

By CHIOMA OKEZIE-OKEH

SOMETIME in April 2020, a building contractor known as Engineer Godwin Christopher received a call from a supposed priest requesting the contractor's services to construct a big church auditorium in Lafia Nassarawa State.

On April 16, Engineer Godwin, in company of the supposed priest who was taking him for site inspection, walked into the trap of hired assassins. They descended on the contractor and promptly slaughtered him.

The suspected assassins who were later arrested by operatives of Force Special Tactical Squad (STS) claimed that they were contracted to kill him and retrieve his SIM card by his friend identified as Sylvester Agwale, a Christian missionary.

Saturday Star learnt from police sources that the deceased's family alerted the operatives when they realised that their brother, who told them of the site inspection with the priest, was suddenly incommunicado.

They were able to track down the supposed priest, Samuel Aloko who turned out to be one of the assassins. He led the police to arrest Micah Adeka and Sylvester Agwale. The two later confessed to the police that they participated in the act while two others remain at large.

Engineer was stingy

On why he ordered the execution of the deceased, Sylvester Agwale, the mastermind told *Saturday Star* that all he was focused on was how to get his hands on the millions in the account of the late engineer, whom he referred to as a friend.

"I am 29 years old and a native of Lafia in Nassarawa State. I am a member of Living Faith Church (Winners Chapel) in Nassarawa, and one of the dedicated persons in the missionary department. It was during one of our work that I met Engineer Godwin.

"He is a contractor and has many sites where he is building houses. I started working as his assistant and we became so close that he can send me to buy building materials worth millions of naira without fear that I could run away with the money.

"The only problem was that he is not generous to me. I was preparing for my wedding and he knew about it. I begged him for sponsorship, instead of giving me good money he only gave me N50,000 donation. He then gave me a loan of N450,000.

"I was not happy and decided to call my friends to get money from him. I observed that there was always so much money in his car. I had seen him bring as much as N1million from the car.

"I called my people and we met at a hotel in Nassarawa where we agreed that they should rob him and collect the SIM card. I told them that if the man dared to resist them, they should kill him. To further convince them, I called the engineer and asked him to send money to my account and he sent N30,000. I told them that I overheard him talking about N25 million that was recently paid into his account for one of the jobs that he was doing.

"We agreed that Samuel would be the one to woo him. He pretended that he was a pastor and wanted to build a church. In fact, on the day of the meeting, Samuel called him and gave him an appointment to come and see the site so that they

could agree on an estimate. I also gave four of the boys who were at the meeting N50,000 each as advance fees. I got the money from the allowance that the church paid me for my missionary work. I had hoped that since we were expecting millions, that all would be well."

"In an attempt to create an alibi for himself, Agwale went to the site where the deceased was supervising his project and offered to assist him as usual. "I was there when he left. He told me that he wanted to check up on a project. I knew that it was Samuel that called him. I waited behind and alerted them that he was on the move.

"About an hour later, they called me that the man was dead and that nothing was found in his car. I still don't believe that story; I am sure they collected the money and hid it from me. Samuel brought the SIM card to me and I took it to meet my friend who is an expert.

"We generated a new password but unfortunately before we could withdraw money from the account, it had been blocked. It was then that I knew that there was trouble. I warned everyone to go underground, but unfortunately, they were careless and Micah was arrested. He was the one who led the police to pick me.

"I am so sorry for allowing greed to lead me to this kind of horrible sin. I only ask God to have mercy on my soul because I know that I will be killed."

On his part, Micah claimed that when he and others were contacted, the message was to kill the engineer. "We knew from the beginning that the engineer must die. "Sometime in April, Samuel called me and two others that there was a job for us and N25 million was involved. It was my friend Agwale that brought the job. If the job was successful, we would all get at least N5million each. I requested that we should meet with Agwale to be sure that it was not a trap. We met at a hotel where he confirmed the job. He told us to kill the man and collect the SIM card.

"He told us that someone is on standby to withdraw the money and offered the four of us N50,000 advance payments. On April 16, which was the date of the incident, Samuel dressed up like a priest and went to an agreed spot to pick the engineer. He had told the man that they were going to inspect a land that will be used to build a

DEADLY TRAP

How evangelist, others slaughtered building contractor

► He was my friend but gave me only N50,000 for my wedding -Evangelist

► We thought he had N25m in his account, says another suspect



AGWALE, SAMUEL, MICAH

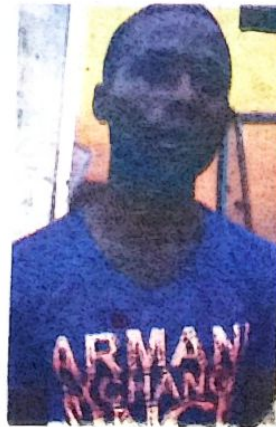
big church. We took him to a site called Project in Lafia. It is a new site where people are buying land so much. As soon as he got to the agreed point, we attacked him. One of us gave him a cut on the neck while I stabbed him severally on the stomach till he died.

Samuel took his phone and we searched his car. Unfortunately, only N50 was found. I don't know if Samuel took the money while we were busy killing the man.

"As we were going, we broke the glass of the car so that people would think that he was robbed and killed by robbers. We were waiting for Agwale to keep to his own side of the deal when I got information that Samuel had been arrested by the police. I ran to Latan area and stayed there. I was called to supply bags of beans to a buyer and when I went there I discovered that the buyers were policemen from STS."

On how he became a cold-hearted criminal, Micah said he was lured into crime by friends. "I am 26 and I'm married with two kids. After my secondary education, I joined my parents and became a rice, yam and beans farmer. I did well and was able to raise money that I used to get married at the age of 22.

Unfortunately, along the line, I made friends with some young herders in our area. They have big guns and they taught me how to make fast money through kidnab-



MICAH



AGWALE

ping and cattle rustling. I made a lot of money and it was during some of our operations that I met Samuel and Agwale. Agwale is aware that we are criminals and he has brought several jobs for us and he was given his share from the proceeds," he alleged. While insisting that he did not find any money in the car of the deceased, Samuel said that he played his role as a priest and convinced the deceased to follow him. "I called him as agreed and quoted parts of the Bible to him to convince him that I am a priest. "He was so happy when we met and I was carrying a big Bible. I told him that the

church is planning to spend at least N100 million on the project and he was explaining how he would get it done at a much cheaper rate.

"I even prayed for him in the car while we were driving to the agreed spot. As soon as he stepped down from the car and I was pointing at the land, the others attacked.

"I am sorry that I allowed the devil to use me to deceive him in the name of God. I am not a pastor and I rarely go to church. It was Agwale that told us that the man was a religious man and would easily be fooled if we used that strategy. I am sorry and I pray for mercy."