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## Doctor arraigned over illegal harbouring of 16 pregnant teenagers

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A **PHYSICIAN**, Ezuma James Ezuma, on Friday appeared before an Owerri Magistrate Court charged with illegal harbouring of 16 pregnant teenage girls, who he allegedly engaged for immoral purposes and giving birth to babies, who he afterwards sell to prospective buyers.

The medical doctor, who was arrested by police at 40 Egbu Road, Owerri, in the Owerri North Local Government of Imo State, on November 26, for running an illegal baby factory, was also in an 18-count charge, charged with the abduction of a day old baby, delivered by one Chinaza Nnachi (19) in the said premises in order that the said child may be killed for any purpose.

His offence is said to be punishable under Section 20 of the Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Law Enforcement and Administration Act, Laws of Federation of Nigeria, 2004, as applicable in Imo State.

In the 18-count charge, Ezuma, who was arraigned alongside his wife, Chioma, was alleged to have on the same date and place in the afore said Magisterial District, murdered a day old baby (name yet unknown), by offering her to be used for ritual by unknown persons, thereby committing an offence punishable under Section 319(1) of Criminal Code, Cap "C 38" Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004, as applicable in Imo State.

When the case came up for hearing, counsel to the accused, Eziku Fidelis, argued that the alleged offences are all bailable and that the accused had reasonable sureties to take him on bail and should be granted bail, based on self recognition.