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We have killed many innocent people in Lagos

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By Esther Onyegbula

Operatives of the Federal Special Anti-Robbery squad, FEDSARS, have arrested two notorious gunmen specialised in terrorising major parts of Lagos state including Surulere, Mushin, Oshodi, Victoria island, Ikoyi and its environs. Police sources said members of the deadly gang have claimed the lives of many persons at different times in Lagos State, in the past few months.

IGP Arase's intervention



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•Suspects

Crime Guard gathered that the suspects were arrested following the directives of the Inspector- General of Police, Solomon Arase, over the restiveness in the state.

Consequently, a team of detectives led by Inspector Banjoko Oluwemimo swung into action after they received intelligence report about the nefarious activities of the gang in the state.

The discreet investigation led to the arrest of one of the suspects identified as Murital Aweniya aka Horspain, a renowned cultist on April 17, 2015. His arrest further led to the arrest of the another suspect, Lateef Akinpelu aka Obey Idi Araba, the leader of a rival cult group.

Sources said the activities of the gang led to the alleged brutal killing of Olasupo Abass, a commercial motorcyclist by Lateef

Akinpelu aka Obey Idi Araba, and his gang at Apesin Street, Mushin Lagos on 21 of February.

Massacre on the streets

According to sources; “On February, 10, 2015, at about 7pm, Muritala Aweniya and members of his gang killed one Oluwasheun Babalola, a 16-year-old boy at Owoseni- Ishola Street, Ilasamaja, Lagos. On that same day, Mrs Mary Babalola, mother of the late Oluwasheun was shot on her right leg by the same gang. **On April 9, 2015, Olayemi Mathew**

Eniola, aka Esi-Oluwo, was also killed by the same gang.

It was learned that Obey Idi Araba, was among the suspects arrested and charged to court in 2012, for the murder of one Wasiu Ajose, aka Apase, by policemen from FEDSARS. He was however, released through a motion for bail and he escaped prosecution.

Relation of victim opens up

The elder brother of one of the victims, Bamidele Abiodun, a vulcaniser at Apersin Street who witnessed the incident told Crime Guard: ‘‘ The day my brother was killed, he came to my shop with a faulty plasma TV for repairs. After fixing the television, he took it and dropped it in his mother’s shop which was the next shop.

Few minutes later, I heard sounds of gunshot. Later, I heard Abass screaming, ‘‘what have I done?’’ from where I hid inside my shop, I saw three men, one with a shot gun, the other with a cutlass while the third had no gun on him.

The three of them were Obey, Agbaje and Omowest. It was the one with the short gun that shot my brother on his stomach and left him in the pool of his blood. They kept shooting sporadically to scare sympathisers as they escaped to Idi-Araba’.

Another witness of the brutal killing of the teenager, a trader at Amu Timber Market simply called Abdul-Wasiu narrated his own account. ‘‘I was at Aborishade Street along Itire road, Mushin, on February, 2015, when gunmen held residents in the area hostage.

They armed themselves in a commando-like manner and started shooting sporadically and as a result, two people died instantly from stray bullets while many others sustained serious bullet injuries.

One of the people killed was a driver of the pastor of a celestial church opposite Aborishade street and 16-year-old Sheun Babalola, who was shot along with his grandmother from Abule -Igbehin area of Ilasamaja.’’

A 64-year-old victim who was shot on the right leg, Mrs Mary Babalola also narrated her heart-wrenching experience in the hands of the gang members. ‘‘ I am a native of Ayede Village in Ekiti state. I have five children, including Oluwasheun Babalola, who was shot dead in my presence.

On that fateful day, at about 7pm, a group of young men stormed the area and started shooting sporadically. One of their bullets killed my son while another hit my right leg. I can’t walk because of the stray bullet that hit me.’’

Account of suspect

In his defence Muri denied being a member of any armed robbery gang but, admitted that he was a former leader of an ethnic militia group called OPC at Mosalashi Street, Mushin area of Lagos state. Narrating the fracas between his group and a rival cult gang that led to the killing of innocent persons in Surulere area, 26-year-old Muri Aweniya said, ‘‘ I am a school drop out.

I dropped out of the Polytechnic Ibadan. I was initiated into cultism when I was a student by one Wale who was the leader of Bukania confraternity in 2014. Our cult gang has several dangerous operational weapons such as pump action, single barrel gun and cutlass. It was my cult gang that shot and killed one Lekan at Ayilara street in Suru-Iere in March.

Other people who were killed by my my cult group in Shitta area were: Fatai, Afeez, Ramoni, Akeem and Saheed. These people were killed because of the fracas between my gang and Lateef Akinpelu aka Obey's

group. Lateef's gang is also responsible for the death of many people like Murphy, Shitta, Raimo and Kabiru at Ogunmola area of Surulere, Kilo and Epo at Ayilara, Lekan and Larne at Suru-lere, Deji and Afeez at Shitta, Aisha and Ola at Lawanson.

‘‘ The late Raimo was a pregnant Woman who was killed by a stray bullet while attending the birthday party of Murphy's son. She was killed alongside Murphy on that fateful day. Early this year, in the month of February, my gang attacked and killed one Isiaka. On April 9, my gang was hired to assassinate Esi Oluwo, a Chairman of NURTW but I wasn't part of the operation.’’

The second suspect, Lateef Akinpelu aka Obey Idi Araba, told Crime Guard: ‘‘I am from Abeokuta in Ogun state. Before my arrest, I was the chairman of NURTW, Idi Araba chapter. I was a former OPC member in Idi Araba chapter. I stopped parading myself as the group leader since detectives from Federal SARS came to arrest me in 2012, and recovered weapons used by my gang for operation.

After my arrest, I was charged to court and there after, remanded in prison custody pending the DPP's advice. Surprisingly one day, a prison warden called and released me. I don't know how my bail condition was perfected and since then, I have never gone back to the court.

I was not part of the people that murdered Abass Olasupo at Mushin It was my boys that killed him and they briefed me that they invaded the area with guns and killed the deceased on 21st February 2015. It was Biodun Akinwumi aka Aluta, Agbakun, Taiwo, Kehine and Wasiu Agbaje that were responsible for the brutal murder of Abass Olasupo. I stopped having anything to do with them since my release from prison.’’

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