‘My waist beads saved me from rape in Lebanon’

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“When I bought my waist-beads some two years ago, I did so because of fashion. But do you know that the beads eventually saved me from the hands of those who lured me to the far Lebanon for slavery related endeavours?”  
  
That was one of the narratives of 33-year-old Gloria Tayelolu Bright, an Eruku-born lady in Ekiti Council of Kwara State, who was recently rescued from servitude in far away Lebanon.  
  
Gloria, a single mother of two children, a boy and a girl, had kept her planned move to Lebanon secret, thinking the trip would land her a gold mine.  
  
She told The Guardian in Ilorin before being handed over to officers of the National Agency for Prosecution of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) in Oshogbo, Osun State, on Thursday, that she had mistaken any trip abroad for “instant wealth and Eldorado.”  
  
  
  
Due to the ongoing investigation of her case by the NAPTIP, which might eventually snowball into a legal firework at the appropriate time, she said she would not, “for now,” disclose certain information about her ordeals to the press.  
  
“I was linked up by a fellow who facilitated my movement to Lebanon sometime in October last year. The fellow dangled before me a teaching job of English language if I would go, even though my academic qualification is Ordinary National Diploma (OND) in Accountancy.  
  
“There was no nexus between what I read and what I was being offered, but the desire to travel abroad overwhelmed my sense of reasoning as at the time in question.  
  
“The first thing I observed on getting there was the inclement weather condition. The cold was so much on my health that each time I coughed, I was throwing up blood-stained sputum with serious chest pains. Besides, rather than taking me to any school as a teacher as planned, I was subjected into a house help job, fetching water with heavy buckets from a distance location into the storey building apartment I was housed in. I was working like a slave, doing all sorts of menial jobs.  
  
‘”To worsen my situation, my master started making advances towards me. I tried all I could to ward him off, but he would not relent. I had to call him aside one day to let him know that no other man could sleep with me aside the one that gave me the waist bead. He dared me by asking me of the likely consequences of him having the affair with me, despite the repeated warnings.  
  
“I promptly told him that such a man would be mentally deranged for six days and that on the seventh day, he would die. That narration calmed him down temporarily and it gave me a momentary sigh of relief. That was how my waist beads saved me from being raped. But my life became miserable and I had to think of the way out of it, so that I would not die in a strange land.  
  
“I suddenly discovered that there was a Wi-Fi telephone network within the house and that afforded me the opportunity to send the video of my ordeals that I learnt became viral. In the process, the Phemic Life Support Foundation, based in Ilorin, with office in Lagos and headquarters in London, came to my rescue. I am happy to be home at last; there is no place like sweet home.  
  
“I want to warn other Nigerians who think abroad is a paradise to think twice before embarking on a wild goose chase.”  
  
Speaking on the development, the Public Relations Officer of Kwara State Command of Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), Mr. A. O. Ayeni, told The Guardian in Ilorin that when the matter was reported to the state headquarters of the para-military body, the officers and men swooped into action and promptly effected the arrest of two out of the three principal suspects.  
  
‘”With the directive of the Commandant, Mr. Bello Ale, our operational unit went into action as early as 2:00am, leading to the arrest at separate locations in Ilorin of a 66-year-old Lebanese, Wafic Hamze, and one Taofeek Sanusi, a lawyer. But one Joseph is said to be at large as at today (yesterday), January 17.  
  
“They are mere suspects and have been handed over to the NAPTIP in Oshogbo,’” said Ayeni.  
  
The NSCDC spokesman disclosed that his Command discovered about 27 files with the lawyer containing dossiers of some ladies in the state already mapped out for trips to Lebanon.  
  
Even though Gloria looked healthy at sight, sources said the NAPTIP might arrange for her thorough medical checks to ascertain her true state of health and possible treatment.  
  
She was eventually handed over to Governor AbdulRahaman AbdulRasak, who in turn handed her over to her parents before the intervention of NAPTIP for more investigations and likely prosecution.