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**The Views of Women of Press Coverage of Rape Cases in
Nigeria: A Misrepresentation or an Under-representation?**

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Abstract

The degree of prominence given to events, issues or phenomena by the press goes a long way in determining people's knowledge, exposure, views, opinions and/or suggestions about such events, issues and phenomena. Thus, the degree of prominence given to rape cases by the press in Nigeria determines what Nigerians feel and know about rape and its attendant consequences. This is the bedrock of this study. It is aimed at ascertaining how Nigerian elite women view the coverage of rape cases by Nigerian press. It is a qualitative study in which focus Group Discussion method (involving ten women selected from five state universities in the South Eastern) was used in achieving the aim of the study. The findings show that respondents, view press coverage of rape cases as "under-representation" and not "Mis-representation". This is based on the cited newspapers which contain few rape cases which were mostly buried in inside pages. Based on this finding, the study recommends that journalists in Nigeria be more sensitive to the plight of rape victims by giving rape cases the prominence they deserve. This no doubt, will serve as deterrent to others who are likely to engage in this inhuman and devilish act.

Key words: Misrepresentation, under-representation, Rape, Press Coverage, Women's Views.

Introduction

Zairnab has become the latest victim of the rising cases of rape and violent crimes in the state. Indeed, these crimes are now occurring with frightening dimension in the North-East, no fewer than 95 child rape cases have been reported in five northern states with Gombe having 50 cases and Bauchi recording 11 cases. (Saturday Sun, March 15 2014 Reporting Child Protection Network (CPN) findings).

The above report by *Saturday Sun* of March 2014 is one of such worrisome cases of rape reported by the press. Oduah (2014, p. 26) stressed that “the rate at which rapes occur in our society today is becoming alarming and outrageous”. Musbau (2013, p. 53) reports that “687 cases of rape were recorded” in 2012, which is an average of two cases per day, 100 cases of rape in Kano writes in 2013 out of which 40 offenders were convicted”. In Anambra State, *Guardian Newspaper* of Friday 7, 2014 reports that there were with 115 rape incidents and complaints only 12 cases taken up by the police.

These were not the only rape cases reported in 2014. On January 10, 2014, a similar incident was reported by *Daily Sun* Newspaper. In this case, a seventeen year-old girl was gang raped by three men on her way back from school. On June 6th 2013, *Guardian*, Newspaper had it that Masonter Iyanga of Akwabo street raped a young girl. *Vanguard* Newspapers of 25th October 2013 reported that a 50 years-old pastor of Choice Bible church allegedly raped three girls aged nine, seven and eight years. Also, *Daily sun* of October 31st 2013 had it that a virgin school girl at Ikorodu Lagos state was gang raped by these men to coma. As if all these cases were not enough, *Daily Sun* of 19th December 2013 reported that a seven-year-old girl was gang raped by three men.

The above instances are ugly scenario that floods the Nigerian press on alarming rate. This is despite the provision made in section 357 of the Criminal Code Act CAP 77, Laws of the Federation which states that:

Any person who has lawful canal knowledge of a women or girl without her consent, if the consent is obtained by force or by means of threat by force or by means of threat or intimidation of any find or by fear of harm or by means of false and fraudulent representation as to the nature of the act, or, in the case of a married women, by impersonating her husband, is guilty of an offence which is called rape.

Similarly, the child's Right Act of 2003 by virtue of section 31(1) (2) (3) of the Act maintains that:

No person shall have sexual intercourse with a child. A person who contravenes the provisions of sub-section (1) of this section commits an offence of rape and is liable on conviction to life imprisonment. It is immaterial that the offender believed the person to be of or above the age of eighteen or (that) the sexual intercourse was with the consent of the child.

The term "rape" is therefore the most serious kind of sexual assault and is punishable with imprisonment for life, (Okonkwo & Naish, 2013).

It is also one of those actions that fall under violence against women (Nwammuo, 2013). One therefore is bound to ask: if rape is punishable with imprisonment for life as stipulated in various provisions of the laws of the Federation, how many persons have been imprisoned? And do the press give a follow up of how rape cases are tried in various courts? These mind bothering questions necessitated this research.

Theoretical Framework

This research work is based on Agenda setting theory of the press. This theory which was propounded by Maxwell McCombs and Donald show in 1972 is simply maintaining that the media determine what the people think about by frequently emphasizing on an issue and by giving it prominence, (Baran and Davis, 2003). Agenda is therefore an issue or subject of discussion which may be topical enough to elicit a positive or negative response from members of the public, (Asemah, 2011). This theory is therefore considered apt for this study because the prominence attached to rape cases by the press would determine to a great extent how Nigerians would see or be knowledgeable about rape cases and its attendant consequences. For instance, constant placement of rape cases, offenders and punishment meted out to them, in front pages and in editorials, will no doubt increase peoples knowledge of the crime.

In examining how the press set agenda on rape cases and how the press treats rape victims, the following newspapers were used in the course of study as reference materials that guided respondent's discussion:

1. *Saturday Sun of March 15, 2014*
2. *Sunday Sun of August 31, 2014*
3. *Sunday Sun of January 19, 2014*
4. *Daily Sun of October 31, 2013*
5. *Daily Sun of December 19, 2013*
6. *Guardian of June 6, 2013*
7. *Guardian of November 3, 2013*

8. *Vanguard of October 25, 2013*

See Appendix i - viii for the papers

Review of Related Literature

This study reviewed three works done by scholars in the field of communication and gender. The first is a research work carried out by Oduah (2014) titled “Exploring Media Framing and Representation of Rape cases in Nigeria”. The researcher content analyzed the Guardian, Vanguard and *Daily Sun* newspapers to ascertain the framing and representation of rape cases in Nigeria. The findings revealed that Daily sun newspaper report rape cases more than other newspapers in Nigeria.

The study also discovered that even when rape cases are reported, they were buried in inside pages of the newspapers thereby giving them little or no prominence. Finally, the study recorded that dominant frames of rape cases include innocence, neutral, intimidation and avoidance. Nwankwo, (2011) carried out a study to find out how Nigerian journalists cover crimes using content analysis as a research design. This study recorded that armed robbery is given high coverage while rape, house breaking and other related crimes are given low coverage by publishing them in inside pages Eboh, (2011); content analyzed Nigerian newspapers to findout how rape cases were reported. The study found that although Nigerian press reported some rape cases, readers were not given a follow-up on how those cases were tried. It also reported that out of 720 rape cases recorded in Anambra State in 2010, only 12 of the cases were reported to the police while none of the cases had been successfully prosecuted by the court.

It could therefore be deduced from these reviewed works that there has been low coverage of rape cases in Nigeria. Rape cases were also not given enough prominence as they were buried in inside pages of the cited newspapers.

All these reviewed works are similar to the present study but differ greatly in terms of methodology adopted. This present study used Focus Group Discussion method while using selected Nigerian Newspapers as reference materials. None of the works tried to findout how women themselves felt about press coverage of rape cases.

Thus, this presents study was carriedout in order to ascertain how women view coverage of rape cases since they are the victims of most crimes especially rape. Previous scholars did not ascertain human angles to their research endeavours. This is the gap which this study hopes to fill.

Methodology

This study adopted qualitative research approach in which Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was used in eliciting reliable responses from the respondents. This study purposively selected two women each from each of the state universities in the South

East namely: Anambra, Abia, Enugu, Ebonyi and Imo States. These women, selected from the Department of Mass Communication in each institution, were lecturers who teach gender courses in their various institutions. This is because, this study falls under communication and gender category and these women were considered knowledgeable on the subjects of the study which were gender and media studies.

Explanation Building Techniques was used in the analyses and presentation of the outcome of the Focus Group Discussion. The FGD session lasted for five hours in which the discussants analyzed the contents of the cited newspapers which was given to them. Based on this, discussion was critically made on the subject of this study.

It could be pointed at this point that this study takes “misrepresentation” to mean presentation of false facts while “under-representation” refers to the presentation of lower number of rape cases when compared to presentation of other crimes.

Findings/Discussion of the Focus Group Session

The discussants fully and actively participated in the FGD session. They uniformly agreed to be knowledgeable on the subject of this study which is rape and its coverage by Nigerian press.

All the Discussants agreed that in comparism with other crimes such as corruption, kidnapping, armed robbery, and fraud, rape cases were given low coverage and prominence by Nigerian newspapers. Dr. Cynthia from ABSU was more outspoken on this when she said that:

Even a blind man or woman will tell you that journalists whether in print or electronic shy away from reporting rape cases. I don't think they consider it a serious crime that deserves their time and attention. And this may be the reason why rape victims do not even report to the police or press because they may not be helped at all. Some journalists will even tell you that we are not in Americans that this is Africa where such issues do not make news. It is indeed a pity!

This finding is in conformity with Oduah (2014) that found through content analysis that rape cases receive low reportage when compared with other crimes. In the analyzed newspapers it was observed that other crimes received more coverage than rape and this means that many rape cases go unreported. It is therefore, a case of “under-representation and not mis-representation”.

On the Discussants' views on why there is low reportage of rape cases by the press, Dr. Onyinye's view from EBSU is presented thus:

The truth is that the press will only publish what they see or hear. If rape victims do not report such crimes to the press, how will it be

published? So, the answer is that the victims do not draw the attention of journalists.

On this, Mrs. Onyido from ESUT disagreed thus:

No, No, No, I totally disagree with you. How will the victims report to the press when some of them do not even know their rights or even how and where to see journalists. Remember there is NAWOJ i.e. association of women journalists in every state. They are not doing their jobs, they should enlighten and sensitive women to stand up and fight for their right instead of dying in silence.

These views as reflected in the answers given by these discussants clearly show that low coverage of rape cases is caused by low reportage of rape cases by media houses and secondly due to low sensitization and enlightenment of women on such issues. This finding is in line with the Agenda setting theory of the press which emphasizes that the media tell their audiences what to think about. This shows that the amount of coverage or prominence given to rape cases or similar cases involving women or their rights will determine how knowledgeable women will be pertaining to such issues.

