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Ibeshe: A Community's Tale Of Woes

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For residents of the Ibeshe community of Ikorodu, a Lagos suburb, peace remains elusive as they live in palpable fear. To the community, daytime becomes night time while night time is daytime. Sound sleep

for them seems an unending mirage. Even the atmosphere is heavily tensed as suspicion hovers round the residents. OLUWATOSIN OMONIYI writes

They did not only stop trusting themselves. Their communal lifestyle is gradually going into extinction as everybody is keeping to him/herself while scampering for shelter. The strength of the spirit of brotherhood binding them in this community has worn out.

The women are moving out of this community en masses, leaving goats and chickens to take over as occupiers of houses. And for those who have the courage to stay back in the community, their husbands no longer enjoy free movements as they have to stay awake to guard the home fronts.

At nights, they cluster. About five families could stay together in a house. A family could accommodate about five different families at night because they believe that in unity, it would be difficult for a predator in human flesh to launch an attack. The men also act as vigilante. Long story short, life for them is a permanent nightmare that is better imagined! The bone of contention in this community is a group of serial rapists called 'Badoo.'

Badoo has become a fearful household name within Ibeshe community. Members of the group operate in commando style having women, mostly singles, widows and children as his main target. Once a Badoo member launches an attack, he leaves on his trail agony and gnashing of teeth. So far, there has been constant crying, wailing and mourning from

deep pains and injuries Badoo- incessantly inflicted upon the people of this community.

Right now, most residents of Ibeshe community live in perpetual fear. According to most of those who chatted with New Telegraph, the residents are moving out of Ibeshe en masse.

Like a popular Yoruba adage which says, 'to avert evil to the whole body, then the eyes must save itself of the horror looming around,' hence, the mass movement of the residents out of the community becomes inevitable. As danger posed by Badoo looms in the air, fear of the group accompanies it.

Long story short, the residents no longer know peace as they suspect one another of perhaps aiding the evil Badoo is perpetuating in the community. According to Fatosin Oluwakemi, a resident and Public Relation Officer, PRO, of the area- CDC Igbogbo Bayekwu LCDA, she no longer sleeps soundly in her house, ever since one of the Badoo guys attacked one of her tenants.

She narrated that after the attack, she slept in her work place (Queens College) for about two weeks but she didn't feel comfortable.

Oluwakemi, however, opted for her aged mother; still she didn't feel safe as there was constant outcry of Badoo's treatment to people around her.

"So, I resolved to be going to my church member's house with my daughter and aged mother every night. But I discovered that even they

were not comfortable at all. In fact, they do not sleep at all. Rather, they kept vigil in turn. At any slightest sound or stub of steps at midnight, we would jump up and start shaking or would start blowing whistle.

We blew whistle to the extent that it became less meaningful,” she said. Indeed, it is really a traumatic experience that the men also no longer move about freely for fear of exposing their wives to the attack of Badoo boys, who specialise in raping only women without their husbands or spouses with them.

But going by the tale of woes and glaring evidences within that Rath community, the Badoo not only rape women or ladies, he also raped children as young as five, seven and 14 years old.

One of them was little Adesewa Adegbite, five-year-old, who resides with parents in Ibeshe Titun. The unfortunate, however, befell the child while sleeping beside her mother inside the church after vigil. A Badoo member was said to have entered the church around 3.30am, carried the child away to an unknown destination, threw her over the fence and had canal knowledge of her. Waking up to see her child shaking after the deed had been done, she thought it was mere cold.

Temitope, the girl’s mother, said she got up, still drowsy and robbed the girl’s body with rob but while massaging her legs with rob, Temitope said she noticed that there was a sticky feeling in her palms. So, she took a flash light to check and discovered that it was blood. “I screamed and everyone around got up and started searching for the culprit,” she said. Consequently, the girl suffered multiple laceration in her vagina.

She can no longer urinate through the vaginal nor could she pass faeces through her anus. One of her arms also got broken as she was kept in POP to strengthen the mangled arm. According to the medical report made available to New Telegraph, she is suffering from multiple laceration in her vaginal.

