

## 'Five policemen, several civilians killed, buried at Badoo shrine'

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August 1, 2017      Taiwo Jimoh



Residents of Ikorodu area of Lagos State yesterday told our correspondent that the shrine raided on Monday by the police initially belonged to a killer group of oil thieves. The residents said the shrine was built on a pipeline by a 'businessman' dealing in oil and gas from where oil thieves siphoned petroleum products coming from Mosimi Depot in Sagamu area of Ogun State.

They also claimed that five policemen and several other people had been killed and buried in the shrine, since 2005 when it was built to siphon fuel. The residents identified the supposed businessman as Alaka Abayomi. Abayomi, according to them, built the shrine to screen illegal bunkering activities going on there.

But when contacted on the phone, Abayomi, who led the police team to the shrine on Monday, denied that the shrine was used for criminal act. He said: "I am not the owner of the shrine, the person that built the place is late, and while he was alive he used the place to treat people of different sicknesses.

"The shrine is a good place; we don't use it for any Badoo activities. The Baale (village head) of the community can confirm it.

When policemen entered the shrine, they did not see any blood stain or some fetish objects. Then, where do they get the story about four graves in the shrine.

"The shrine has been there for donkey years.

This is the first time I am seeing policemen working on propaganda. We don't do what they claimed they do in the shrine. I was linked to the shrine because I do patronize the place.”

But the state Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Olarinde Famous-Cole, neither picked his calls nor responded to a text message sent to him to confirm the story.

However, the shrine, it was learnt, was not in Agbowo as being reported, but located at Ojo Ayandolu community in Sagamu area.

When our correspondent visited Agbowo yesterday, mobile policemen and Special Anti- Robbery Squad officials were patrolling the community to maintain law and order.

A resident, who did not want his name in print, said the shrine was first discovered by a hunter in 2013.

He said: “The hunter called the attention of the then Agbowo divisional police officer to what he saw, but the DPO did not take it seriously and the illegal activities continued to thrive unchallenged.”

The resident also claimed that the DPO later got to know what was going on at the shrine, he allegedly bargained with vandals. He added: “The DPO threatened the hunter, which forced him to relocate to another community for fear of being killed. “Aside the graves that were discovered by the police, five policemen and several other people have also been buried at the shrine.”

Another resident, who gave his name as Kehinde, said the policemen and the others were killed because of greed.

He said: “The policemen were the ones providing security for them, whenever they were going on operation at night to siphon fuel. To cover their track, they would kill and bury the policemen and others who work with them.

“The owner of the shrine stopped using the house recently, after the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) stopped pumping petroleum products through the pipelines.

Suspected ritual killers and kidnappers then took over the place for their own use.” Kehinde added that some of the farmers whose farms were located in the area had stopped going to farm for fear of being killed by the ritual killers and the kidnappers.

A retired policeman, who did not want his name mentioned, told our correspondent that in 2013 when the place was first discovered by the hunter, the residents wrote a petition to then commissioners of police in Lagos and Ogun states but they did not act.

He said: “If they had acted on the petition then, by now we would have been saying a different thing.

We are all living in fear in Agbowo and Imota because ritual killers and kidnappers have taken over the two communities.

“When the businessman and his partners noticed that some residents of the village have discovered the shrine, coupled with the NNPC shutting down the pumping, they went to Igbeinadun area in Sango and built the same shrine there from where they are also siphon fuel.

“As speak with you now, police don’t know they have another place where they operate. “I have every fact about the shrine.

The then Agbowo DPO was after the lives of some of us because we were telling him what to do to get rid of the criminals using the place. But they have rubbed his palm he could not talk.

However, God has vindicated us now; Lagos State Neighbourhood Watch later discovered it which brought the policemen from Lagos to the scene.