

NOVEMBER 23, 2016

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## Rulers of the Jungle

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Posted on Nov 23 2016 - 2:27am by YUSUF MOHAMMED

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*Often times in Nigeria, people take laws into their hands by meting out justice on the streets to suspected criminals. In the past two weeks, videos of an alleged victim of jungle justice- a seven-year-old boy has been trending on the internet. Although the law enforcement agents are in denial, many are worried by the trend. Yusuf Mohammed reports*

Jungle justice can be defined as a form of extra-judicial killing where the victim is deprived of the rule of law. Here, justice is meted out in the most barbaric way, usually through stoning or burning the individual.

Most times, it is carried out by a mob or individuals with so many people watching. It is actually judgment without trial. It is becoming a trend in Lagos and Nigeria at the moment. For instance, it is so bad that if an accusing finger is pointed at you, the chances of the person's survival may be minimal.

The evil called jungle justice has become very rampant as the fastest way of meting out justice to suspects. Jungle justice has been going on in Nigeria and Lagos by extension for a very long time.

Most people got a wind of it due to the publicity that the gruesome murder of the four University of Port-Harcourt boys at Aluu community got. The murder was recorded for the world to see.

According to Yusuf Issa, “In my entire life, I have never come across a video that made me almost lose my sanity. I became sick for two weeks after watching that video. It affected my psyche. I became scared of my fellow human beings each time I walked on the streets.”

Many thought the Aluu incident which caused international outcry would put a stop to the act. They were wrong. After that incident, there have been no fewer than 20 cases of jungle justice; from the Ejigbo pepper women’s case to that of the Badagry boys a few years ago.

The list goes on and on. Two years ago, a woman in her early 40’s was beaten to a pulp and burnt alive in Ilorin the capital of Kwara State. It happened in the full glare of the public. Her crime was that she was alleged to have kidnapped a child. Similarly, a woman was beaten and burnt





to death in the Ekoru area of Abule-Egba, Lagos on Tuesday May 6th, 2014.

Eye witnesses claim the woman stopped some primary school pupils who were on their way to school, and asked to take them to school. However, a female hawker, who was suspicious of the woman, alerted the area boys who questioned the woman if the children were hers.

She claimed they were her children but couldn't give their names and the direction she was taking them wasn't where their school was located. In addition, the children said they didn't know her. This resulted in her being beaten to stupor, before she was burnt.

Recently, the case which got most Nigerians talking was the gruesome murder of a boy who was reportedly 7 years old. According to reports, the boy was beaten and burnt to death by a mob at Orile Iganmu for stealing cassava flake (garri).

However, New Telegraph gathered that the boy wasn't 7 years old but looked like a kid due to his stature. Residents, who spoke to New Telegraph on the condition of anonymity, were of the view that the young man was a notorious thief who terrorized the area with his gang. According to an eyewitness, "the young guy was a thief. People here knew him very well."





He and his gang used to rob women and men who look gentle. Unfortunately for him, one Hausa man caught him while he was trying to run away after stealing from a woman. His friends ran away but he wasn't lucky to escape. They wouldn't have burnt him but he took out a knife from his pocket and stabbed the Hausa man repeatedly. That was what got people very angry.”

Sandra Golen, a lawyer, told New Telegraph that the law must be respected irrespective of the age, gender, ethnicity or status of the suspect. She said: “Whether he was seven years old or 20, it doesn't really matter.

What we are saying is that no one deserves to die that way. What is the difference between the thieves and those who lynch? The sad part is that innocent people lose their lives that way.

Even if it has been established that he wasn't 7 years old, haven't children been beaten and burnt to death in the past?” Speaking on Jungle justice and the story about the boy killed at Orile, the Lagos State Police Public Relations Officer, Dolapo Badmus, told New Telegraph that “It is a lie. It didn't happen in Lagos. I can't say where it happened.

All I can tell you is that it didn't happen in Lagos.” Asked if there were measures put in place to see that it doesn't happen again, she said, “There is a law against jungle