When asked whether they know about the provisions of the law of the Federation that states that any man that rapes a child will be imprisoned for life, they uniformly agreed they are aware of what the law says about rape and its consequences. But on whether they have heard or witnessed someone imprisoned or punished for committing rape, Dr. Onwuka, from ANSU said:

I have neither heard nor seen a man imprisoned for committing rape. The only thing you read on few newspapers are cases of rape. You do not even know whether those people are taken to the court. So most men who commit rape go unpunished and this is why many men do it every day. Once two or three men are jailed, others will be deterred from doing it because of the consequences.

This view reveals that although there are provisions in the law of the federation that stipulated various punishments for offenders, only few rape cases are tried. This is also in line with the reports of *Guardian Newspaper* (Friday 7, 2014, p. 20) which states that: some NGO's recorded 115 incidents and complaints on rape but only 12 cases taken up with the police while non of them was successfully prosecuted". This finding may also be the cause for non-reportage of rape cases to the police or to the media. Since most rape cases, even when reported or published, tend not to be prosecuted successfully, many women may feel it is a waste of time reporting such cases to either the media or the police.

The Discussants' views on whether the dressing patterns of young girls contribute to the rising cases of rape, attracted total criticisms of modern dressing patterns of young girls and they agreed that it is one of the reasons why rape cases are increasing alarming. This finding is in line with Oduah (2014, p. 10) view that incident dressing constitutes another factor that sometimes make young girls victims of rape”.

Finally, on how under-representation of rape cases could be stopped by the Nigerian press, the discussants suggested the following.

1. That NAWOJ members i.e. (Nigeria Association of Women Journalists) team up with NUJ (Nigerian Union of Journalists) to enlighten and sensitize women about their rights generally while stressing the provisions of the law regarding rape and other crimes against women.
2. That headlines always be cast in national newspapers calling on victims of rape to always report to police and media houses nearest to them;
3. That rape cases be prosecuted once reported as this will encourage rape victims to always report such crimes while serving as deterrant to others who have such tendency to commit rape.
4. That journalist always give a follow-up on any published rape case as readers will be interested to know how rape cases are resolved by the appropriate legal authorities.

Conclusion

This study explored elite women's view of representation of rape cases by Nigerian press. It sought to find out whether the manner of representation of rape cases by the press could be termed “Mis-representation” or “under-representation”. Agenda-setting theory of the press served as the theoretical framework for the study while focus Group Discussion method was adopted as the research method. Explanation Building Technique was used in the analyses and presentation of research findings.

The findings revealed that rape cases covered by the Nigerian press received low coverage and prominence and as such, it could best be described as “under-representation” and not “mis-representation”. Secondly, the study found that this under-representation of rape cases is caused by low reportage of rape cases by rape victims to the police or media and also due to non-sensitization/enlightenment of women in the provisions of the law, and their rights. This study attributed low reportage of rape cases by rape victims to non or low prosecution of the reported rape cases which usually make offenders free of punishments.

Indecent dressing among young girls, as the study found, is one of the factors why rape cases are increasing alarmingly. Finally, the study found that under-representation of rape cases could be handled by NAWOJ and NUJ members rising up to their responsibility of enlightening, and sensitizing women on their rights and

on various provisions of the laws regarding rape and by giving follow-up coverage on rape cases.

Recommendations

In view of the findings, the study recommends the following:

1. That journalists in Nigeria stop under-representation of rape cases and give it the prominence it deserves;
2. That NAWOJ and NUJ members be socially responsible by sensitizing and enlightening women on their rights and on the provisions of the law of the federation on rape and other related crimes;
3. That rape cases be handled by the police and other legal bodies while offenders are prosecuted and given the punishment the offence deserves;
4. That rape victims be encouraged by the media, non-governmental organizations and other governmental agencies to always report cases of rape to appropriate authorities.

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Sunday Sun of January 19, 2014

Daily Sun of October 31, 2013

Daily Sun of December 19, 2013

Guardian of June 6, 2013

Guardian of November 3, 2013

Vanguard of October 25, 2013

APPENDICES



The MetroSection

'My son was not an armed robber'

• Mother laments alleged killing of his only son by female police officer

By Obita Sunday

FOR Mrs. Ogas Okungbowa Momodu, no words of encouragement can replace the vacuum created by the death of her only son, who was allegedly shot and killed by a trigger-happy female Divisional Police Officer (DPO) of Ogidia Police Station, Benin City.

Her neighbours and friends are reluctant to leave Mrs. Okungbowa's house for fear that she might kill herself if she is left alone to bear the pains of losing her only son, Ibrahim Momodu.

Ibrahim was a 22-year-old Science Laboratory Technology student of the University of Benin (UNIBEN).

An employee of the Edo State Centre for Community Development in the Ministry of Information and Orientation, Mrs. Momodu, has charged the Inspector General of Police, Mohammed Abubakar and the Federal Government to investigate the alleged killing of her only son by one Onyeka Afeghua, a DPO. She said her consolation would come only when the truth is unearthed and the culprit brought to justice.

Her son, Ibrahim Momodu, a 500-level was allegedly shot along Textile Mill road, Benin City. "Last Tuesday, I discovered that my son did not come back home from school, which was unusual of him. I was angry, so I left for my work and when I came back from work, I discovered that the food I left for him was still there.

"This is a boy who has never spent a night outside our house. I called his phone but there was no response. It was on Wednesday morning I decided to go to the police station near our house to lodge a complaint of missing person. When I got there, they gave me two policemen who led me and some of my family members to Ogidia Po-



The late Ibrahim Momodu

lice Station. We were told that the DPO was not in the office. "A policeman who knew me called my daughter in Port Harcourt and informed her of what happened. It was my daughter who now called to inform me that my son was dead. It was at Ogidia Police Station that I was directed

to the police headquarters, where we met the Crime Officer who confirmed the death of my son, saying: 'It is a shameful death. Your son was involved in an armed robbery.'

He said he was caught at the scene of robbery. He also said he was caught with a bag, which they

snatched from someone and they now opened fire on him. I asked for the body and I was told he had been buried. From there, I started weeping and went home."

"I am depending on the media to help me tell the world that the police killed an innocent boy full of hope and life. My concern now is that the police hierarchy should be sincere and arrest DPO Caro Onyeka Afeghua for questioning. I am sure the Police would find out the truth if she is interrogated. I don't have anyone to fight for me except God. This is my only son out of five children, my hope is gone, and I am really distressed.

Meanwhile, a group of people has protested the death. One of those who led the protest in Benin City, Mr. Pharez Jonathan, who is also a member of the Edo State Youths Forum, said the Ibrahim Momodu, he knew was not an armed robber. He added that it was a calculated plan by the police DPO to free herself.

According to him, "Our friend Ibrahim was on his way back from his friend's place. Simply because the DPO saw him carrying a nylon bag, the DPO, a woman, personally shot at Ibrahim three times. He was shot close to the petrol station three times. A lot of people were there and they saw what happened. They said the DPO stood there and watched him die. Even if he was an armed robber, which he was not, did the DPO have the right to shoot him? We have carried our protest to the Governor's Office. We also went to the state Police Command. We protested at strategic places in Benin. We will not despair until this wicked DPO is brought to justice. We will not allow an innocent man, a 500-level student of University of Benin to die without justice."

Man, 29, arraigned for armed robbery, rape

From Joseph Wantu, Makurdi.

A TWENTY-NINE-YEAR-OLD man, one Msonter Iyange of Akwoko Street, Zaki-Blam, Benue State was yesterday arraigned before a Makurdi Chief Magistrate's Court over charges of armed robbery and rape.

Police Prosecution, Sergeant Michael Ewoh told the court that on May 14, 2013, one Imoter Mchivga, who lives of opposite Yam Market in Zaki-Blam reported at the Zaki-Blam Police Station that he was robbed while his sister, Nadoo, was raped by the robber.

According to the prosecution, the complainant explained to the police that he was sleeping in

his house when the accused person forced his door open and attacked him.

Mchivga stated that the accused person, whom he recognised as Iyange, robbed him of the sum of N900.00 and a tor light valued N200.00.

He stated further that after robbing him, Iyange compelled him to call his sister to open her door and when she opened the door, upon hearing her brother's voice, the robber forced him into the room, pulled Nadoo out and locked him up there.

The complainant said that he later discovered from Nadoo that the robber took her to his room with three, ts to injure her with a charcoal iron in the room if she refused and raped her.

Prosecution said that the suspect confessed to the crime during police interrogation, adding that the offence were contrary to Sections 1 (2) (a) and (b) of the Robbery and Firearms Act, 2004 and 284 of the Penal Code Laws of Benue State, 2004.

However, when the case came up for mention, no plea was taken for want of jurisdiction and prosecution said that investigation into the matter was still in progress and asked for another date for mention.

The Chief Magistrate, Mrs. Theresa Wergba ordered that the accused person be remanded in prison and adjourned the matter to July 4, 2013 for further mention.

Phototeams



With of elder statements, Edwin Clark, Dr. (Mrs.) Bland Clark (left), father of the team for, Enoferous Foundation, Sir Robert Esler, President/Founder Enoferous Foundation, Pamela Fair and Solomon



Account Manager/Prize Communications Ltd, Rami Akiba (left), Publisher THE OYEZIN, Mr. Malachy

Briefs

Osaghae to Lead varsity

DISTINGUISHED scientist andivist, Prof. Egbhe, who is also the Vice-Chancellor (Vice-Chancellor) of the University of Benin, will take over the reins of the 2013 Local City's Faculty of Sciences and Engineering Studies distinguished, at the Unive national Conference at 3.30p.m.

Missing doct

A house-situate 2 A Williams Road Estate, Iju, Lagos, approval, building p relevant receipts of the house for Abiola Ibrahim Ol, reported missing. A missing are a copy Army Housing Estate of Assignment building plan of A House. All efforts to original copies of f ments have proved The matter has been reported to the police please contact the ice station or contact above address.

