

Enugu man arrested for cousin's death after abuse allegation

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| By Raphael Ede

The Enugu State Police Command has taken into custody a 51-year-old man, Emeka Emmanuel Nwangwu, for allegedly killing his 19-year-old cousin, Loveth Uloma Nwangwu.

The unfortunate incident came days after she reportedly accused him of years of sexual abuse and threats to her life.

The state police spokesperson, SP Daniel Ndukwe, announced the arrest in a statement on Tuesday, describing the circumstances surrounding the young woman's death as "gruesome and devastating."

According to the police, officers from the Nsukka Urban Division, assisted by the Neighbourhood Watch Group, arrested the suspect on Monday after he allegedly stormed a pharmacy in Nsukka where the victim was being treated and violently assaulted her.

PUNCH Metro learnt that just three days before the attack, Loveth had lodged a detailed complaint at the Umabor Police Division, telling the officers that she had lived with the suspect since 2019—when she was 13—following the death of his wife.

“During that period, she alleged he repeatedly abused her sexually, cut her off from family and friends, and threatened her whenever she attempted to escape,” the statement noted.

The police stated that she fled to her family home in Enugu-Ezike in late November, but the suspect allegedly tracked her down, threatened her with a gun, and forced her back to his residence in Ibeku-Opi, Nsukka LGA. “She managed another escape and returned to the police station, where she was issued a medical form for examination,” the statement added.

The families were invited for a preliminary inquiry, during which the suspect allegedly confessed and asked for forgiveness. The victim’s family—citing cultural sensitivities—had initially opted not to pursue a criminal case, instead proposing spiritual cleansing because of the incestuous nature of the allegations.

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The situation escalated fatally when the suspect reportedly forced his way into a pharmacy where Loveth was receiving treatment. According to the police, he overpowered her and slammed her head repeatedly on the floor.

“She was rushed to the hospital but was confirmed dead,” Ndukwe stated. Her remains have been deposited in a mortuary pending autopsy.

The suspect was quickly apprehended at the scene and has been transferred to police custody.

The Commissioner of Police, Mamman Bitrus Giwa, as the statement further revealed, condemned the killing in strong terms.

“This shocking and cruel act will not go unpunished,” he said. “We assure the family and the entire public that justice must be served and it will be served without delay.”

He directed the State Criminal Investigation Department to conduct a thorough investigation and file charges in court as swiftly as possible.

The horrific circumstances of Loveth’s death have sparked outrage and sorrow across Nsukka and neighbouring communities, especially given her earlier attempts to seek help.

The police have urged residents to remain calm and allow the investigation to run its course.