
Body of abducted APC chieftain, Samuel Wanjoku found in Rivers

By Ann Godwin, Port
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• Police nab Catholic priest, two others over alleged child theft



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The decomposing body of Samuel Wanjoku, a chieftain of the All Progressives Congress (APC), who was kidnapped two Saturdays ago along Ubima Omawan road in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State, has been recovered in a forest in the area.

The late Wanjoku, the immediate younger brother to the member representing Ikwerre State constituency in Rivers State House of Assembly, Azubuike Wanjoku, was kidnapped alongside one Moses Ogu on the way while returning from their village in Apani, Ikwerre Local Government after a political party function.

Over a week after the abduction of the two APC chieftains with no contact made to the families of the victims, the body of Wanjoku was found in a forest. Meanwhile, family members and residents of the community, in company of some policemen, are still in search of Agu, while the body of Samuel has been deposited in mortuary.

Reacting, the Ikwerre Youth Movement (IYM) has said the murder of Samuel Wanjoku, also known as 'Egbe', the younger brother of the member representing Ikwerre State Constituency in the Rivers state House of Assembly, Azubuike Wanjoku, is a huge blow to IYM.

The socio-political group in a statement by its Deputy President-General, Kingsley Owchondah, called on relevant security agencies to immediately investigate and quickly

unravel the perpetrators of the act. The group also condemned what they described as the insensitivity of the Rivers State government over the steady and incessant killing of Ikwerre youths, mostly within the Ikwerre and Emohua Local Government Areas. IYM has in the meantime declared three days of mourning for Samuel Wanjoku beginning from today, November 19.



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Meanwhile, the Rumuolumeni Police Divisional Headquarters in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State, has arrested a Catholic priest and two others over alleged child theft. The priest, Rev. Fr. Collins Menegbo, was alleged to have conspired with one Helen Bassey and another suspect simply identified as Gift, to steal two children within Ngbakatali in Rumuolumeni community.

It was learnt that the clergy arrived the shop of the victims' mother pretending to be buying something and later left with the children, who are aged one and three, to the other suspects' apartment in the neighborhood, to discuss with them.

It was further gathered that the priest carried the two children inside his tinted glass black Peugeot car ready to drive out before the mother of the children raised the alarm.

The Guardian gathered that the priest was first apprehended by residents and passers-by when the incident happened on Saturday. A source in the area said the clergyman after his arrest was taken to the palace of the paramount ruler as custom demands, and was later taken to police station for proper investigation.

Father of the two children, Stanley Obisike, from Ibaa community in Emohua Local Government Area of the state, told journalists that the clergyman had visited his shop, when his wife was with the children. Narrating the ordeal, Obisike reiterated that "the suspect pretended to have come to buy something and later left with the children, who are between the years of one and three, to the other suspects' apartment in the neighborhood, to discuss with them."

He alleged that there were plots by some police officers handling the matter to cover up the crime and grant the prime suspect bail without proper investigation. He, therefore, called on the Commissioner of Police, CP Zaki Ahmed, to intervene for justice to prevail. When contacted, the state's police boss, Ahmed, disclosed that he had already ordered that the bail process be cancelled and the suspects transferred to the Anti-Kidnap Unit (AKU) for further investigation.



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