

Troops raid oil bunkerers at Orashi forest in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State, on Monday. Photo: X@HQNigerianArmy

DSS arrests suspected killers of C'River medical practitioner, Professor Ekanem

OPERATIVES of the Department of State Services (DSS) have arrested the leader of a gang and one other person who kidnapped and murdered a prominent professor of neurology, Ekanem Philip Ephraim in 2023.

The gang leader, 23-year-old Patrick (surname withheld) and his accomplice, 40-year-old Bassey (surname withheld), were apprehended at a medical facility in Cross River State while planning to kidnap another medical professional.

According to the source, the DSS had been tracking the kidnap ring since Ephraim's killing in July 2023, when gunmen posing as patients abducted her.

The duo has confessed to the crime, admitting that they killed the professor after collecting multiple ransom payments from her family.

A reliable source said: "It has been two years of torment for her loved ones, not knowing what happened to the Professor. I believe that, with this arrest, her family

and loved ones will be able to finally have some peace and the much needed closure that they deserve."

The suspects also owned up to kidnapping other victims and vandalising electricity cables, with one Isaac (surname withheld), who was also arrested by the operatives, according to sources.

It will be recalled that Professor Ekanem was abducted on July 13, 2023 by gunmen who posed as patients at her private clinic at Atimbo Road, Calabar.

Her abduction sparked statewide protests by the state chapter of the Nigeria Medical Association (NMA).

The medical association had embarked on an indefinite strike, which crippled the health sector for over a week, in a bid to prevail on government to rescue the professor.

"This huge breakthrough underscores the commitment of the DSS in reverting to covertness in its operations and restoring public safety across the country," declared the source.