

CITY SCOPE

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Is Lagos still safe? (3)

● *Men of the underworld get deadlier by the hour*

LAGOS—THE joy of a young couple, Mr. and Mrs. Olarenwaju Gbadamosi, to swim in their marital bliss was abruptly cut short on Friday, June 9, 2006, at the popular Idumota market after the dare-devils struck in broad daylight. Mrs. Abiola Olarenwaju, a deaconess and mother of two was in the market to finalize arrangement for the production of beads for a customer's 80th birthday, when she fell victim to the onslaught of the robbers, who had invaded the market.

Reports said the bandits, numbering over ten and armed with sophisticated weapons, stormed the market that black Friday and was busy carrying out raids, when a team of policemen who were earlier alerted arrived. The robbers who were taken unaware by the early arrival of the police team decided to shoot their way to safety. Unfortunately, they went berserk, killing innocent people who were going about their businesses, in a bid to escape. By the time the robbers fled from the market, no fewer than six persons including Deaconess Olarenwaju, an unidentified woman

months pregnant when she was killed in cold blood by these armed robbers at Idumota, where she had gone to finalize arrangement for the production of beads for one of her customer's 80th birthday.

"On that fateful day, she informed me that she wanted to go to Lagos very early to buy materials for the production of the beads so that she can meet up the deadline for Saturday. I had to take her to the market as early as 7am and after I dropped her, she promised to be back early to complete the job. She also begged me to call her by 11am to check whether she had finished. Immediately it was 11am, I called her but when her phone rang, it was a policeman who picked it and answered my call. He asked me about my identity and I told him that I am the husband to the owner of the phone. I even charged him to give the phone to my wife so that I would speak with her.

"To my surprise, the policeman asked me to come to Ebute-Ero police station. I was confused and I insisted that he should give the phone to my wife but he suddenly

waju, an unidentified woman

heavily pregnant woman, lay dead in a pool of their own blood. The husband, Olarenwaju Gbadamosi, narrated the story to *City Press*. "I am a business man and I specialize in air-condition installation. My wife, Deaconess Abiola Olarenwaju, was into beads making and we have two children. She was five

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junction, I decided to call one of my neighbours to ask whether my wife had returned home, thinking that the phone may have been stolen but the neighbour said that she was not yet at home. Three hours later, at about 3pm, I repeated the call and I was informed that she was not at home. It was at this point that I suspected that

something may have gone wrong and I immediately left my office at Mainland and proceeded to the police station where I was told that my lovely wife was shot by a group of armed robbers and that her remains had been deposited at the General Hospital, inside Lagos.

"The policemen showed me her bag already marked with her tray number at the mortuary and the N240 found on her. I told them that she left home with N50,000.00 but they responded by saying that N240 was what was recovered from her bag. I was dumb and found it difficult to believe that my better half, whom I dropped few hours ago, was now dead. They handed her bag to me with the tag and I ran like a mad man to the mortuary, where I saw her prostrate body riddled

with bullets through her chest and jaw. In fact, she had six shots in her chest while the one under her left ear pierced through her head as if a hole was drilled.

"It was later that I was informed that the robbers, who were escaping from the market, were shooting indiscriminately and my wife was one of the numerous victims of the firing".

In tears, he recounted how he started his life with his wife. "It has been a great and lovely relationship and we planned to raise our children together in the way of the Lord and give them the best education, but see how the dream has died. We got married in May 20, 2000 and we have been living like brothers and sisters or to put it more appropriately, like twins.

We understand ourselves to the extent that we can hardly do anything without informing each other. If I left home in the morning, she will call to find out if I had gotten to the office. I cannot do without calling her to know what was happening at home too. In fact, that was how I got to know what happened to her early that day. She was a lovely, caring mother, friend and companion and I will really miss her. It is obvious that a better part of me is gone forever because of these robbers. Now that she is gone, how do I start again? Who will cook for me and the children. Well, I have accepted my fate by putting everything in God's hands but I will appeal to government to check these incessant robbery cases in our cities without delay".

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