked 20 years in September this year”.

During the parade, the suspects confessed to the crime. The gang leader, Bright Iheachi, who admitted killing the students, said one of the victims (Nelson) made away with profit they jointly made from an online business.

Iheachi said: “I was the person that ordered my colleagues to kill the three of them, but it was Nelson that I had wanted them to kill, but I later changed my mind and decided that the three of them be killed,” he said.

Another suspect involved in the killing of the three young students, Friday Akpan, claimed that it was Bright that ordered for their killing.

Akpan said: “It was Bright that ordered us to shoot the students dead. He said, if we do not shoot them, the victims will expose us.

“Bright told us that he had business deal with Nelson and when the money entered, Nelson refused to give him his share and travelled to Ghana.

“When Bright learnt that Nelson was back from Ghana, he hired us to kill him. Bright brought Nelson and his friends to the bush and ordered us to kill them.

“We pleaded to Bright to spare the lives of Nelson’s friends. But, he insisted that we should kill them, so that they don’t expose us. We also raped the female victim before killing her”.

Earlier, the state Commissioner of Police, Mukan, narrated that the victims were kidnapped at Choba, Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, on April 7.

He said: “The case was reported at the Anti-kidnapping Unit and they immediately swung into action, following which on April 30, 2020, the leader of the deadly gang by name Bright Iheachi (aka Nelly 20 years) was arrested.

“On interrogation, he made useful confessions that led to the arrest of two other members of the gang namely Friday Akpan and Emmanuel Kamiwelisha.

“In the course of investigation, all three suspects confessed to have killed the undergraduates among other operations carried out by them around Woji, Peter Odili road and Eleme communities.

“In our avowed determination to crack and solve the crime, one of the suspects in the wee hours of May 1, 2020, took operatives of the Anti-kidnapping Unit led by the commander, to a forest at Eteo in Eleme LGA where he identified the decomposing bodies of the undergraduates and narrated how five of them sexually assaulted the female and killed them all.

“Further confessions of the suspects led to the arrest of the fourth and fifth suspects, namely Isaac ThankGod, a native of Eken in Khana LGA and Christian Chimezie Mbakwe 39, a native of Obowo in Obowo LGA of Imo State.

“The fifth suspect was arrested in Imo State where the Toyota Avalon car with Reg. No. LSR 197 FY belonging to the deceased Nelson Nwafor was recovered from him”.

*Sunday Sun* gathered that the money that led to the death of the victims ran into millions.