As such, the side of her stomach was slit opened to enable her pass urine and faeces. Explaining to New Telegraph her experience in the hands of Badoo, the little girl said: “I saw one dark man carrying me in his arms to my school compound. On getting there, he threw me over the fence and jumped inside. When I wanted to cry, he threatened me that he would kill me if I did so.

I was shaking, then he raised my dress and” It is indeed a horrible experience for little Adesewa. She couldn't really describe the terrible moment with Badoo. As she was talking, she trembled at the memory of the night. Right now, Adesewa feels quite uncomfortable with her left hand inside the POP.

It itches her uncontrollably and if she had to pass urine or faeces, then part of her intestines got exposed. Adesewa's father, Olugbenga, alleged that the police officers at Ipakodo Divisional police station were not helpful. Rather, they were busy taking turns to feed their eyes.

“In annoyance, we left the station and rushed to a nearby private hospital where we were later referred to the Lagos State University Teaching Hospital, LASUTH,” he said. They, however, pleaded with the state government to come to their aid for proper and full treatment of the girl,

Adesewa. “We beg Lagos State government to please come to our aid. We want them to take up the full responsibility for my daughter’s treatment, so that she lives a normal life again.

We are low income earners,” the parents pleaded. For Mabel, seven years old and another victim of Badoo, she has become mentally deranged. She was not stable on the bed, shaking and screeching at the sight of strange figure. She wouldn’t talk to anyone outside her mother or her care givers. She was attacked by Badoo while trying to rape her 86-yearold grandmother.

That night, Mabel was sleeping by the side of her grandmother when one of the boys sneaked in through the backdoor. While struggling with the old woman, she woke and the picture that greeted her eyes was too much for her to comprehend, she screamed and made for the door.

But she was slow as the Badoo boy aimed at her with a chisel! The chisel penetrated her mouth from one side to the other, thereby dislocating her jaw totally. Not done with that havoc, the Badoo boy according to the old woman, put the young girl on the bed with blood all over her and had canal knowledge of her.

The young girl was not only psychologically traumatised, she was also physically battered. Her mouth has been badly damaged, lost half of her teeth and her entire face seriously damaged. She was however referred to Orthopedic Hospital, Igbobi because of the damaged jaw but was rejected and referred to LASUTH. But due to the fact that the parents are low income earners, they couldn’t afford the hospital bill any longer.

They got the girl discharged and resorted to home treatment. At home, they no longer stay in their house but stay in the church where the little girl is receiving spiritual treatment. Upon sighting a strange face, this girl either goes into coma or starts fretting violently, except there is a known face, then she stay calm but turns a recluse.

Her grandmother, 86, has since recovered physically, but now living dejectedly and in despair for fear of Badoo and the pains he had inflicted on her family. According to the old woman's narration, it happened at the early hours of a Sunday at about 2:00am, when a strange figure entered into her apartment, raped her.

She said she got battered by the rapist for struggling with him. "He described the struggling arrogant on my part and before I knew what was happening, my face was attacked, cutting off my nose," she said. The 86-year-old is also with her daughter and grandchild in the church praying for total recovery of the girl. "We plead with the state government to please come to our aid. They should not just sit there and talk on the pages of newspapers that they have provided security.

The residents of this community are actually fighting war with powerful unknown forces which only the government can conquer," she pleaded.

Exactly a week after the old woman and grandchild's attack, another lady, a Ghanaian and a nursing mother was said to be attacked by this same serial rapists. In her case, she was raped and maimed badly. Her whole 32 teeth were removed and deeply axed at the back.

Unfortunately for her, she didn't live to tell the story.

She was rushed to Ikorodu General Hospital but later transferred to LASUTH where she gave up the ghost. In the same vein, at Oke Ota community of Ibeshe, one Deborah Salau, a nurse was attacked and badly axed at the back and the head. Salau sustained head injury.

There is a hole in her skull according to the neurologists handling her case at LASUTH. The neurologists said they were not able to gather all the pieces of bones broken from her skull.

They added that blood slipped into the brain and ear. “Consequently, it will take about two years for nearfull recovery. Truth be told, she cannot totally recover because it has to do with brain.” Not only that, some black substances were seen in her private part. When New Telegraph visited the hospital, she was seen being fed through the pipe connected to her nose.

