

Ritualist set ablaze in Nasarawa

JOHN SHIKLAM, *Kaduna*

A suspected ritualist was set ablaze by a mob while allegedly attempting to kidnap a six-year old boy for rituals in Nasarawa, a suburb of Kaduna.

Eyewitness account claimed that the man was caught by some youths in the area while attempting to kidnap one Munir Shaibu at Fulani Road off Market Road Nasarawa.

The youths were said to have immediately apprehended the suspect and gave him a thorough beating before setting him ablaze.

All efforts to rescue him by other people in the vicinity was said to have been resisted by the youths who were reported to be armed with dangerous weapons.

The suspect's leg was said to have been amputated by the angry youths before he was dragged to a nearby bus stop and set on fire. His charred body was left by the road side.

"A passer-by innocuously

peeped into an uncompleted building after seeing some unusual signs, only to stumble on a man attempting to kidnap a baby, the man on sensing danger took to his heels but luck ran out of him as a mob of youth pursued and caught up with him," eyewitness said adding that when people returned to the uncompleted building, the small boy was writhing in agony in a pool of his blood with his private part removed and eyes gouged

out by the kidnapper.

The boy was said to have been rushed to Saint Gerald Hospital where urgent medical attention was given to him.

Munir's mother Hussein Khalid said her son had been missing since February 18, 2007 and nobody was able to say his whereabouts until he was discovered lying in a pool of blood at the uncompleted building.

"His stomach was cut with his

intestine torn open, while his eyes were battered. I am not sure whether he will survive, let alone to live a normal human life now," she told newsmen in tears.

Reacting to the incident, the Kaduna state Police Command said it had raided the Nasarawa area and apprehended many youths suspected to have set the kidnapper ablaze.

Ten suspects according to the police sources were being interrogated.

UBEC threatens private schools

GODWIN AKOR, *Makurdi*

THE Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) has directed state universal basic education boards across the country to close down private secondary schools that refuse to recognize the on-going disarticulation exercise.

Executive Secretary of the Commission, Professor Gidado Tahir gave the directive while inspecting some projects embarked upon by the Benue State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB).

Tahir who was visibly worried when he learnt that some grant-aided schools owned by individuals and voluntary agencies were not willing to accept the disarticulation of their schools for the disclosed programme, said the National Council on Education had approved that such unwilling schools be closed down.

In his words: "Disarticulation is paramount, the UBE programme cannot succeed without it. The chairman of the board and his team have the responsibility to

stamp their feet on this issue. Any school that resists disarticulation should be punished".

He maintained that it was unfortunate for owners of private schools to think that the UBE programme was designed only for public schools, emphasizing that it was all encompassing.

Tahir commended the State's Universal Primary Education Board (SUBEB) for embarking on relevant projects, maintaining that more efforts would give Benue high rating.