Ogbakor Ikweri

THE general meeting of Ogbakor Ikweri will hold on Sunday at Club 1919, Nige way Compound, e AP Filing Station, Metta, Lagos at 11

Victory College students meet

THE general meeting of Victory High School Old Students' Union holds on Sunday at the school's compound, on Bank A Way, Abule Ogbe Stop, Ikeja, Lagos at 2.30p.m.

Marriage seminar

PREEDOM in Christ Inc. (The Glorious will from today begin day marriage seminar "Heaven in Homes" dom Cathedral, 4 Fr Street, off Kosoko St Ogumilana Street, Ibe Lagos. The seminar, featuring, home building, rearing and love tips at 5.00p.m. daily, wh day's event is at 8.30. Pastor Bisi Adewale, Okerin Ben neighbours will minister.

NAFRFC holds grad

THE Commandant Ian Armed Forces ment Centre, Oshodi Vice Marshall M.A. Al will on Friday, June 1 side over the graduation of Trainees of Course 1/ Danjuma 2 at 10.00a

UMCOBA old boy

METHODIST College Izuakoli Old Boy Association (UMCOBA) will meet on Saturday

The MetroSection

Beware! Rapists on the prowl...

Police parade seven rapists in Ekiti, victims narrate their ordeals

From Marywa Adeyemi
(Head South West Bureau Ado Ekiti)

EKITI State Police Command yesterday raised alarm over what it called "sudden increase on rape cases in the state" in the last one month and advised parents to be alert in protecting their female children.

The Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) Mr. Victor Babayemi raised the alarm while parading seven rapists, including two students of a private polytechnic in the state, a proprietor of a nursery/primary school who defiled an 8-year-old pupil, three commercial motorcycle riders and a 17-year-old boy who raped a three-year-old minor.

One of the victims, an 18-year-old student of the private polytechnic revealed how four boys and a security man working in the school gang-raped her. She said one of the students identified as Dayo, who is now at large, had approached her for a relationship, which she declined. But on May 5, 2011, Dayo and three other boys broke into her room in dead of the night tied her hands and leg to the window taking turns to have sexual relationship with her.

According to her: "I was sleeping when I heard a loud bang. Before I knew what was happening, they were already in my room. One of them said what I refused only Dayo to do four of them have come to do."

She said on the second day she reported the matter to the school authority and the Chief Security Officer (CSO) of the school was asked to take up the matter. She said the CSO asked one of the security officers, Seyi Adanbiwo to take her to the Police Station at Ilawe-Ekiti for immediate action. She said that she did not leave the police station until Spina and Adanbiwo said he received a phone call from the CSO that the lady should sleep in his house to further protect her from those boys he said might come back that night. But unknown to her Adanbiwo also wanted to take an advantage of her.

She said: "Though I was still in shock and could not refuse the offer that I



The rape suspects.

should sleep in the house of I was security man that night, but the man also raped me that night and three tried to kill me. If I dare mention my ordeal to anybody. But I was ready to die and I went to my parents and reported what happened to me."

The 8-year-old pupil of God Is Great Nursery/Primary School also narrated how the proprietor of the school Mr. Tunde Phioye had been having carnal knowledge of her. She alleged that Phioye who she referred to as "uncle" used to take her to the uncompleted market to have carnal knowledge of her with the threat that she would die if she disclosed it to her parents.

She told newsmen that the proprietor had done it four times with her before the artisans in the neighbourhood had apprehended him. The state government has ordered the closure of the school and advised parents to take their children to other schools.

One of the suspects, Kunle Aralopo, 20, who joined in the gang-rape told newsmen how his inju failed him on the day he was arrested by the police. He said if

he had been able to memorize his incantation, it would have been difficult for him to be arrested. He said he was busy memorizing an incantation he learnt from a traditional priest, when the police detectives arrested him.

He said: "I wrote the incantation that the police should not arrest me on a piece of paper. I was busy memorizing when the police pounced on me and arrested me."

Aide Kunle, one Akomolafe Oluwasan, a National Diploma student of the private polytechnic and two others, who were at large, were said to have gang-raped an 18-year old student of the polytechnic.

Others rapists paraded include a two-man gang rape suspects, Babatope and Oluwasani Tope and a 17-year old minor who raped another three-year-old minor.

The Police Spokesman, regretted the upsurge of rape and defilement incidences in the recent times, especially from Ilawe Ekiti state, urging the populace to look after their wards and ensure that they entrust their them in safe

hands.

He said the Police have taken some of the victims to the hospital for medical reports, saying results had indicated that all of them have, at one time or the other, experienced rape and defilement.

Babayemi warned the private polytechnic, which is becoming a safe haven for rapists, against hoarding information relating to issue of rape, claiming that some cases of rape, leading to expulsion of some students were not reported to the Police.

The PPRO said: "Rape and defilement have become a source of concern to the Police in recent times. But we are assuring the people that we are not going to rest rape issues with kid's gloves. Those who take pleasure in raping and defiling the ladies and minors will be made to face the full wrath of the law."

The criminal codes and Ekiti State Gender-based Violence Prohibition Law forbid these acts and whoever is caught will be tried according to the dictate of these two laws.

He pledged that those who are at large would soon be arrested and made to face the full wrath of the law.

Briefs

Maria Taiwo Abati for burial July 18

THE burial rites for Mrs. A. Maria Taiwo Abati, ninth of the Special Adviser to the President (Media & Publicity) Dr. Reuben Abati, who died Thursday, May 23, 2011, are scheduled to hold on Thursday, July 18 and Friday July 19, 2011 at 10.00 a.m. at St. Job Abesokuta in Ogun State.

A Service of Songs, Thursday July 18, at 1.00 p.m. at Rev. K. Memorial Grammar School Ilesha, Abeokuta.

Funeral Service is Friday, July 19, 2011 at 10.00 a.m. at St. Job Anglican Church Ilesha, Abeokuta. Reception of guests will be at Bishop's Court, Onikoloko, Abeokuta.

Special programme

THE Redeemed Christian Church of God, France International, will today to Sunday hold its special programme at the Church Auditorium, 9, 10 and 12, Ebur Street, Lawanson, Surulere, 6.00 p.m. daily. Pastor Ogha Onagheni will minister while Pastor in Charge is Amos Emwom.

Fashola, Sagay for NBA (Lagos) Law

LAGOS State Governor Babatunde Fashola and constitutional lawyer, Professor Sagay (SAN) are among dignitaries expected at the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) Lagos branch 2013 law week scheduled for Sunday June 23, Thursday 27, 2013 in Lagos.

The Organising Committee's chairman, Mrs. Ndani Ede, Fashola would be a guest of honour while Prof. Sagay would deliver the opening speech. Also, former Vice Chancellor, University of Ado-Ekiti, Professor Akin Oluwode and renowned lawyer, Mr. Funmi Adesokoya (SAN) would deliver papers on "Money Laundering Versus the Legal Profession". Ede said there would be an interaction between the Bar and the Bench, which would be moderated by the Chief Justice of Lagos State, Justice Ayem Sholola and Mrs. Titi Akinlajun (SAN) among others.

Sholola, 63, for burial

FUNERAL rites for Mr. Stephen Oluasegun Olanuwo Sholola, who died at the age of 63, begin today with a Christian wake at 4.00 p.m. at the Redeemed Christian Church of God, Christ Church Redemption Way, Chagada, Lagos.

A statement by Mr. Lanre Ladipo said he would be buried tomorrow at the Old Ibeju Cemetery, Lagos, after a funeral service at the same church at 11.00 a.m.

He is survived by his wife: Pastor (Mrs.) Tretola Sholola; children: Babajide, Oluwarotimi, and Oluolufemi, and other relations.

Yoruba-speaking American, Kayode Oyinbo, takes Lagos Assembly by storm

By Wale Oluwalade

YORUBA-speaking American, Kelvin Barry, a La Kayode Oyinbo, on Wednesday took the Lagos State House of Assembly and guests by surprise with his uncommon fluency of Yoruba language.

His core Yoruba accent and accurate choice of deep-rooted words, left mouths of several lawmakers and guests ajar. They were all surprised at the foreigner's sheer mastery of their mother tongue.



At the end of his four minutes speech, there was no doubt that Kayode Oyinbo is not in the class of many so-called Yorubas, including several of the Lagos lawmakers, when it comes in conversation in unadulterated Yoruba.

Barry was a guest at the Special Parliamentary session in commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the June 12 and second anniversary of the Seventh Assembly, attended by politicians, party loyalists, royal fathers, Lagos White cap chiefs, Civil Society Organisations among others.

His core Yoruba accent and accurate choice of deep-rooted words, left mouths of several lawmakers and guests ajar. They were all surprised at the foreigner's sheer mastery of their mother tongue.

At the end of his four minutes speech, there was no doubt that Kayode Oyinbo is not in the class of many so-called Yorubas, including several of the Lagos lawmakers,

Acknowledging some of the guests present at the special session, Speaker of the House, Adeyemi Ilorunjo, said he had invited an interesting guest to the House and would like him to say a few words of greetings.

Ilorunjo had met Barry in Wisconsin, United States, and a few seconds of interaction

Barry of Saseed Babagun was all that endeared the Speaker to the unusual American Yoruba language student.

Meeting the date, his greeting in deep Yoruba words quickly confirmed the Speaker's choice.

Barry greeted the Speaker, the Oluwasan and all guests at

most at full length of prostration. He told the gathering he had been in love with the Yoruba language for several years and had spared nothing to learn it.

He said his love for indigenous language, culture and tradition had made Yoruba fascinating to him; an opportunity they lacked the west, especially the United States.

According to him, many in the Chamber could trace their origin back to their forefathers and where they came from - a privilege he lacked being a non-African.

Without mincing words, Barry urged the Yorubas and other Nigerians to value what is theirs - their country, language, culture and traditions.

He said there is nothing like promoting what belongs to one. *Nani non nani... Oni ran ni ba non!*

He said further that he was in Nigeria, to stir in a proverbial fire. *Non ni non ni...*

Among those that were impressed, if not floored by the exceptional performance, was guest speaker at the session, Prof. Pat Utomi.

