

Court remands six farmers over alleged murder of woman in Benue

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Gavel PHOTO: Getty Images/Ingram Publishing

A Chief Magistrate's Court in Makurdi, yesterday, ordered the remand of six farmers in the Nigerian Correctional Service facility for allegedly killing a woman in Oju Local Council of Benue State.

The accused: Sunday Onah, Moses Victor, Friday Agbo, Kingsley Onyike, Edwin Udama, and Thomas Onalwo, all residents of Anwo, Idelle, were charged with criminal conspiracy, theft, intimidation and culpable homicide.

Chief Magistrate Kevin Mbanongun declined to take their pleas, citing a lack of jurisdiction, and adjourned the case till December 17 for further mention.

According to the prosecution, Inspector Godwin Ato, the case was transferred from the Divisional Police Headquarters in Obusa Ainu, Oju, to the State Criminal Investigation Department (CID) in Makurdi for further investigation.

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Ato said the case was reported by the deceased's husband, Mr Patrick Ogebe, who told police that he returned from a trip to Oju on September 20 to find his wife and motorcycle missing.

Following a community-led search, the missing CG125 motorcycle was found in Onah's house at Anwo. Ogebe also alleged that Onyike and Udama had earlier threatened his life, while Onalwo reportedly heard his wife's cries for help on the day she was attacked but failed to alert anyone.

During the investigation, police stated that Onah implicated Victor and Agbo as the individuals who brought the motorcycle to his house. Further findings led detectives to a shallow grave in a nearby forest, where the woman's body was exhumed and taken to the General Hospital Mortuary, Oju, for autopsy. The prosecution stated that the offences contravened Sections 97, 288, 398, and 222 of the Penal Code Laws of Benue State, 2004.