

# Again, ritualist kills 14-year-old girl, removes vital parts in Plateau

13th September 2022 in Lifeline

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From **Gyang Bere**, Jos

**Nightmares have become constant for Fatima Danliti, mother of 14-year-old Maryam Salisu, who was trapped and killed by a suspected ritualist in a bush at Babale community, a suburb of Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State.**

Fatima, a mother of seven, could not hold back tears as she cried uncontrollably when the mutilated, lifeless body of her daughter was found in the bush on Friday, September 9, 2022.

Indeed, young girls are now targets of ritual killers in the state. This is the fourth ritual case Plateau State has recorded this year. The first occurred on the January 1, when a young girl was killed in a hotel within the city centre. Her eyes were allegedly removed by her boyfriend.

It was terrifying for Fatima and other residents of the community who trooped to the scene to catch a glimpse of the body, which was dumped in a trench without her throat, tongue, breasts and eyes.

Maryam had gone out that fateful day alongside 12 other girls to a nearby bush to fetch firewood for her mother when a ritualist struck her with a stick and she fell down while her peers fled home, wailing and soliciting the help of the vigilance group to rescue her.

But the evil man dragged her into the bush and removed her vital body organs and dumped her remains in a trench and disappear. Before the vigilance group could rouse themselves that fateful afternoon, the perpetrator had fled the scene to an unknown destination.

The mother, who narrated her pain, said Maryam was out to assist her get firewood alongside her friends for cooking as it was not easy to afford gas, kerosene or even buy charcoal. She said that if she had got any premonition of her daughter's death, she wouldn't have allowed her to move an inch away from home.

She said: "I have left everything to God, since the man was not found at the scene. Only God will take vengeance on my behalf.

"We have left everything to Allah. Everyone has their own way of departing. I believe that is how Allah wanted it to happen. I am reporting the culprit to the Almighty. It is now between him and the Creator."

A 13-year-old, Aisha Sani, a peer of the late Maryam, who escaped being whisked away by the merchant of death, gave an account of how her friend was attacked.

"We were in a group of 12 when we went to a nearby bush to fetch firewood for cooking. We didn't envisage that someone was in the bush waiting for us. Each person took different ways to get the firewood.

"We saw a man with a stick and he hit Maryam with it and she fell down. We started crying and asking for help but there was nobody close to assist us. We begged him to leave her but he was dragging her into the bush and we ran to inform people at home," she said.

Former councillor representing the area, Sani Babale, said this was the first time the community was experiencing such a sad and gory incident. He asked security agencies to fish out the perpetrator.

He said: "The girls went to the bush to fetch firewood and as they were busy fetching the firewood, a man suddenly appeared and hit her with a bamboo and she fell down while the rest of her friends ran home to report what was happening in the bush."

Babale explained that the incident occurred on Friday, September 9, about 2pm: "Her friends who went to the bush reported to us that when the man hit her with the bamboo, they begged him to leave her but he refused and dragged her into the bush

"When residents of the community, men and women, trooped to the scene of the incident, we couldn't find the man and Maryam. We all returned home and got back the following morning and in the process of searching her whereabouts we found her body in a hole with her two breasts, throat and tongue removed

"It is painful. We have never experienced this kind of calamity. We are in short supply of security in our area. We are calling on Plateau State Police Command to deploy more police officers in the community."

Police public relations officer DSP Alfred Alabo confirmed the incident and said the police tactical team was working round the clock to arrest the perpetrator.