TheMetroSection

Family seeks justice after suspected kidnappers collected the ransom and still killed their only son

Murder still...after a ransom

A young man is lured into a trap by kidnappers who happened to be his secondary school classmates. After his parents paid the ransom of over N I million, the abductors killed the young man, dismembered his body and dumped the remains into a dumpsite.

From Lawrence Njoku, Enugu

THE once-happy life of the Ezeudu family has been turned upside down.

Now, whenever the father, Mr. Bona Ezeudu, speaks about what befell them, tears flow down his cheeks, particularly so because those allegedly behind the incident were close to his family. They include a Divisional Police Officer in Enugu, his son, a former policeman, who also doubled as the DPO's per-sonal assistant and an unidentified motorcyclist.

While the five and two others are now held by the Police, others are still at large.

They are alleged to have conspired and kidnapped Ezudu's son, Lotachukwu, demanded and obtained a ransom of more than N1 million, and still went ahead to kill

the 19-year-old.
The family's ordeal began when on September 25 last year, Ezeudu and his wife Ngozi, travelled and Lotachukwu, a third-year Ac-counting student of Univer-sity of Nigeria, Enugu campus and his other sib-

lings were at home. That day, the DPO's son and some of his secondary school

classmates visited him.
As the visitors were leaving, the DPO's son invited Lotachukwu to their house the next day to accompany them to procure a latton them to procure a laptop since he, Lotachukwu, was good at Internet and its pro-

gramming.
According Ezeudu, who narrated the story, amid tears:
"That evening, a text message arrived for my son from his friend, which he discovered was an air time. "He said when he visited the

house the following day, he was going to ask him whether he made a mistake in sending the air time.

"The next day, he was leaving the house when his mother called back and asked if he wouldn't take his lunch.

His reply was he did not want to be late to help his friends buy the laptop and would come back home

"It was 4.05 p.m. and I asked him to take the car so they could buy the laptop and come back fast."

Tears still flowing down his cheeks, Ezeudu told *The Guardian* they became worried when darkness came, Lotachukwu had not re-turned home and his phone

kept saying: 'Not available'.

A frightened Ezeudu
launched a search that took
them to some of his son's friends, to no avail.

Then about 6.00 a.m., someone informed them that a red car in which his son drove that morning had been spot-ted around Ninth Mile Cor-

ner, outside the city.
Shortly after he got a call from some people who said they were holding Lotachukwu.

"They demanded N3 million for his release and I said I didn't have such money as an artist and pleaded with them to reduce it.

"We haggled for a few days and when they agreed we could bring one million, I went to borrow from relations and friends to meet their deadline".

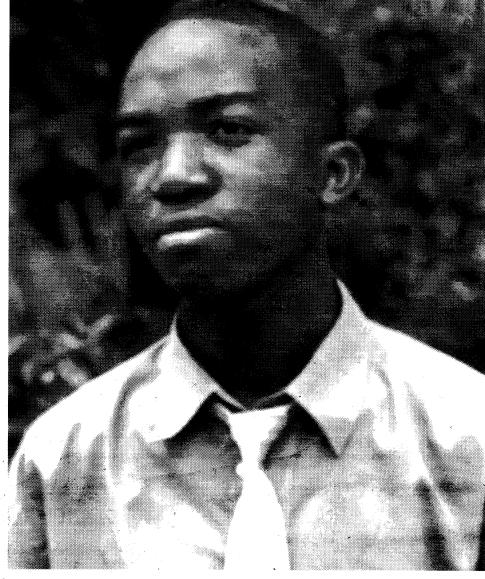
He said he paid the ransom as demanded the next day and then began to wait end-lessly, for the return of his

"But they stopped calling me. They have not spoken to me

They waited for me to pay the ransom and then, killed my only son. I have neither heard his voice, nor seen his

He alleges that his son was kept captive for nine days at a residence of in TransEkulu area of Enugu before he was killed.

"They dismembered him, bagged him and dumped him in a dumpster around Nike Lake Road to evade detection and to punish me. I don't know what I did to deserve this, but I know that those who killed my son did so to cause me permanent in-



The late Lotachukwu

They dismembered him, bagged him and dumped him in a dumpster around Nike Lake Road to evade detection and to punish me. Those who killed my son did so to cause me permanent injury and they have succeeded, because Lotachukwu was my only son

jury and they have succeeded, because Lotachukwu was my only son," he lamented.

He continued: "They knew he would reveal the identities of those who kidnapped him. That was why they killed him. Now, more than six months after, I am yet to even see his remains after I paid their ransom. This is wickedness, man's inhumanity to man and it is now for the long arm of the law to catch up with

During his recent official tour to Enugu, Inspector Gen-eral of Police, Ogbonnya Onovo, had lamented the involvement of a police officer in the incident. He said the suspect had been discharged from the Police and was being

prosecuted.
But in what looked like an expression of tacit support,
Onovo had commented about the DPO, whose son is alleged to be involved in the act, to be upright, saying: "The

fact that his son is involved in kidnapping does not make him a kidnapper," though he promised that justice would prevail in the matter.

Meanwhile, the Police in Enugu have charged five persons, including the DPO's son to court for their involvement in the kidnap and murder of Lotachukwu.

When the case came up for hearing last week, the suspect through his counsel, C. D. Nwabara, had applied for

Now, though the matter is yet to be discharged, Ezeudu is afraid that the influence of the DPO might count in securing bail for the son, whom he said, was the "mastermind

Group petitions IGP over alleged police harassment of cleric

ACIVIL rights organization, Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Olisa for several days without charge or trial. According to the statement signed by spector-General of Police (IGP), Mr. Ogbonna Onovo to order investigation into allegations of harassment and victimal allegations of harassment and victimal allegations of the Christ Army Church of the Mark Send and Send allegations of the Christ Army Church of the Mark Send and detained the police unlawfully arrested and detained and detained olisa for several days without charge or trial. According to SERAP, Olisa was only released after the alleged informant and former Archdeacon "was satisfied that the lease him on bail. According to SERAP noted that the alleged informant former Archdeacon "was satisfied that he had been disrobed as a Venerable had taught him some lessons."