She could not take solid food through her mouth. According to the landlady, who related the story to New Telegraph, she looked out of her window which oversees Deborah’s and discovered that Deborah’s window has been broken. Immediately, she said rushed to the scene and saw Salau in her pool of blood. She said she screamed for help.

“Before Salau went to coma, she managed to tell me the story that while struggling with a Badoo boy, he battered her to weaken her and threw an axe at her back and macheted her head at the back.

Thereafter, raped her even with blood all over her and cleaned her private part with a white handkerchief and poured alligator pepper inside

it. “And narrating her experience to me, she went into coma. For two weeks, Salau was not stable in the hospital.” In Ibeshe, another lady simply identified as Yetunde was raped and battered three days after moving into her new apartment in the community.

She was lucky; she survived it and moved on with her life in full force of activities. Another victim, who pleaded anonymity, told New Telegraph that she was able move to on with life because she has accepted her fate. According to her, she was raped, inflicted with injuries while she wrestled with him- Badoo. “He overpowered me, broke my nose, cut my lips and broke some of my teeth.” Another 14 -year -old girl said she was raped by Badoo.

She sustained severe injury in her private part and left eyes. The above stories were the few cases out of about 20 women that chatted with New Telegraph. Due to the incessant attacks, brutalisation and rape on the women, all the community women spearheaded a protest to the palace of Olubeshe of Ibeshe, (their king) to press home their demands for security and sanity of the community.

On getting to the palace, the king, Oba Richard Abayomi, was alleged to run away, leaving his aides behind. The crowd then marched forward to the king's residence where they chanted songs that they were tired of being nicknamed ‘adokun Badoo,’ meaning Badoo's remnant.

As they were chanting the song, they were throwing stones and destroying the king's property. This move definitely made the king to come out and address the crowd and assured them that he would tackle

the issue on timely. But three days after the protest, there was alarm within three areas of the community- of three rape incidents with axe marks as the usual signature.

According to the residents, they felt both the king and police were lackadaisical about the issues, hence they decided to take laws into their hands. They caught one of the rapists and burnt him to ashes. And by the time the police officers got there, there was little or nothing they could do to salvage the situation.

They gave excuse that they took the barbaric action because two of the Badoo boys they caught and handed over to king were handed over to the police, who let them off the hook, making the bad boy to come back to reign more terror on them. One of such cases was the one they caught recently.

He failed in his attempt to rape a lady in Okeota, suburb of the community. While trying to escape from the alarm the lady raised, he sustained injury from the broken bottles placed on the fence of the building. This became a lead for search among the people.

Luckily, at Ilaje, another suburb of the community, he was apprehended when trying to get treatment from a nearby Chemist. He was taken to the palace and within minutes of his arrival at the palace, Police team came to interrogate him before whisking him away.

At the palace, some women including teenage girls were bold to come and identify him as the one who attacked, raped and maimed them. Even

the 86-year- old grandma identified him as the Badoo who raped her.

A Lagos civil servant discreetly went to Ipakodo police station to identify him as the Badoo, who attacked her. So was the case of another Badoo, who was caught and handed over to the Oba, who in turn handed over to the police. But the issue of the second one was more dramatic. From Ipakodo Divisional Police Station, he was transferred to Panti in Yaba area of Lagos.

According to an officer at the station, the transfer became necessary when the crowd coming to the station to have a look at Badoo was becoming uncontrollable. But at Panti police station, the Badoo was said to be vomiting blood anytime he was being interrogated.

He was said to have confessed before the king at the Panti Police Station that they were four in number perpetuating evil simultaneously in the community.

According to the Chairman, Okeota Joint CDA, Pastor Abayomi Adelokun, the boy mentioned some prominent names in the society whom they sell the white handkerchief they used in cleaning the ladies private parts to, at the sum of N200, 000.

He explained that the anger of the community became aggravated because the community was not carried along in the interrogation processes at the Police station. They also suspected that there is a conspiracy among the police, Oba and the Badoo gang.

Why?! He explained that the manner the Oba pleaded on behalf of the Badoo boys, handed them over to the police who after few days set them free, was suspicious. Then, they accused the Oba of being insensitive to their plight. “We are not carried along with the interrogation process or how far with the issue of the rapists.