I term admitted Barry had done far better than he would imagine himself doing with the Yoruba language and "then many member of the House, that conduct their Thursdays sitting in Yoruba language.

Police arrest eight over murder of 82-year-old in Edo

From Alenmu-Olorunwa Alia, Benin City

THE Assistant Inspector General of Police (AIG), Zone 5, Benin City yesterday said it had arrested eight persons in connection with the murder of an 82-year-old retired Police Inspector identified as Samimi Ajayi over community disputes in Ovia North-east Local Council of Edo State.

Mole's grievance was the report that the suspects buried their victim alive in a grave near a forest in the area after allegedly inviting him to intervene in the crisis.

It was alleged that the same gang, which invited him to provide a nuce in the crisis, abducted him and took him to a forest where he was allegedly buried alive.

They were said to have after a few days exhumed his body and buried it in a yet to be identified grave deeper into the forest, apparently afraid that the grave by the bush path could easily lead to suspicion.

But a source claimed that the choice by his assailants to bury Ajayi alive might be connected with ritual purposes.

However, one of the suspects, (names withheld), while confessing to the crime, said they anticipated that Police would come after them, because the victim was buried close to the road, which he said was the reason they exhumed him and buried him in another location.

The Deputy Commissioner of Police, Dave Akintemi, who spoke on behalf of the Assistant Inspector General of Police (AIG), Hashim Agungun, while confirming the incident, said the suspects were helping the Police to locate the site where the late Inspector Samuel Ajayi was buried.

News

Afenifere condemns Ekiti killing
●Group appeals to President Jonathan

BY DAPO AKINREFO

PAN-YORUBA SOCIO-POLITICAL organisation, Afenifere has expressed worry over the political violence in Ekiti State which claimed the life of an Ekiti Bibire Coalition member weekend.

Afenifere, in a statement by its publicity secretary, Mr. Yinka Odumakin, condemned the act and called on the Police to bring perpetrators of the act to book. Afenifere said: "The distasteful act carried out, Sunday by armed thugs was the high point of gun attack on members of Ekiti Bibire Coalition during a meeting at Ward 3 in Emure-Ekiti, in the Emure Local Government Area of the state.

"Mr. Foluso Ogunbare was reported dead from the attacks while another Mrs. Beatrice Ige is said to be receiving treatments from gunshot wounds.

"Afenifere decries in its entirety this barbaric incident and calls on the Police to immediately fish out the perpetrators of this gruesome act so they can face the full wrath of the law without delay."

Meantime, a political pressure group in Ekiti State, the Ekiti Justice Group, EJG, has called on President Goodluck Jonathan to intervene in the security situation in the state, saying, "Ekiti State under Governor Kayode Fayemi is drifting towards anarchy."

Reacting to the attack on supporters of the Ekiti Bibire Coalition in Emure-Ekiti, Sunday, which led to the death of Mr. Foluso Ogunbare, and many others, including a woman, Mrs. Beatrice Ige injured, EJG said in a statement by its coordinator, Ebenezer Olaeye that, "only the president can save Ekiti State from being plunged into a state of anarchy by political thugs because we are getting closer to a situation where people will begin to defend themselves."

Nigerians not safe in India, FG tells India

NIGERIA TOLD India, yesterday, that it fears for the safety of its nationals in the resort state of Goa after one of its citizens was slain and a local legislator compared Nigerians to "cancer."

Tensions have been rising in the tiny, palm-fringed state since a Nigerian man was stabbed to death last week in a murder that police blamed on rivalry between local and Nigerian drug traffickers.

Nigeria's High Commission called the death a "cold-blooded" killing.

Local media reports said the Nigerian was hacked to death by a group of Goa drug traffickers, while five other Nigerians suffered stab wounds.

Goa police arrested 53 Nigerians last week after around 200 of them staged a protest against the killing, chasing a police hearse carrying the corpse of the dead Nigerian and putting the body on the road.

Following the demonstration, which blocked Goa's main highway for several hours, Goa's chief minister Manohar Parrikar asked police to track down Nigerians living illegally in the former Portuguese colony so that they could be deported.

COMMISERATION: Ogun State Governor, Senator Ibiokinle Amosun, commiserating with Mrs. Esther Soluade, widow of the former Deputy Governor of Ogun State, Chief Olusesan Soluade, at the deceased's residence in Abeokuta.



Ogun's first deputy gov dies at 80

BY DAUD OLATUNJI

ABEOKUTA — OGUN State's first civilian deputy governor, Chief Olusesan Soluade has died at the age of 80.

A statement by one of the children of the deceased, Seye, on behalf of the family, yesterday, said the late octogenarian died, Monday, at the Federal Medical Centre, Idi-Aba, Abeokuta at 10:45p.m. after a brief illness.

The family, however, said the burial arrangement would be announced later.

Meantime, Governor Ibiokinle Amosun has expressed shock at the news of the demise of Chief Soluade.

In a statement by his Senior Special Assistant on Media, Mrs. Funmi Walkama, Amosun said he was saddened by the news of the exit of this illustrious son and former Deputy Governor, especially at a time when his wealth of experience was mostly needed, for the advancement of Ogun State.

Amosun described the former Deputy Governor, as a seasoned administrator, leader and astute politician, who devoted his life to the service of the state and humanity in general.

INEC to carry out nationwide constituency delineation

BY DAYO JOHNSON

AKURE — AHEAD of 2015 general elections, the Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, is to carry out a nationwide constituency delineation exercise.

This, when done, will lead to the creation of more polling units to stop voters from going far from their homes on election days to vote and to de-congest overcrowded polling units.

Resident Electoral Commissioner in Ondo State, Akin Orebisi said this in Akure during a state-wide stakeholders meeting on continuous voters registration exercise.

Orebisi pointed out that the exercise would equally ensure that state constituencies were better delineated so that equal or close to equal representation was guaranteed.

According to him: "INEC is working to ensure that it delivers its constitutional mandate and become one of the best electoral man ages in the world."

Orebisi said that in few weeks, the continuous voters registration exercise will begin across the country for 18 years of age and above who did not participate in the last exercise.

He reiterated that the Commission was introducing a permanent voters card for the conduct of the 2015 general elections.

16-yr-old girl raped to coma in Ogun

Y DAUD OLATUNJI

ABEOKUTA — A 16-year-old girl (name withheld) has been reportedly hospitalised after she was allegedly raped to coma by some unknown men in Abeokuta, the Ogun State capital.

Vanguard gathered that the incident occurred at 8p.m. on Monday on her way back home from where she was sent on an errand.

According to a popular actress (name withheld) who broke the news through her post on the Facebook: "A 16-year-old girl from Abeokuta in Ogun State was sent on errand last night (Monday) around 8 p.m. to the nearby street.

"On her way back home, hefty men ambushed her and got her raped till coma. As we are posting this right now, she is lying in sick bed at Federal Medical Centre, Abeokuta."

Painless deliveries now fashionable

OSOGBO — DR Olufemi Abidoye of Ladoko Akintola University Teaching Hospital, LAUTECH, yesterday, said more elite expectant mothers now opt for painless deliveries.

Abidoye, Registrar of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at LAUTECH hospital, stated this in Osogbo.

"With the availability of options, many women who can afford it are opting for less painful services in recent times.

"Apart from caesarian sessions, there is now a more advanced procedure called spinal anaesthesia which is totally painless.

"Many expectant mothers who can afford the new procedure are even travelling abroad for the advanced procedure," Abidoye said.

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6—Vanguard, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2013

News

Trader arraigned over alleged car theft

BY ONOZURE DANIA

LAGOS — A 45-year-old man, Adeola Adedawol, was yesterday arraigned before a Lagos Magistrate Court in Ikeja, over alleged stealing of a fairly used car worth N800,000.

The defendant who resides at 12, Shomade Street in Ikorodu area of Lagos, is facing a one-count charge of stealing preferred against him by the police.

The defendant who is a trader was docked before Magistrate A.O. Akinde.

The prosecutor, Sergeant Chinalu Uwadiene, told the court that the defendant committed the alleged offence on May 22, 2013 at about 10 am on Ikorodu road.

He said the defendant stole a fairly used Honda Accord car with number plate JN 897 AAA, engine J30A41144465 and chassis IHGCM66503A094209 belonging to one Alani Sulaiman.

According to the prosecutor, the offence is contrary to section 278 and punishable under section 285 of the criminal laws of Lagos state of Nigeria, 2011.

Earlier, the defendant pleaded not guilty to the charge against him.

Two security men remanded in prison over robbery, rape

BY ONOZURE DANIA

LAGOS — TWO security men, Samson Obroh, 55 and Joshua Iyeye, 20, were yesterday remanded to Kirikiri Prison by an Ikeja Magistrate Court pending the legal advice from the office of the Director of Public Prosecution, DPP over alleged robbery and rape.

The defendants who reside at 4a, Alanda Akinremi Street, Orile-Agege and 16, Puposhola Street, Lagos respectively were ordered to be remanded in prison by Magistrate A. O. Akinde.

The defendants and others at large, committed the alleged offence on November 19, 2013, at about 1 a.m. at 13, Ben Olakunle Street, Fagba in Iju Ishaga area of Lagos State.

Chief, 2 others arrested for robbery

BY DAYO JOHNSON

AKURE — THREE persons, including a chief, have been arrested by the Police in Ondo State for robbery. Vanguard gathered that the three suspects, in November

this year, invaded the house of one Mrs Esther and robbed her of a Toyota Camry car.

Other items stolen were two mobile handsets and jewellery.

On the receipt of the complaint, the operatives of SARS

swung into action and one Chief Sunday Boboye, the Ajagun-Ode of Ode community, Akure; Akeem Bakare and Ramoni Ismaila were arrested.

The police image maker, Wole Ogodo, said they had

all confessed to the crime.

Ogodo said it was Ajagun-Ode that used to supply the gun and the customized number plate they used while taking stolen vehicles to a dealer in Ado-Ekiti.

