

National

Dead suspect was involved in kidnapping, Rivers police declare

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Sequel to the outcry by the family of one Chukwudi Okereke, a 34-year-old motor mechanic and father of three, who died in police custody in Port Harcourt, Rivers State Police has said the deceased was implicated in a case involving kidnapping, armed robbery, and cultism.

A statement by the command's spokesperson, Grace Iringe-Koko, said the deceased was arrested because of his alleged involvement in serious crimes, especially the kidnapping of a business woman.

Iringe-Koko, reacting to a press conference held on May 23, 2024, by a member of the Civil Society Organisations on the matter, said investigations revealed that the deceased was a member of the Dey-Gbam secret cult gang.

Recall that The Guardian on Thursday reported that Okereke was arrested on January 11, 2024, from his small mechanic shop at the Ikokwu Spare Parts Market in Port Harcourt.

The Police Spokesperson said the deceased was arrested in relation to the kidnapping of a female business tycoon, name withheld, in the Diobu area of Port Harcourt on September 7, 2023.

She explained: "The kidnappers were armed with AK-47 rifles, a pump-action shotgun, and locally-made pistols. The victim was held captive for seven days and was released after the victim's family paid a ransom of ₦3.5m.

"Investigations revealed that the deceased was a member of the Dey-Gbam secret cult gang. He and his accomplices purchased one of the AK-47 rifles used during the operation. Two of the kidnappers have been arrested, and they are also members of the Dey-Gbam cult group."

Iringe-Koko also said sometime last month, the Police held a meeting with the