We have made several appeal to the Lagos State government. Yet, no succour. Pending the time they will harken unto our voices, we have decided to take laws into our hands,” he said the people vowed.

In a joint letter written to the Lagos State Governor, Mr. Akinwunmi Ambode, tagged “Save Our Soul” made available to New Telegraph, they stated their grievances to the governor and the horror they are currently facing. They also indicated their displeasure with the king’s body disposition to their plight.

“In view of these incessant attacks, brutalities, and sexual abuse of women, people such as widows, single mothers, young ladies and the likes have been moving out en masses from our communities and panic, fears and pandemonium has taken over the land.

Therefore sir, the Joint CDA’s of Ibeshe land which is an umbrella body of over 40 community Development Association hereby cry out to kindly save our soul from all these blood sucking ritualists and let justice take its course and we have been put in darkness on this issue for too long and the whole community is in jeopardy,” they pleaded.

Pastor Fred Olanipekun, chairman, Ibeshe land Joint CDA, told New Telegraph that the Badoo issue has been rampant since two years ago but it got to the peak with a recent incessant attacks with several effort to tackle the issue. Unfortunately, all efforts proved abortive.

He alleged for instance that all the reports plus evidences tendered at the police station were discarded. “And now, the police are claiming that there was no report made at the station and the monarch still feel free to hand over suspects to them.”

He explained that it has now gone so bad that the residents have taken laws into their hands. He described an incident of one Badoo the community people chased into the swamp and made sure he got drowned.

“They made sure he never came out alive. It’s as bad as that now,” he said. Upon their own investigations, he said the community elders discovered the Badoo boys are group of artisans working in the Fashola Housing Estate but took to evil when the project stopped, making them out of job.

He said they reside inside the uncompleted building. Olanipekun said that all efforts to meet with the monarch for conflict resolution dialogue proved abortive. He claimed that the king refused them audience.

Rather, he ordered the police to use teargas to disperse them. Also, efforts made to get the attention of the Lagos State government proved abortive. He said the last attempt at the State Secretariat, Alausa, Ikeja to

see the governor failed as they waited the whole day but no one attended to them.

“And it was after this attempt at seeing the governor that we got more attacks from the Badoo boys in the community,” he alleged. In providing solution for themselves, Olanipekun said, they supplied themselves with whistles and even ordered every household to own one so that at any suspicious move or noise, they should blow it. He also said they have resolved to operating vigilante among themselves.

Trouble, according to New Telegraph's findings began with the refusal of the people to pay double fee for their lands. Majority of the community people accused the monarch of being the brain behind the terror unleashed on them. They claimed that the Oba usually demanded for extra payment on their landed property or on undeveloped lands. The joint CDA chairman alleged that, “we get constantly harassed for each level of development on our lands.

The elders in charge of this community including the Oba could sell a land to more than five persons.” The Badoo, according to most people that spoke to New Telegraph is a way of scaring them out of Ibeshe, a way of them forfeiting their lands. However Oba Abayomi debunked all allegations levied against him. Rather, he accused the aggrieved community of being unruly and impatient.

He accused the people of damaging his palace and personal house. Even at that, he refused to get angry and refused to get anyone arrested. The Oba explained that the Badoo is a group of people terrorizing his

community. He said it was not only in his community but all over Ikorodu environs, just that it is becoming more incessant in his community.

He said his offence was that he refused to hand over suspects to the people to carry out jungle justice. “It is very unlawful to accuse someone of wrong doings and carry out the judgment by yourself. I told them that whatever judgment they wanted to carry out, they would have done that before coming to my palace. But getting to my palace, I won’t let it happen.

Never!” He said he has taken several steps to forestall all chaos in the community, since the days of the former Lagos State Governor, Babatunde Fashola and till the present.

He said he went further to perform traditional rites to the tune of N700,000. The traditional rites included bringing out the most dreaded masquerades of Ibeshe land and carrying sacrifices at every Tee junction of the community. “And it yielded result. For one of the Badoo boys was apprehended the following day,” he said.

The Oba refuted the allegations that the women were moving out en masse and the allegation he has personal interest in the lands of the place. Explaining, he said he, as the Oba, has no quarter or a full plot of land in Ibeshe land: “Even my house, I bought it. I do not have a land in this place and I’m not in charge of sale of lands here.