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How Lagos monarch was kidnapped— wife

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By Monsuru Olowoopejo, Ifeanyi Okolie & Chris Onuoha

LAGOS—Nofisat, wife of the 73-year-old abducted Lagos monarch, Oba Yushau Oseni, *Oniba* Ibaland, yesterday, said the Oba was kidnapped at about 8p.m. Saturday, when he was about taking his bath.

It was gathered that over 15 mask-wearing gunmen stormed the town. While six of the kidnappers entered the palace, others stood at strategic locations, including the waterways. The policeman attached to the palace



The kidnapped monarch's wife (left) and sympathisers.

had closed from duty by 4p.m.

Vanguard gathered that while four of the gunmen took the monarch through the back door, the other two left through the main entrance.

Nofisat narrated that the Oba was about taking his bath “when we heard the children in the sitting room shouting. We were both in his room; we left in order to caution the children. But we

met the gunmen at the entrance of the parlour.

“They asked him if he was the monarch and he answered in affirmative. Immediately, they left the children alone and took him. I tried preventing his kidnap, but one of the gunmen hit me in the neck and I fell.”

It was learned that the young wife went after the abductors, begging to spare him. The gunmen shot her and the 60-year-old palace security guard, Mr. Sunday Okanlawon, who was also trying to prevent the kidnap.

Vanguard learned that some of the kidnappers waited at the entrance of the creek in a boat.

A resident, simply identified as Biodun, said that while the kidnappers were escaping with the monarch, they shot sporadically to scare people away.

He said: “In the process, bullets hit two residents, a-yet-to-be-identified commercial motorcycle operator and commercial bus driver, Hakeem Lalupon, who was shot in the stomach while refuelling his vehicle, with number plates AGL-658 XL.”

Biodun said the *okada* rider died yesterday, while Lalupon is battling for survival.

He disclosed that Lalupon was rushed to three hospitals before he was referred to the Lagos State University Teaching Hospital, LASUTH, Ikeja, where the doctors are battling to save him.

It's embarrassing—Son

The son of the abducted monarch, Alhaji Kabiru Oseni, said he was coming from Oto-Ijanikin when he was informed by his siblings that his father had been kidnapped.

He said: “They left with the wives’ phone. This is embarrassing. And since his abduction, they have not called nor demanded for anything. What is paramount to me at this time is the release of my father.”

Former Commissioner for Rural Development, Mr. Cornelius Ojelabi, in an interview after a visit to the family of the monarch, disclosed that two other residents were kidnapped earlier before the monarch’s abduction.

Among the sympathisers, who thronged the home of the monarch earlier in the day, was the Deputy Governor, Dr. Idiat Adebule, who condemned the

act.

She said: “I am appealing to the kidnappers to release the elderly man. He is a king and has various responsibilities to perform. We need his wisdom and leadership in this town.”

At about 1:30p.m., the Muslims and Christians in the community stormed the palace of the monarch to pray for his quick release, while the traditional worshippers appeased their gods for the monarch’s safe release.

Speaking after the prayer session, Evangelist Michael Toivide, Head, Celestial Church of Christ, CCC, Iba Province, said: “The Oba is our father and since his abduction on Saturday, we have not been happy and cannot sleep.

“This prompted us to begin indefinite fasting until his release.

Police identify

kidnappers’ leader

Police source at the Lagos State Police Command intimated *Vanguard*, yesterday, that a militant leader (names withheld) may have led the gang that kidnapped the monarch.

Vanguard gathered that the said militant leader, believed to be an indigene of Arugbo, an Ijaw community in Ondo State, is currently keeping the kidnapped monarch in his camp in Ijegemo-Idimu, Lagos.

Police sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity, disclosed that the said leader of a gang of militants operating from Ijegemo, may have coordinated the kidnapping following their inability to siphon petroleum products from pipelines belonging to NNPC within the area.



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