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Enugu Councillor, 9 others nabbed for kidnapping, murder

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By Emmanuel Nzomiwu (Awka)
and Igoniko Oduma (Yenagoa)

Department of State Security (DSS) Anambra State Command has arrested **a serving councilor in Enugu State, Kingsley Chukwuka Eze, and nine other suspects over alleged involvement in kidnapping and murder.**

They were suspected of having kidnapped and killed immediate past Commissioner of Science and Technology in Anambra State, Chike Okoli, after collecting N2 million as ransoms from members of his family. They were also suspected to have killed two other victims after collecting money from their relatives as ransoms.

Parading them before journalists at the DSS office in Awka, the State Director of Security, Alex Okeiyi, said his Command arrested the ten suspects in Awka, Awka South local government area (LGA) of Anambra State and Ugwuoba in Oji River LGA, Enugu State for series of kidnap incidents in both areas over a period of time.

He provided the names of the other suspects and their ages as Emmanuel Ifeanyi Anyanor (28), Sunday Nwafor (28), Casmir Anumba (45), and Vincent Chukwuego Nweke (2). Others are Ejiofor Nwaonwu (20), Victor Anayo Ezejiofor (21), John Onyekachukwu

Ndianefo (34), Collins Ikechukwu Ngene (23) and Ikechukwu Nwokike (33).

He said: "The gang is also suspected to have kidnapped immediate past State Commissioner for Science and Technology, C.C. Okoli in May 2014." On 23rd June 2014, the Command recovered from Anyanor the Sim Pack of an Airtel GSM No. used for negotiating the sum of N2 million paid for his release. The suspect confessed he bought and registered the Sim card and four others for negotiating the ransom.

"The Command suspected that the recent victim they claimed to have killed and buried was that of the Commissioner, but Nwafor and Anyanor severally took operatives to the forest where they reportedly buried him and could not locate the grave" he added.

The State DSS boss alleged that the councilor, Eze (38), was mastermind of the kidnap of one lady identified as Ezeugo in Oji River LGA in April 2014, on whom a ransom of N700, 000 was paid for her release, adding that he provided his Hyundai Accent car for the operation and a hideout in Oji River where she was kept for three days.

In a related development, kidnappers of Patimi Akene, the mother of Bayelsa State Commissioner for Lands and Survey, Furoebi Akene, have threatened to cut off her head and deliver it to him in a plate.

The 78-year-old Patimi was abducted on June 14 by gunmen numbering six at her home town, Foinbiri, in Southern Ijaw Local Government Area of the state.

The threat followed Akene's refusal to accede to the hoodlums' demand of N10million ransom which they reduced from the N30million they had earlier demanded as a condition to release her.

The bandits were said to be more irked by the commissioner's refusal to resign his appointment from the cabinet of the governor of the state, Seriake Dickson, which they demanded shortly before whisking his mother away into the creeks.

Akene revealed this on Friday when he received a committee of friends and well-wishers in Yenagoa. He said the kidnappers called him on the phone and

threatened to hack off his mother's head if he remained adamant over their demand. He said the hoodlums told him they would deliver the victim's head in a plate to him at his residence in the state capital while her body would be taken to his house in the village.

He said although the threat was disconcerting, he had refused to be intimidated. "One of the kidnappers, who claimed to be the leader of the gang threatened to kill my mother. He said he will cut off her head and deliver it to my house at INEC Road (in Yenagoa) and the body at the village", Akene said.

"Because of the difficulty of getting me to agree to their demand, they have stopped calling me to discuss ransom", he added.

He said the latest was as a result of his refusal to cooperate, the kidnappers had resorted to calling his younger sister to demand the ransom. He disclosed that his younger sister begged the gunmen to accept N1 million but they declined, claiming that the money was not sufficient for fuel and feeding of their victim.

He recalled that the news of his mother's abduction forced him not to attend the World Surveyors Conference in Malaysia. "When they demanded that I resigned from the present administration as condition for my mother's release, I told them that I am not a man out to sacrifice his mother for position", he said.

Akene also said they had allowed him to speak with his mother as a proof that she was still alive. "They allowed me speak with her twice. The first time, she told me she was okay and I asked her if the kidnappers are Ijaws, she confirmed that they are".

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