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Although he was the complainant the informant also volunteered to be a surety to bail Olisa from police custody. Bishop of the Christ Army Church of tained at the Ajeromi Police Station, Lagos.

Nigeria Lagos Diocese by the police.

He was neither informed of the charges

":We are seriously concerned about alle-

Nigeria, Lagos Diocese, by the police. He was neither informed of the charges The harassment, according to SERAP, is against him nor of his right to a lawyer.

Nigeria, Lagos Diocese, by the police.

The harassment, according to SERAP, is on the basis of alleged false information given to the police by a former Venerable, Archdeacon in the church.

Archdeacon in the petition, SERAP says the former line of the State Criminal Investing the petition, SERAP says the former line of the Church against him nor of his right to a lawyer.

While still being denied access to a lawyer, against him nor of his right to a lawyer, against him nor of his right to a lawyer.

While still being denied access to a lawyer, and victimize innocent citizen on the basis of false information.

Archdeacon in the church.

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": we are seriously concerned about ane gations that the police are used to harass and victimize innocent citizen on the basis of false information.

The organization, therefore, urged Onovo to ensure that the police stop false information.

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Rev. Olisa on allegations of 'kidnapping'.

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Rev. Olisa is a violation of his internation of the police stop false information.

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might have informed his retaliatory action to use the police to unlawfully ar-

Archdeacon provided the police with gation Department, Asaba.

Ally recognized fair trial rights guaranfalse information that Rt. Rev Olisa was involved in alleged plans to kidnap him and the police failed and neglected to inand two other persons, following which form him of the charges against him or to and the International Covenant on the remainded in determining the state Chillian investing and victimization of Rt. Rev. Olisa and to thoroughly investigate allegations of harassment and victimization of Rt. Rev. Olisa and to thoroughly investigate allegations of harassment and victimization of Rt. Rev. Olisa and to thoroughly investigate allegations of harassment and victimization of Rt. Rev. Olisa and to thoroughly investigate allegations of harassment and victimization of Rt. Rev. Olisa and to thoroughly investigate allegations of harassment and victimization of Rt. Rev. Olisa and to thoroughly investigate allegations of harassment and victimization of Rt. Rev. Olisa and to thoroughly investigate allegations of harassment and victimization of Rt. Rev. Olisa and to thoroughly investigate allegations of harassment and victimization of Rt. Rev. Olisa and to thoroughly investigate allegations of particular and victimization of Rt. Rev. Olisa and to thoroughly investigate allegations of harassment and victimization of Rt. Rev. Olisa and to thoroughly investigate allegations of particular and victimization of Rt. Rev. Olisa and to thoroughly investigate allegations of Rt. Rev. Olisa and to thoroughly investigate allegations of particular and victimization of Rt. Rev. Olisa and to thoroughly investigate allegations of particular and victimization of Rt. Rev. Olisa and to thoroughly investigate allegations of Rt. Rev. Olisa and to thoroughly investigate allegations of Rt. Rev. Olisa and to thoroughly investigate allegations of Rt. Rev. Olisa and to thoroughly investigate allegations of Rt. Rev. Olisa and to thoroughly investigate allegations of Rt. Rev. Olisa and to thoroughly investigate allegations of Rt. Rev. Ol

Briefs

School graduates 3 pupils, honours 19 By Isaac Taiwo T was a day of honou

students of Topgrade ary School, Surulere-La The Island Club, Onika where the school mar passing out at a colou graduation ceremony received various awar overall best students is and social science, science guages among others. The Chairman, Govern Council, Mr. William F scribed Nigeria as a lar brilliant youths who a ture of the country. He advised them to be ambassadors of the sc

the various higher inst they would find thems The School Administr Rosemary Fowler told "As you graduate today opportunity has just o wider, waiting for you through and fulfill you dreams and most of al purpose"

Ambassador Segun Ol who was the Guest Spe spoke to the students of "strangers and indiger Akpan, 60, for bur

THE death has occurr Elder Etim Ekpenyoi of Itiam Etoi in Uyo Loc cil of Akwa Ibom State, age of 60.

age of 60.
A service of songs hold at his Lagos residence of Ikenne Steet, off Odudt Street, by Kilo Bus Stop rulere, Lagos at 6.00p. He will be buried on State of Stop of the March of Stop 10, Obio Imo Lane, Uyo, Ibom State, after a func ice at 11.00a.m.

He is survived by his as mother, wife and child among whom is Israel Metro FM, Lagos.



Choir holds concert

THE Royal Praise Choir semblies of God Chui Coker (AGC) holds its fir ship Xperience today at Immam Memudu Stree Orile Iganmu Lagos, at 1 Guest artistes include Bankole, Ruth, Olumide

Blessing among others. Imoga Reformers me

THE Association of Imformers, Lagos chapt hold its monthly meeti Sunday, August 1, at No. fuyi Popoola Street, Mat Oshodi, Lagos at 3.00p.

NIMR holds worksh

THE Molecular Biolog Biotechnology Divis Nigeria Institute of Me search (NIMR) will hold ing workshop with the 'Molecular Biology: the bone of evidenced-base cine' on Monday, Augus the NIMR Auditorium, Lagos at 9.00a.m. Chief host is Prof. I. A. I