He said after the matter was reported, the vehicle was traced to Ado where one Akinyele Gbenga, the receiver, was arrested.

Ogodo said the receiver sold the vehicle to Ogundare Oluwole for N720,000.

Oluwole, according to Ogodo, in turn sold the vehicle to one Dare Akomolafe at Ikere Ekiti. The police spokesman said the car and two locally-made barrel guns were recovered from Ajagunode.

He said "the police will go into the root of the matter and ensure that those involved are punished."

The suspects, according to sources, may have been docked yesterday.



Fake, counterfeit, substandard, expired and unwholesome products being destroyed by the South-West region National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control, NAFDAC, at the Sagamu dump site in Ogun State, weekend. Photo: Biodun Ogunleye.

9 docked for stealing dogs in Katsina

KATSINA — THE Police in Katsina State, yesterday, arraigned one Ngwana

Lar and eight others accused of stealing two hunting dogs and causing grievous hurt to

the dogs' owner.

The Police prosecutor, Inspector Babangida Shehu, told the court that the accused allegedly stole the dogs belonging to one Aliyu Sule of Karau village in Mashi Local Government Area in the state. Shehu said the owner of the dogs had pursued the accused, who came from Plateau, to Mami road where he met them boarding a vehicle with the animals.

He told the court that when Sule asked for his dogs, the situation led to a fight, and he was subsequently injured.

The prosecutor said the accused were standing trial for criminal conspiracy, criminal trespass, theft and criminal force.

The offences are punishable under Sections 97, 263, 342 and 386 of Northern States Federation Provision Act, Cap 345 of Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 1990.

The Chief Magistrate, Mr Kabir Shu'aibu, granted the accused bail but said the surety must be a reliable community leader residing within the court's jurisdiction.

He adjourned the case to December 31.

Alleged cultist remanded over murder

BY ONOZURE DANIA

LAGOS — JUSTICE Kudirat Jose of a Lagos High Court sitting in Ikeja, yesterday, remanded a suspected cultist, Rasheed Bello, in Kirikiri prison over alleged murder of one Busirat Ogunlaja and for also being a member of secret society.

The defendant is facing a two-count charge of conspiracy and murder.

The prosecution counsel, Kester, told the court that Rasheed and others at large committed the alleged crime on February 3, 2011.

He said the defendant and his accomplices who are members of Aye Confraternity murdered the deceased at 8, Odofin Street, in Epe area of Lagos.

The defendant pleaded not guilty to the charges against him but his plea was not taken as the judge ordered that he be remanded.

However, counsel in the matter asked Justice Jose for a trial date.

She adjourned the case to February 24, 2014.

The Metro Section

Day old baby corpse floats on Kaduna river

From Bashir Bello, Kaduna

THE lifeless body of a day-old baby was yesterday found floating on a stream in Kurmi Mashi, a metropolis in Kaduna North local council of the state.

An eyewitness who identified himself as Mallam Musa Ahmed said he saw the floating body of the baby at about 10:00am when he went to ease himself beside the stream and immediately raised alarm which attracted the attention of neighbours and passers-by.

Ahmed said the corpse of the baby was immediately taken and buried with the community.

When asked whether the police was notified on the development, he said: "The dead body of the baby was buried without police knowledge in view of the condition in which the baby was found," adding that, "the unfulfilled cord was still there."

Meanwhile, the Police Public Relation Officer (PPRO) Kaduna State

• Gunmen kill NSRMEA staff in Malali

Command, DSP Aminu Lawan said he has not been briefed about the matter by the Divisional Police Officer (DPO) of Kurmi Mashi Police Station as he gave assurance that the Comr and will make necessary enquiry it to the matter after which necessary investigations will be carried out.

Similarly, a staff of National Steel Raw Materials Exploration Agency (NSRMEA), Malali, Kaduna, identified as Ibrahim Mohammed Tella was also gunned down by unidentified gunmen along Umaru Gwandu Road, Malali, Kaduna at the weekend.

The incident happened when he deceased was on a bike from the 'Tiger Garage, Malali village, holding his six-year-old boy when the gunmen approached him, shot him from the rear and zoomed off on their bike.

According to an eyewitness, Ibrahim Saleh, the incident happened at approximately the popular Destiny College, situated in Malali GGA.

It was also gathered that the late Tella spent the weekend working on his farm, which is across the River Kaduna along the new Yakowa Road.

On the said day, he left with his son to the Tiger Garage where they had their lunch and he received a call from there that somebody was waiting for him on the farm. He immediately jumped on the next available motorbike to his farm, unaware that another bike was trailing them. The assailants on bike caught up with them opposite Destiny College and started firing several shots at him.

After confirming that he was dead, the three men on the bike zoomed off causing commotion and confusion.

The Police Public Relation Officer, Kaduna State Command, DSP Aminu Lawan confirmed the incident and



Commissioner of Police, Kaduna State, Olufenmi Ademilake said the police are after the killers as investigation has already begun into the case. He appealed to members of the public with useful information to assist the police track down the perpetrators.

Briefs

Nigerian navy hosts Africa maritime experts
By Olatu Sunday

THE Nigerian Navy will from August 27 to 28 host the international conference of African navies and maritime experts at the Eko Hotel and Suites in Lagos. The conference, according to Nigerian Naval authorities, would proffer best ways to secure Africa waters and sea trade. Chairman of the Local Organizing Committee for the conference Rear Admiral Iboke Iboke, Flt Officer Commanding, Western Naval Command, Lagos, said Nigerian Navy would collaborate with the navies of other African countries to tackle insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea. According to him, the theme of the conference is "Offshore Patrol Vessel - Africa".

"The conference will also examine the unique maritime security challenges in maritime countries in the 21st century as the continent is witnessing progressive surge in offshore activities," he said.

"Naval chiefs and stakeholders will also discuss issues such as anti-piracy, sea of robotics as well as multilateral protective measures to safeguard offshore oil assets."

"Other issues include exhibition of security and defence related equipment, protection of oil and gas assets, technology transfer and development of domestic ship building capacities," Iboke added.

Fayemi's wife laments increasing rape of minors in Ekiti

From Mylwa Adeniyi, Ado Ekiti

THE wife of Ekiti State Governor Mrs Blisi Fayemi has blamed the increasing rate of defilement of minors in the state to street hawking and exposure of female children to street life.

She regretted that despite various laws put in place by the Governor Kayode Fayemi-led administration to protect gender rights in the state, the increasing rate of reported rape cases should concern all residents of the state.

She, however, advised parents to desist from allowing their minors to roam the streets in the name of hawking and report any case of defilement to the police.

Mrs. Fayemi spoke yesterday while flagging off the Market Outreach Programme where she intends to partner and empower market women for sustainable development.

The programme, which is being financed by Ekiti Development Foundation (EDF), an initiative of Mrs Fayemi in collaboration with Ministry



Mrs Fayemi of Women Affairs, is expected to lead advocacy for better life for market women. Kick starting the programme at Ido-Ekiti Market in Ido-osi Local Council, Mrs Fayemi hinted that the

gesture was to demonstrate the present administration's concern in the state to market women.

Some of the items donated included a brand new 16-seater bus, mini purses and cash support.

The governor's wife thanked the ladies for their support for the Kayode Fayemi-led government, stressing that the programme was one way of showing appreciation.

Another highlight of the event was a health talk by the officials of the state Ministry of Health where market women were taught the rudiments of personal hygiene and how to run a good marital home. The State Action Committee on AIDS (SACA) team led by Dr Charles Deberry also gave HIV/AIDS awareness advocacy at the communities visited.

A health officer, Mrs Kemi Akinleye urged the audience to always accord respect to their husbands saying it was one of sure ways of keeping a good home. She emphasized on the benefits of taking balance diet urging them to avoid too much intake of fatty and salty food, as it could cause hypertension.

At the close of the programme, Mrs Fayemi hinted that the

Fulani community petitions Oyo governor over killing of its members

From Iyabo Lawal, Ibadan

WORRIED by the murder of its members in some parts of Oyo State, the Fulani community in the state yesterday called on Governor Abiodun Ajimobi to urgently intervene and stop the crisis.

They alleged that natives in the towns and settlements have killed about 11 of its members in the last six weeks.

The Fulani group known as *Jamu Natu Fulba* Association of Nigeria, Oyo State Chapter in a petition to Governor Ajimobi, and made available to reporters in Ibadan gave the names of the victims as Sanusi Musa, Saidu Abdulahi, Ibrahim Haruna, Umar Babagana, Salu Rebo and

Muhammad Usman.

The petition signed by Alhaji Salihu Kadiri and Mallam Muhammad Salihu Kosi, national chairman and general secretary respectively said "Natives particularly farmers and youths kill our people at any slight provocation. The common excuses for such brutal killings are that our cattle are fond of grazing on their farmland or they disturb free flow of vehicular traffic on some major roads."

"In the last few weeks, these ethnic jingolts and blood-suckers have invaded many Fulani clans and settlements to commit their crime of serial murder with impunity. This has resulted in the cold-blooded murder of at least 11 of our brothers whose family have been left in zentral grief," the group stated.

While calling on the state government to take steps to halt the killings, the group also accused the state Police Command of not taking prompt action each time cases of the killings in question was reported at any of its formation.

"Since the police and other security agencies have never shown concern to any reports of brutality, harassment and killings of our members going by past experiences, we make a passionate appeal to Governor Ajimobi and other well-meaning leaders in the state to save us from these serial killers," the petition read in

Group calls for suspension of Hausa traders from Bodija market

From Iyabo Lawal, Ibadan

FOLLOWING the violent clash between Yoruba and Hausa beans traders at the Bodija Market in Ibadan last Friday, a Yoruba socio-cultural group, the *Omitata Yoruba Apapoo* (OYA) yesterday called for indefinite suspension of Hausa traders from the market.

