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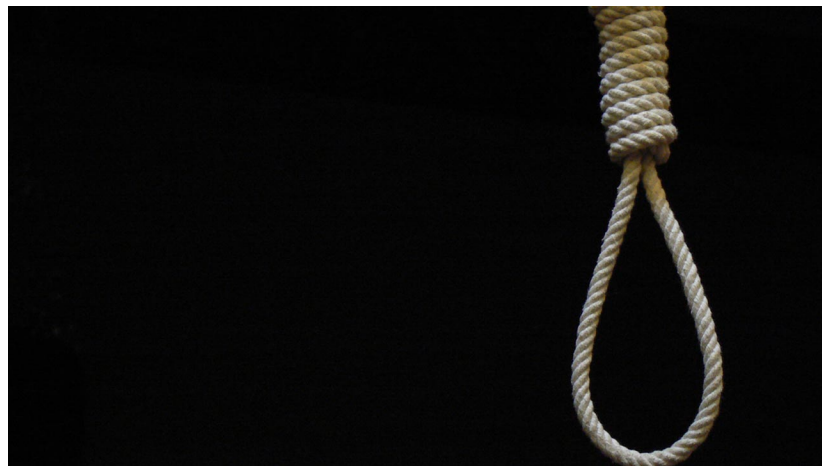
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News

Toddler killed for ritual gets justice, seven years after

By [Enuma Okoro, Contributor](#)

| 19 July 2016 | 1:26 am



Court sentences stepmother, two others to death by hanging

A Benin High Court yesterday sentenced three people to death by hanging over the murder of a three-year-old girl. The convicts, Betty Stephen, the stepmother, and two teachers – Johnson Ogbeide and Nancy Aiwuyor, committed the offence on February 24, 2009, at Erhiborhibo village, Orhionmwon local council of Edo

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State.

The judge, Justice Geraldine Imadegbelo, in her ruling said the prosecution has proved its case beyond reasonable doubt. She said the prosecution proved that the stepmother gave the three-year-old girl to Ogbeide, who in turn handed over the baby to his colleague, Aiwuyor, to be sold for ritual purposes.

Reviewing evidence, the judge said the child was left in the custody of her stepmother by her parents and went to farm on the day the child was killed.

“When the victim’s parents returned, they could not find the child, only for the stepmother to confess that she sold the child to the two other convicts,” she said.



The trial judge also said the prosecution established that the victim was sold for N1.5 million, her nine fingers cut off and her hair shaved for the ritual.

According to the judge, “seven years after the victim disappeared in the hands of the convicts without being found, the court was safe to hold that the child was dead.

“The acts of the first, second and third accused persons, which caused the death of the deceased, were unlawful,” Imadegbelo said. The court also sentenced the convicts to 14-year jail term each for the offence of child stealing. In another development, the Delta Police Command yesterday confirmed the abduction of Mr. John Odogun, the Chief Security Officer (CSO) of the Petroleum Training Institute (PTI), Effurun, in Uvwie Local Council of the state.

According to the command’s Public Relations Officer (PPRO), DSP Celestina Kalu, the CSO was kidnapped by gunmen on Sunday. The police spokesperson said efforts were, however, being made to track down the criminals. The victim was said to have been abducted on his way to the Rainbow Christian Assembly Church,

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around the NNPC Housing Complex in Ekpan community.

Family sources said the victim was alone in his car, and that the incident occurred at about 7.00a.m. The source further said that the family had not been able to establish contact with the kidnappers. The PTI Public Relations Officer (PRO), Mr. Brown Ukanefemoni, also confirmed the incident. He added that the institution's management was working with the police to ensure his release from the kidnappers' den.

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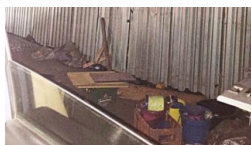
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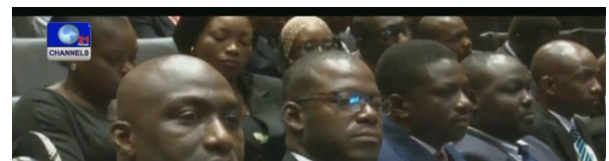


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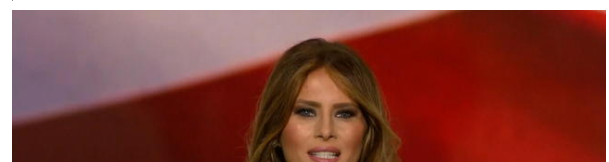
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