

Police nab five suspects for beheading man after collecting N30m ransom

By **Monday Osayande (Asaba)** and **Eniola Daniel (Lagos)**

24 December 2024 | 3:00 am



The Police in Delta State have arrested five suspects in connection with the death of one Paulinus Okon who was murdered by his bosom friend identified as Efe Onoetiyi.

It was gathered that Onoetiyi led four others to allegedly tied the deceased, his bosom friend to a stake at night close to Orere River and beheaded him after collecting over N30 million ransom.

Parading the suspects yesterday in Asaba, the State Commissioner of Police, Olufemi Abaniwonda said the deceased body was thrown into the River while one of them, a herbalist took his head and buried him at his shrine in Otokutu, Ughelli South Local Council of the state.

Abaniwonda, who gave the names of the suspects as Efe, Sunday Ikpeba, and a 30-year-old herbalist Lawrence Joseph, said they were arrested at various locations where they were hiding after allegedly killing Okon.

The Police boss explained that the deceased was reported missing on September 8, 2024, by his brother after he went out with Onoetiyi. He stated that Onoetiyi, who initially denied knowledge of what happened to Okon, came to his house to ask his family his whereabouts, but the deceased family confronted him, saying that he went out with Okon on that same date.

“On a later date, Onoetiyi came back and demanded N500,000 from the deceased’s brother that he would use the money to pay a herbalist who can tell them Paulinus’s whereabouts.

“He came again and informed the family that Okon was kidnapped and he collected a ransom of about N20.7 million from the deceased brother claiming that he was in touch with the kidnappers.

“When it became obvious that Onoetiyi had something to hide, he was arrested and the case was transferred to State Criminal Investigation Department (SCID) State Headquarters Asaba,” Abaniwonda said.

He further said on November 28, 2024, he directed the Divisional Police Officer (DPO) Ekpan to take over the case and ensure that a discrete investigation is carried out to fish out those responsible as the main suspect Efe was not yielding.

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The DPO carried out an intelligence-led investigation that indicated that 48-year-old Okeimute Gaga was connected to the matter.

“Upon his arrest, Gaga opened up and confessed that he can no longer hide what happened.

“Gaga narrated how Onoetiyi brought Okon to the Orere River in Otokutu and requested that they kill him.

The suspect further stated that on September 8, 2024, himself, Onoetiyi, Sunday Ikpeba, and a 30-year-old herbalist, Joseph tied Okon to a stake at night close to Orere River and beheaded him alive. His body was thrown into the River while the herbalist took the deceased's head and buried him at his shrine in Otokutu.

“The Divisional Police Officer (DPO) led police operatives to the shrine in Otokutu where the deceased's skull was exhumed and recovered.

“During interrogation, Onoetiyi was asked why he killed his friend, he stated that he saw a building for sale at a cost of N30 million which he advertised to the deceased.

“He alleged that the deceased paid the money in three instalments, but instead of buying the house, he diverted the money for his personal use, bought two lands and was building a duplex for himself.

“He further stated that he did not know how to explain to the deceased that he had used his money, hence he decided that killing him will save him the trouble,” he explained.