"At least five people were injured in the clash. The group, while addressing reporters at the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) press centre in Ibadan, described the bloody fight as economic jihad which started against the Yoruba traders on May 4 when four of their colleagues who went to buy beans were murdered in Borno State while another set of 10 traders were killed on June 28 in the same state and over 140 million reportedly taken away from them.

The group's spokesperson, Oluadare Ogumilana said "accounts of the killing did not suggest that the murdered traders were caught in any bonnet blast or crossfire. This points to the fact that those who killed them must have trailed them to Borno to shift attention to Boko Haram.

Ogumilana said since the second round of killings on June 28 stopped the Yoruba traders from going to Borno State, the beans has been coming into the hands of Hausa traders who have been selling at cut-throat prices to their Yoruba counterparts as retailers.

"Before last Friday's clash, a measure

of beans had risen to N550 as against N200 before the Borno killing. We are miffed that the Hausa traders could still muster the guts to engage their Yoruba hosts in a bloody fight after the killing of 14 of them in Borno State. We know what could have happened in the North if they were in our shoes."

He added further: "It is time to show that we can take it no more. If they are testing our will, Yorubas are not cowards. In practical rejection of this audacity, OYA calls for indefinite suspension of trading activities by Hausa at Bodija market until the perpetrators of the dastardly act of murder of 14 traders are brought to book."

Church holds concert

THE 2nd all night Festival of Voices Music Concert of the vine Salvation Bible church tagged: "Joy of the Lord" in Ilemiah 4: 10 will hold August 30, 2013 from 8pm to 6am at Adesoji Street, Ibaday off Ilorodu Road, Lagos

Okosi, 77, for burial

THE death has occurred of Mrs Agatha Okosi (née Okaligbo) on July 20, 2013. According to her nephew Mr Melvin Ido, CEO of Melvior Nigeria Limited, she will be buried on August 30 at Ibebusu Street, Inland Town Okinsha, Anambra State.

Odusote, 107, for burial

THE death has occurred of Madam Susanah Ajolax Odusote (née Dina) who pass on July 25, 2013 at General Hospital, Lagos. Funeral arrangements begin on Friday August 30 at 5:00pm with a wake at her residence, No. 3, Olu Mosa Street, Oke-Agbo, Ibebusu, Ogun State. Her remains will be interred at the Christa Cemetery, Oke-Agbo Ibebusu after a funeral service on August 31 by 12noon at St. John African Church Oke-Agbo with the entertainment of guests will follow immediately at St. John's African Church Primar

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ISIS executing their captives.

Like ISIS, like Boko Haram

Continued from page 14

Like ISIS, Boko Haram is also believed to be in control of other areas near Gwoza in southern Borno. The group is also said to have foothold in some other areas in northern Borno and at least one town in neighbouring Yobe State. The development is fueling the fear that the insurgents are closer than ever to achieving their goal of carving out a strict Islamic state across northern Nigeria, especially with the seeming impotence of the Nigerian Army to rise to the challenge.

Yet there are more reasons to believe that Boko Haram is fashioning its operation after the Middle East jihadist group. Women, according to reports, are becoming convenient targets for sexual exploitation and violence by the group. Reports by women's rights organizations claimed that thirteen cases of rape by ISIS militants were recorded between June 9 and June 12, of which four resulted in suicide of the women. This disturbing development is emblematic of what many women in the troubled northern states in Nigeria face on daily basis in the hands of Boko Haram insurgents.

Reports in the recent months about the ordeals of women captives in Boko Haram's den reeked out agonies, pains and trauma of sexually assaulted and exploited by members of the insurgent group. Giving an account of her traumatic experience in the hand of the insurgents, Mrs. Rachael Oyeiyinka who was taken captive for three months by the Boko Haram alongside her husband said the insurgents took turns to rape the women in their captivity. "I cannot count the number of times but every day, some of the women got pregnant and were given concoction to flush it out, so many of the women who resisted were killed. If you are very pretty, they will initially reserve you for their leader. But as soon as he gets a replacement, he would push you out for general use," Oyeiyinka said in a recent interview.

In the Middle East, ISIS has in the recent weeks shown that it is increasingly becoming a ruthless and effective killing machine going by a recently released video where ISIS fighters were seen executing some people lying face down. A similar scene was reported to have been captured in a video released by Boko Haram insurgents last week.

The obvious similarity in the mode of operation of the two groups may have heightened the fear that Boko Haram may have a link with the deadly Middle East terrorism. Stephen Davis, Australian hostage negotiator, voiced this much reportedly quoted in a recent interview where he was in a recent interview where he was reportedly quoted to have warned the Nigerian government that Boko Haram might establish links with ISIS if the activity of the sect is not effectively checked.

Davis who opined that going by the trend in Somalia, Southern Sudan and Egypt where militant groups team up, Boko Haram, according to him, might toe a similar path.

As a way of checking the activity of the group, Davis suggested that government intensify efforts aimed at blocking and tracking down its funding for terrorist organisations. Identifying sources of funding for terrorist organisations as well as their sponsors have, however, proved to be one of the most difficult tasks in the war against terrorism.

More worrisome is the realization that while there has been concerted efforts in some quarters to unmask the faces behind global terrorism, such efforts are often whittled down by political wrangling as opposition political parties often trade blames with the issue in their war of attrition. Nigeria is no exception. However, with the suspicion that Boko Haram could establish a link with ISIS not a few observers are of the opinion that the sect's brutality may receive additional impetus.

Recently, a report on Daily Bhaskar, an online news medium alleged that the rise of ISIS, is being 'shaped and controlled' out of Langley, Virginia and other CIA facilities in the States with the objective to spread chaos in the world's second largest oil state Iraq.

The accusation which is credited to a Canadian think tank on international affairs and security, The Centre Global Research, questions the manner in which ISIS took control of the oil-rich city of Mosul, 'without firing a single shot. Eyewitness' accounts were said to have revealed Iraqi government soldiers abandoning their guns and ammunition 'without any resistance' to ISIS fighters. Pictures of Iraq government soldiers leaving behind bulletproof jackets and guns were reportedly splattered across the Internet when ISIS entered Mosul.

CGR was quoted to have said, "A point worth mentioning is that much of the present Iraqi government has been armed with the US assistance."

The report, it was gathered, mentions a certain General Ibrahim al-Douri as the mastermind of the recent ISIS military success in Iraq. Douri is said to be on the watch list of America since 2003 and his former Baath Party head and Saddam Hussein successor. He is believed to be the current head of the Iraqi rebel group Army of the Men of the Naghbandi order.

The report further alleges that Douri had well-placed contacts in Washington, which enabled his return to Iraq, even after being present on US most wanted list.

The report, among myriads of other claims raised to support its allegation also quoted US State Department official, Andrew Doran, claiming that several ISIS fighters hold US passports. It concludes that lack of US action to halt the advancing ISIS as a further proof that the group's advances were deliberately allowed if not instigated by Western countries.

In Nigeria, the politicization of Boko Haram insurgency has confined effort to unmask the forces behind the activity of the deadly sect into the realm of speculation. Will the hoods on the faces of the members of the insurgent group be ever removed? Only time will tell.

Save our souls

Continued from page 14

She said Gamboru is still under Boko Haram control as no Nigerian soldier is in the town "for now." She said the insurgents often patrol the town in their trucks, shouting and searching for Nigerian security forces even as she called on the authority to act quickly before the situation deteriorates. She appealed for the evacuation of fleeing residents from the Cameroon territory "before they begin to get hostile" to them. "They are still cooperating with us now and trying to be friendly but we know this may not last long. They may change and become impatient with us. We're Federal Government should help us. We're over 1000 here with women and children in majority," she disclosed.

Sunday Sun also learnt some Nigerian soldiers who the military authority said "charged through the Cameroon border in a tactical maneuver" after the fierce battle with Boko Haram on Sunday are injured. "One was shot in the neck and his condition is degrading now. He couldn't even eat very well on Thursday," a source in the community told Sunday Sun. The source said he was more concerned about the Nigerian troops than some of the Gamboru residents.

"If government does not care about us, what about these soldiers who are wounded in the course of fighting Boko Haram? They deserve to be treated because they fought Boko Haram men gallantly that day. Government should do something about it," he stressed.

He also debunked the claim by the military authority in the country that troops are pursuing Boko Haram men who fled into Gamboru. He said rather, Boko Haram has taken over Gamboru. "As I am talking to you now (Thursday), no Nigerian troops are in Gamboru pursuing Boko Haram. In fact, we learnt Boko Haram men were searching houses at Ngala, asking people if soldiers were in their houses.

The commercial twin towns of Gamboru/Ngala in Ngala Local Government, southwest of Borno, are located about 120 kilometres from Maiduguri, the state capital. The first Boko Haram attack on the area on May 5 left no fewer than 200 people dead and many houses, trailers and other properties burnt. On May 9, the insurgents blew off the only bridge on the road linking the area with other parts of the state. The development has cut off the community from the country and Boko Haram worsened the woes of the inhabitants as it struck again on Sunday, August 24.

News



Comp on duty in Gombe metropolis, yesterday. NAN PHOTO.

Boko Haram trial: Journalists sent out of courtroom

THE journalists, who were at the Lagos Federal High Court, yesterday, to cover the arraignment of the alleged 17 members of Boko Haram were greeted with humiliation and threat from men of the Department of State Services, DSS, that escorted the accused persons. The journalists were sent out of the courtroom by the armed security operatives and one of them threatened to arrest the journalists if they resist. A senior DSS officer told newsmen that the directive to keep them away from the arraignment of the suspected Boko Haram members was from the Presidency. Other litigants were actually barred from the courtroom. When the Boko Haram case was

called, some lawyers were implored to leave the court, this, it was gathered, was due to the small size of the courtroom. However, the arraignment of the suspected Boko Haram members, which had suffered two adjournments on October 2 and 9, due to lack of interpreter and the absence of the trial judge, respectively, could not go on yesterday. This was because the first to fifth accused persons namely (Ali Mohammed, Adamu Karumi, Ibrahim Usman, Bala Haruna, Idris Ali) did not have legal representation. Presiding judge, Musa Kuya, adjourned the matter till November 27, for the arraignment of the accused persons.

