

City & crime update

Cult member: I got a gun to avenge my friend's murder, burning of my house

Juliana Francis

When rival cult members targeted Kazeem Mudi, 21, killing his best friend in the process and razing his family house to the ground, he knew he was way above his head in trouble.

He disclosed that when he joined the Arobaga Confraternity, he didn't know the group had an ongoing war with the Black Axe Confraternity. He soon realised he was in trouble when members of Black Axe kept appearing everywhere, trying to kill him.

Mudi, who was alleged of being an armed robber, denied the allegation, insisting that he was just a cultist. He was the first, among other members of Arobaga Confraternity, to be arrested by the police. He was arrested at Ayingba Market, after shooting sporadically into the air.

He claimed to have stormed the market, to kill those that killed his best friend and burnt down his family home. But police said that he entered the market, armed with gun and robbed traders.

Recounting his story, Mudi said: "I joined Arobaga Confraternity in 2017. One of my friends, Rabi, who is now dead, introduced me to the group. I didn't know that the Arobagas had an ongoing war with members of the Black Axe Confraternity. I was attacked by members of the Black Axe Confraternity the moment news got out that I was a member of Arobaga Confraternity."

Mudi further recalled: "My friend, Rabi, was killed and my house burnt to the ground. I managed to escape. I later went to our leader, Oki and asked for a gun. I needed the gun because I wanted to avenge the death of my friend and the burning down of my house."

"When I learned that some members of the Black Axe Confraternity were at Ayingba Market Square, I went there with the gun Oki gave me. I shot at one of them when I sighted him. When I attempted to escape, the police showed up and arrested me. I took them to Oki's house where he was arrested. Four other pistols were recovered."

Mudi and members of his cult group were alleged by the police to be those that had been terrorising Ayingba community in Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State. They were arrested by operatives of the Inspector-General of Police Special Intelligence Response, IRT. Since their arrest, the suspects had maintained that they were not armed robbers, but cultists.

The police said that five pistols, 15 rounds of 9mm live ammunition and assorted charms were recovered from the suspects.

The suspects have been identified as Kazeem Mudi, Nasiru Yusuf, Riwa Aminu and Oki Yakubu. Yakubu has been alleged to be the leader of the gang. The suspects said that they had been in a protracted battle of supremacy with Black Axe Confraternity, over the control of Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State.

Yakubu said that the guns, ammu-

nition and charms recovered from his house were those he and his group had been using in wagging wars against their rivals.

A police source said: "The suspects have carried out several armed robberies and killings around Ayingba and other communities within Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State. The intelligence report, which led to their arrest emanated from the office of the Inspector-General of Police and passed on to the IRT, headed by a Deputy Commissioner of Police, Abba Kyari. A crack team of operatives were deployed in Ayingba community to track down the suspects. The police discovered on arriving the community that the suspects were highly dangerous as they move around the community and its environs with

guns, robbing and intimidating people. A member of the gang, Kazeem Mudi, was arrested at Ayingba Market Square, after he successfully robbed some traders in broad daylight of their cash and mobile phones at gunpoint.

"He was arrested by IRT while attempting to escape from the market square. The sound of gunfire after he opened fire, while robbing his victim was what attracted the IRT operatives. He was arrested just as he was about to mount his getaway motorcycle. The gun used for the operation was recovered. He was interrogated and confessed that his gang members were in Oki community, waiting for him to bring home his loot from the robbery."

"He told us that his gang leader had more guns in his house. He was taken to

the home of his gang leader, who when he sighted the police ran into the ceiling. He was chased out and arrested. The gang leader led the police to arrest two other members of the gang. They confessed to have robbed an Igbo businessman in his shop recently using one of the guns recovered from the gang leader's house.

"I'm not worried that the suspects are claiming not to be armed robbers. It's normal for criminals to change the veracity of their crime once they are caught with credible evidence so as to gain sympathy."

While narrating how he and three other members of his gang robbed an Igbo businessman, who trades at Igiolo community, in Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State, Nasiru Yusuf said: "I'm a member of the Arobaga Confraternity. I joined the group three years ago. I led three of my friends to rob a grocery shop belonging to an Igbo man at Ayingba. It was my gang leader, Oki that gave me the gun for the operation. We took N100,000 from the man and I got N20,000 as my share. I ran away to Abuja when policemen came looking for me. They didn't succeed in arresting me then. It was when I came back to Ayingba and visited Oki that the police arrested me."

The alleged leader of the gang, Yakubu, said that he joined the Arobaga Confraternity due to oppression. He said: "Members of Black Axe Confraternity usually oppressed my friends and I. We then decided to join Arobaga Confraternity; and since then, we have been fighting. I own four of the pistols that were recovered from me. I bought them for my protection. The charms, which were recovered from my house, belonged to my late grandfather. I don't use them for armed robbery. The Black Axe guys fighting us are very deadly. They have killed more than eight of my friends in the last two years. So we needed these guns for our protection."



The suspects

Fake Drugs: I supply my products to Onitsha market, says suspect

Stanley Ihedigbo

47-year-old man, Emeka Madu, aka Cabara, a principal suspect arrested by police over operating an illegal factory where they produce fake drugs, said he supplies his goods to Onitsha market.

The suspect who operates his illegal factory at an uncompleted building, No. 2, Adebayo Muyili Street, Kudaki Road, Egbe, Lagos, said that some of his customers in Onitsha market know that his drugs are fake but buy them because they are cheap.

According to him: "I am the owner of the factory. I am a primary school certificate holder. I learnt the trade from a friend, called Dozie, who is now late. I started my own business about four

years ago. Although I am not a pharmacist or a chemist the medicine is not totally fake as I use quality chemicals to produce it."

"My market is at Onitsha Anambra State, I don't supply in Lagos. And I have not really made too much money but at least, I have made little. I am not the owner of the building where I am operating for now. I too use some of the drugs because they are not fake and my wife and children take too because they are not totally fake."

Other suspects are, Eze Young, 26, Chijioke Umunna, 19 and Kingsley Obilo, 22, all staff of Cabara.

Speaking with pressmen, the Force Public Relations Officer, Ag. DCP Jimoh Moshood, who paraded the suspects at the factory premises said that operatives

on the Inspector General of Police Intelligence Response Team (IRT) uncovered an illegal factory where they produce fake drugs.

Moshood said that the IRT working on credible intelligence stormed and raided the secret fake factory at Ikotun area of Lagos where substantial production, packaging and distribution of suspected fake drugs to different parts of the country was being carried out.

He added that the dastardly act might have resulted in several deaths, health complications, and physical disabilities of many victims nationwide.

Moshood explained the hideout where the fake drugs were produced was raided on December 23, 2018 by IRT

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