

Vanguard

How CAC elder escaped from den of ritualists

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* As one-chance operators devise new strategies

By Bose Adelaja

Mr. Fajemidagba Foluso is an elder in the Christ Apostolic Church, CAC, Mowe in the Obafemi Owode Local Government Area of Ogun State. Foluso who recently had a close shave with death in the hands of persons suspected to be ritual killers, narrated his ordeal to Vanguard Metro.



(<http://www.vanguardngr.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Ritual-killings.jpg>)

Ritual-killings

According to him, he boarded an inter-state bus at Mowe on Tuesday November 24, 2015, intending to alight at Redeemed Bus-Stop. After paying the N30 fare demanded by the conductor, the bus which picked seven other passengers, sped off. Instead of stopping at the Redeemed Camp Bus-Stop as earlier agreed, the driver headed for the Ogere interchange. It was at this point that the passengers became apprehensive and demanded to know where the driver was taking them to.

Unfortunate passengers

Their questions were rebuffed by the speeding driver who instead, ensured that the windows were securely closed. The unfortunate passengers were allegedly striped half-naked and dispossessed of cash and personal belongings before being transferred to a waiting van at the Ogere interchange.

Elder Foluso who spoke in an emotion-laden voice, said one of the victims, a boy who was going to write an examination on that fateful day, struggled with their abductors until he was gunned down.

Undeterred by the sad end of the boy, the gangsters allegedly carried his corpse along with them until the seven abducted persons were transferred into a fully air-conditioned van which was stationed at the Oghere interchange, ostensibly awaiting the arrival of the "loot".

Recalling what transpired on that fateful day, Elder Foluso said: “All the seats in the van had been removed and we were forced to sit on the floor for the continuation of the journey to an unknown destination.

At a point, the vehicle veered off the expressway into a thick forest. But before we left the expressway, we saw some police check points and cried aloud for help but to our greatest surprise, our abductors started exchanging pleasantries with the uniformed policemen. At a particular illegal check point, some of the policemen whom we sought assistance from retorted, ‘help ko, help ni, abeg follow them to wherever they are taking you to. That’s your own luck...’ The unfriendly attitude of the policemen heightened our fears. We knew at that point that danger was lurking around the corner hence we resorted to seeking God’s intervention.

The journey inside the forest took almost three hours before we arrived at a building located on the rock. As soon as we alighted from the vehicle, a man came out from the building to exchange pleasantries with one of our abductors. He spoke in Yoruba language, ‘‘Melo l’  ko wa l’ te yi’’ ? (How many did you bring this time around ?). “Seven plus one dead body’’. This response sparked off an argument as the man shouted, ‘‘Ki ni mo fe fi oke se? Owo meje ni maa san o (what am I doiAng with a corpse, I will pay for seven only).

He took a headcount to be sure that seven people were actually brought into their den. The vehicle left immediately the man paid an undisclosed sum of money to our abductors. We were later divided into two groups but three of us were put in a room’’.

Continuing, he said; ‘‘A lady among us was wounded severally for struggling with them. On my part, I kept shouting the name of Jesus. It came to a point that one of the ritualists shouted from within and ordered me to keep quiet. ‘Ta l’o n pa’riwo ni’beyen,’ (Who is making noise over there?), he barked. I continued shouting the name of Jesus quietly and few minutes later, one of the aides who pitied by condition, offered to assist me to escape.

Offer of assistance

He asked me to pretend like somebody who was pressed and wanted to answer the call of nature, Luckily, this strategy worked out. The guy asked me to take my clothes and follow him. We trekked for about an hour before he showed me a bush path that led to a village and left. I trekked for another one hour before I got a motorcycle which took me to the expressway where I stood for a while before getting a bus to Lagos. It was during the journey that I realised we were far away from Elelubo, Ibadan. I was finally reunited with my family and church members. That was how a journey of about three minutes ended up in 24 hours’’.

The plight of Elder Foluso is synonymous with what hundreds of innocent people go through on daily basis in the hands of “one-chance” abductors and ritualists along the ever-busy Lagos/Ibadan expressway.

VM investigations show that one-chance operators along the expressway, have adopted new tactics to trap and rob innocent commuters. Some of the unlucky commuters are sold at give-away prices to prospective buyers who in turn, sell them off to ritual killers who slaughter them and sell to occultists and other evil persons. VM learnt that the amount paid is negotiable and is dependent on the age and sex of the victims. Similarly, delicate parts of the body like the breasts, tongues, private parts and nails allegedly attract higher prices. VM further gathered that since some states in the South-West, especially Lagos, introduced security measures to stem the activities of one-chance operators, they have shifted their base to the Lagos/Ibadan expressway. This allegation has however being denied by the Police.

The Police Public Relations Officer in Ogun State, Mr. Muiyiwa Adejobi insisted that the story of Elder Foluso is a mere

rumour.

“It as a rumour and was not reported to the Command. The Command has a team on anti- kidnapping/cultism, headed by a Superintendent of Police but people think we are not working. We have about 15 similar cases which were reported to us within a space of one week. But none of them was able to present facts to buttress their stories. So, such cases can be regarded as either framed or cooked up to curry favour from the public. I expect the victims to intimate the Police with such developments so that we can go and comb the area, but nothing of such was reported. It is impossible to be kidnapped without informing the Police after your return. Unfortunately, people only go to church for thanksgiving or report their experiences to the media. We call on those who claim to have experienced such to come up and present their facts,” he said.

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