Lawyer, 3 others nabbed over crude oil theft

BY SAMUEL OVADONGHIA
YENAGOA—Operatives of the Department of State Services, DSS, and the Nige-

rian Police have arrested four persons, among them a lawyer, over their alleged involvement in the theft of over 2,000 metric tonnes of petroleum product suspected to be Automated Gas Oil from a facility belonging to the Nigerian Agip Oil Company in Brass Local Government Area, Bayelsa State. The lawyer, simply identified as Angelo, is Lagos-based and counsel to one chief, said to be on the run and wanted by the Bayelsa State Police Command over the illegal movement of the stolen petroleum product from Bayelsa to Lagos. A source in the Joint Task Force, codenamed Operation Pulo Shield, said the lawyer and three other persons were arrested at an area known as Outside Bar in Lekki Area of Lagos, while negotiating for the transfer of the stolen product to a foreign buyer. The source said: "They had successfully moved the vessel from the Bayelsa waters into the Lagos axis. The surveillance team were detailed to allow negotiation for sales to commence before their arrest. "We could not apprehend the Chief as he escaped."

FRAUD: DSS parades fake Boko Haram member in Enugu

BY TONY EDIKE
ENUGU—THE Department of State Services, DSS, Enugu State Command, yesterday, paraded a 35-year-old man, Mr. Daniel Danboyi, who claimed to be a repentant member of Boko Haram sect, for allegedly extorting money from some churches under false pretence. The suspect, who is also known as Shuaibu Shehu Robiu, was said to have visited several churches in the country, telling fictitious story of how he was actively involved in the activities of the Boko Haram insurgents before he repented and became a Christian. The State Director of DSS, Mr. Victor Duru, who paraded the suspect in Enugu, said that Danboyi, a native of Garshi District, Kura Falls, Barkin-Ladi Local Government Area of Plateau State, "has been going about duping innocent Nigerians, using religion as his tool."

According to him, the suspect was arrested at Mountain of Fire and Miracles Church, Zik Avenue, Enugu, in connection with Boko Haram activities. Duru said: "He has been going about with a false testimony, deceiving people, duping and exploiting people in the name of religion. "He claims that he was a Boko Haram member, who has converted to Christianity." He added that Danboyi began the deceit in 2001 in a church at Abuja.

7 returning hajj pilgrims die in road accident

BY SALISU MARADUN
Road. He said: "The pilgrims, who also happened to be the second batch to be airlifted from Saudi Arabia after the conclusion of hajj, were hearty and healthy. "But to our dismay, we received the news of their death."
GUSAU—SEVEN pilgrims from Zamfara State, who were returning from this year's hajj exercise, lost their lives few hours after arriving the country. The deceased, who were indigenes of Bukkuyum Local Government Area of the state, died when the vehicle conveying them from the International Airport, Sokoto, ran into a ditch after the driver lost control. According to Lawal Garba, the Public Relations Officer of the Federal Road Service Commission, FRSC, Sokoto State Command, survivors of the accident are currently receiving medical attention at the Federal Medical Centre, Gusau. According to Lawal, who officially confirmed the death of the returning pilgrims, investigation is on to ascertain the cause of the accident. Also speaking on the issue, the Registration Officer of Bukkuyum Local Government, Mallam Ibrahim Nasarawa, revealed that the accident happened along Sokoto-Gusau

Pastor accused of raping 9-yr-old, two 7-yr-olds
ABUJA—A pastor, Emmanuel Mathew, 50, appeared before an Abuja High Court for allegedly raping three pupils in a primary school at Mpape, Abuja. Mathew, who is the pastor and General Overseer of The Choice Bible Church, Mpape, and proprietor of the said school, was arraigned on a five-count charge. The Prosecutor, DSP Stanley Nwodo, told the court that the accused raped two seven-year-old and a nine-year-old pupils on different occasions in his school. Nwodo said the offence contravened Section 293 of the Penal Code, which attracts 14 years imprisonment, an option of fine or both.

Mathew pleaded not guilty to the charges. After arraignment, the Counsel to the accused, Mr. Uyo Yamah, urged the court to admit his client to bail. The prosecutor did not oppose the application because the accused had been on administrative bail. In his ruling, Justice Hussein Baba-Yusuf, granted bail to the accused in the sum of N500,000 and a surety in like sum. Baba-Yusuf ordered that the surety must be resident within the FCT and must produce proof of ownership of a landed property. He adjourned the case till January 21, 2014, for hearing.



PROTEST: Members of Education Rights Campaign, ERC, protesting the strike embarked on by Academic Staff Union of Universities, ASUU, in Lagos, yesterday. NAN PHOTO.

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 Conviction is an open wound; only truth can heal it. Uthmaniyah Fu 0154-886

14 | THE GUARDIAN, Thursday

Editorial

Stiffer penalties for human traffickers

THE move by the National Assembly (NASS) to prescribe stiffer penalties for persons involved in human trafficking is most desirable against the backdrop of the worsening scourge. Human trafficking has tarnished Nigeria's image and subjected thousands of victims to inhumanity. Many have died in the process of being trafficked across international borders. Any measure to combat the menace and punish culprits deserves support. The federal legislature's decision to prescribe a 10-year jail term for persons convicted of human trafficking is commendable.

The House Committee on Human Rights had noted that fines alone were no longer an option for convicted traffickers. National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Persons (NAPTIP) now estimates that eight million Nigerian children are engaged in exploitative child labour, hence, the need to provide legal and institutional support for the agency.

The issue of human rights is covered in relevant international conventions to which Nigeria is signatory. Besides, the Constitution has human rights provisions enshrined in it. Human trafficking, therefore, is a clear violation of both the Constitution and international conventions that are binding on Nigeria.

It is, however, important to appreciate that there is a nexus between poverty and human trafficking. Lack of education and poor enlightenment are also critical factors.

Above all is the collapse of family values. Some parents encourage their children to be trafficked. In extreme cases, oath-taking to cement the deal is even organised, taking advantage of traditional beliefs. Human trafficking has grown into big business run by cartels around the world. Like drug trafficking, it has become complex and therefore, requires both tough measures and well-coordinated international cooperation to combat it.

Governments around the world have a crucial role to play in combating the crime. Worsening economic hardship in most developing countries has contributed immensely to this problem. Experience shows that people are trafficked from poor, economically depressed countries to the developed world and not the other way round. It is modern day slavery. Good governance and stronger economies would stem the tide of human trafficking and Nigeria should not relent in the effort to curb this menace. The legal approach which the NASS is considering should therefore be encouraged, while public enlightenment is stepped up to create awareness among the populace.

...And rapists

AGainst the backdrop of rising rape cases in Nigeria, the Minister of Women Affairs and Social Development, Hajia Zainab Malina recently vented her outrage over the light punishment given to perpetrators and convicts of the dastardly act by the law courts. The minister's outburst is justified. Considering that rape victims go through lifelong trauma arising from their awful experience, perpetrators deserve stiffer penalties. One way to deter rapists and reduce the crime is to pronounce tougher penalty on convicts under the law. A life imprisonment would do.

Rape has remained a recurring decimal across the country. Teenage girls, primary school pupils and even elderly women are raped. Last year's reports of the serial rape of elderly widows in their 70s and 80s in Opi, Nsukka in Enugu State by a band of thugs in the community shocked everyone. And earlier in 2007, then Minister of Education, Obiageli Ezekwesili decried the reported rise in cases of sexual molestation of children in primary and secondary schools by some of their teachers. Sadly enough, all these reports went without prosecution or conviction. That encouraged would-be rapists and child molesters.

The Lagos State House of Assembly, the other day, joined in the campaign for more severe sanctions for those who defile minors: and rapists, to stem the act in the state. The lawmakers want to amend the Child Rights Law 2007 to accommodate sanctions and preventive measures for criminal acts that have gone viral in Lagos. No fewer than 678 cases were recorded in 2012 by the Lagos State Ministry of Justice. None made it to prosecution.

The situation in Lagos is not different from what obtains in other states of the federation. As a matter of fact, some states are deeper into the rape crime and yet, little is heard about prosecution or conviction. The truth is that many cases of rape and child abuse are actually not reported. The culprits get off scot-free, thereby, constituting a greater threat to the female folk.

At the same time, most of the reported cases are not prosecuted due to the attitude of parents and guardians who would prefer not to pursue the case for fear of possible stigmatisation of the victim. Rape victims are exposed to all sorts of dangers, including the dreaded HIV/AIDS disease, sexually transmitted infections, psychological trauma and unwanted pregnancy. The odds are many. It is however worrisome that people prefer to suffer in silence, having been victims of offences that have legal sanctions. The law has made provision for the prosecution of rapists and imposition of appropriate sanctions. Victims and their families should therefore be willing to come out to seek legal redress, which is in their own interest and that of society at large. The time has indeed come for Nigerians to change their neglectful attitude towards sexual offences.

LETTERS

NDDC and the gender agenda

SIR: While governments across the world pledged greater affirmative action to ensure that women assume greater leadership roles at the Beijing Conference, not much happened in Nigeria's political landscape until now it is, therefore, gratifying to note that under the Jonathan administration "one in every three members of the Federal Executive Council is a woman" and Nigerians have witnessed the impressive outing of women in these and other high-profile offices in various sectors of the economy.

Conversely, it is worrisome to note that since the inception of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) in 2001, only one female, Dr. (Mrs.) Georgiana Niger-Nwagha from Bayelsa State has sat on the board as a State Representative. This implies that out of the nine states that constitute the board, eight have not fielded a female representative and that no female has held the position of Chairman, Managing Director or any of the executive directorships.

Alongside this neglect of the womenfolk, we note that the blueprint by those who dreamt the dream that culminated in the establishment of the Commission was jettisoned and brushed aside once the Commission came on stream. This is without prejudice to the recognition of Chief Harold Dappa-Birye, who was the

arrowhead of the struggle, exploitation through naming the state socio-economic Commission building after him. Arguably, the lack of human kindness of those who the nation's dreamt the dream and committedly pursued the establishment of the Commission may not be unconnected with the intractable squabbles and implore Prudence Ngonzi further tap into Okonjo-beala and Diezani's talents and Allison-Madueke and their ilk women by cannot be said to lack quality essence of the leadership materials on the fence. Transformational side of the gender board of NDDC hedgerow; to think otherwise is to be blind to current events in the Niger Delta. As the Niger Delta nurses its gangrened wounds from decades of

• Nosa Jaso, Warri, Delta Sta

Amosun's infrastructural revolution

To exit is to change, to change is to mature, to mature is to go on creating oneself endlessly - Henri Bergson.

SIR: The above quote clearly pictures the on-going historic infrastructural revolution in Ogun, which many eminent Nigerians have described as 'phenomenal'. Many residents of Ogun are fast becoming the biblical Philip who confidently told his friend, Nathaniel, 'come and meet my Jesus'. It is true that the 37-year-old state is among the famous in Nigeria but sad to note that it was one of the so-called

ancient states' structure before Ibikunle Amosun's iteration. In the last two story has been around from we be in a bid to boost the state' the government led to the const expansion of all roads and bridge. It is amazing! the state is indeed a centre of attraction the road project cent near comp. • Femi Onasanya Abeokuta, Ogun

KNOT IN OUR CHARACTER

TEN MEMBERS OF OUR STATE'S UNDER-20 FOOTBALL TEAM HAVE FAILED AN AGE TEST.

NOT AGAIN. GOVERNOR SH SET UP A RAP HEADED BY JUDGE FROM COUNCIL ARE PROBE THE M

THAT WON'T BE POSSIBLE.

WHY?

THE JUDGE HAS JUST BEEN SANCTIONED FOR FALSIFYING HIS AGE.

D.E. SAIT

FROM PAUL RUDE, BAUCHI

I was getting dark in the evening and Zainab Mohammed had just taken a bend through a footpath path at Kuzari going to her house in Lukshi after attending the turbaning ceremony of the Gimbhya Lukshi in Dass Local Government Area of Bauchi State when she heard footsteps and whispers behind her in the bush. Then came three men like a bolt from the blue who accosted her.

"I turned and asked them what they wanted from me and they said they wanted to follow me. I said follow me for what? What did I do to you that you want to follow me? Do I owe you money that you want to follow me? I told them to leave me alone. I don't want my husband to hear that men were following me. I told them to leave me alone but they refused," she recalled while narrating on her hospital bed the pathetic story of how her assailants gang-raped and plucked her eyes about a fortnight ago.

"Suddenly, they held my hands. I was struggling to free myself from their grip. They held my neck and I almost died. They twisted my hand, they opened my two legs and took turns to rape me. I was fainting. Then they brought an object I don't know whether it was a knife or not and they started removing my left eye. I screamed and tried to struggle but they removed my left eye. They started removing the other eye and I screamed harder. Then I heard a male voice saying this scream inside the bush is not normal and people came", she stated, adding that that was the point her assailants took to their heels.

The victim said she knew two of the three men that attacked her. "One of them is called bullet but I don't know the name of the other one. They use to go round the village aimlessly drinking alcohol", she recalled.

Zainab, 30, a mother of four miraculously survived the double tragedy of being brutally raped by three men who later removed her eyes with a knife on March 1, 2014 at Lukshi village, Dass Local Government Area of Bauchi State. Zainab's case becomes more pathetic because she is physically challenged. The victim, who is barely five feet tall, was said to have been struck by a mysterious illness when she was a child and was left almost incapacitated, with her left arm and leg almost useless. Although Zainab manages to move around by limping, walking for her is a herculean task.

Speaking with *Saturday Sun* from her hospital bed at the female ward of the Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Teaching Hospital (ATBUTH), Bauchi, the victim attributed her miraculous survival to providence.

"Thank God some persons were passing and when they heard my screams, they rushed to where I was. Before they got to me, the men who attacked me had gone far. They pursued them but could not get them," she recalled.

"They came back and were asking themselves 'what do we do with this girl or is she a woman?' One of them went to get a vehicle and they carried me inside. They came to inform my husband. They told him 'they have finished your wife'. Then I was taken to Dass General Hospital and later Teaching Hospital, Bauchi," she said.

How assailants were arrested

The Public Relations Officer of the Bauchi State police command, Haruna Mohammed said that the police did not waste time before swinging into action as soon as the news of the dastardly act reached them.

According to him: "Since then, the command embarked on aggressive man-hunt of the suspects and it has yielded a positive result as all the three suspects were arrested and have confessed.

"They are Sabo Rabo alias bullet of



•L-R Suspects: Bitrus alias Japanese, Sabo Rabo alias Bullet, Moh'd Sani alias Bamigboye and Usman Sabo, native doctor

3 men rape mother of 4 in Bauchi

■ Pluck her left eye for rituals



• Zainab

Durr Katanga village, Bitrus Yakubu alias Japan of Dado village, Mohammed Sani alias Bamigboye of Durr Katanga village. The suspects will be charged to court as soon as investigation is concluded." It was further learnt that the police has arrested a fourth suspect Usman Sabo who was picked up following alleged confessions of the initial three suspects that he was the proposed buyer of the plucked eyes.

Why we did it -Suspects

Bitrus is a tall, huge man with kola-stained teeth from Dado village in Dass local council area who mends broken domestic plastic buckets and bowls for a living. Looking unkempt, he claimed to be 45 years old but looked every inch in his late 50s. The father of four said he is separated from his wife. "My wife ran away with the children and I have been living alone," he told *Saturday Sun* at the Bauchi police command headquarters where he is being kept with the three other suspects. The others are Sabo Rabo, who is a 40-year-old native of Doukabuga village in Toro council area while Mohammed Sani is 30.

In his open confession, Bitrus said: "I am here because I committed a crime. We were three. We did it at a spot called Kuzari. She asked us to give her some money

and sleep with her. We went to a nearby bush and had sex with her. It was only me and Sabo that did it. Mohammed Sani did not have sex with her but he was the one that brought the idea that we should remove her eyes."

Bitrus said that after the two of them raped the woman, they planned to run away but Rabo warned that if they did, he would disclose what they did. "We had no choice but to comply. We used a knife to remove her eyes," Mohammed Sani said it was temptation from the devil that pushed him into raping the woman and removing her eyes, adding: "Sabo told us that he had someone that would buy the eye."

But Mohammed Sani denied the accusation. He said: "I did not ask them to remove her eyes. It was Japanese (Bitrus) who is our senior that said he discussed with one native doctor that if he removed the woman's eyes, the native doctor will give us N1 million. They asked me being the strongest to hold the woman. That is after Sabo Bullet had slept with her. I held her down and Japanese (Bitrus) removed her left eye."

Usman Sabo, 35, is the native doctor that Sabo said asked Bitrus to bring the eyes for a N1 million compensation. Sabo who sells herbs and married with two children told *Saturday Sun*: "I was sitting on my own when Bitrus came with the

eye. He told me he had a woman's eye but I didn't see it. He asked me if I could prepare for him charms that will make him to disappear. I told him I am only a herbs seller. I don't prepare charm to make people vanish at will. I have never done it. I only treat people who are sick whenever my services are required. When I told Bitrus that, he left in anger and later the matter came that I gave him N1 million. Did I look like a millionaire? The eye is with Bitrus but he kept denying it."

While denying being in possession of the victim's eyes, Bitrus said the eyes are with Mohammed Sani. "The eye is not with me. It is with Sani. He promised to give us N1 million. I did not get a single kobo", he insisted.

I'll never forgive them -Zainab

Lying on her hospital bed at the Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Teaching Hospital, Zainab cuts the picture of a pitiable woman who has come to a dead-end with nowhere to go as she writes in pain.

"What did I do to them to deserve this? I will never forgive them. Allah, I will never forgive them for what they have done to me. It is better if their eyes are removed just as they have removed mine. I need revenge. That is what my heart desires", she pleaded.

Her husband, Mohammed Saleh could not control his emotions as he broke down. "I was in a friend's house when the news of what happened to my wife reached me. In our tradition we do not accompany women to ceremonies. They go with their friends and relations that are women. When I realised it was getting dark, I went to my friend's place. I met someone there who told me that my wife had gone home. I decided to go home. On reaching the house, I did not see her so I went out to look for her. I met someone on the way and on asking he replied, 'do you know what happened to your wife?' I followed him down to Lukshi Primary School where I saw my wife in the pool of her own blood. It was terrible. That was how we rushed her to the hospital", he added.

We need help -Family

Zainab has become the latest victim of the rising cases of rape and violent crimes in the state. Indeed, these crimes are now occurring with frightening dimension in the North-East. For instance, no fewer than 95 child rape cases have been reported in five northern states with Gombe having 50 cases, and Bauchi recording 11 cases, the Child Protection Network (CPN) findings revealed.

Again, Zainab is one of many reported cases of victims of suspected ritual killers who specialised in removing the eyes of their victims in a bid to get rich quick. The first known case of such was recorded in December 1985 when the victim Ibrahim Inuwa, a resident of Anguwan Doya in Bauchi, then 12 years of age, had his left eye removed and the right one destroyed in the process. Ibrahim, who miraculously survived the ordeal is blind till this day. Just like Zainab, Ibrahim's assailant was arrested and jailed for 13 years and nine months. He served his sentence and became a free man. Zainab's assailants would soon be charged to court.

"Where do I start from? I am just a poor farmer. How will I take care of the children and Zainab?", asked Saleh, a peasant farmer who said he married Zainab two years ago after she lost her first husband. "We need help from government. Please, let them help my family," he pleaded.

Her father, Qwayi Wakil from Lam said Zainab was the last born of his five children. Reacting to the fate that befell his daughter, the old man said: "I was at home sleeping when I was informed. I felt bad when I saw her. I was crying like a baby when I saw her. As a father I felt pained to see my child in this condition. They have killed my daughter. They have finished her"