

A 40-year-old man, Halilu Abdullahi, has been arrested for the alleged attempted murder of a minor. The suspect claimed that he heard a strange voice telling him to kill the girl.

Abdullahi, who hails from Sokoto State, was arrested behind Mainland Hotel at Oyingbo, Lagos Mainland, while trying to slit the throat of four-year-old, Alimotu Durojaiye on August 18.

It was gathered that the suspect, who was initially taken to Denton Police Station, Ebute-Meta, has been transferred to the homicide section of the State Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department (SCIID) Panti, Yaba.

According to a source, the suspect told the police that a strange voice told him to kill the girl.

He also allegedly admitted that he had killed three other persons.

*The Nation* gathered that Abdullahi, a *mai suya*, lured his victim with biscuit while she was playing with her peers around White Sand Market in Oyingbo.

Another source said he abducted her and fled despite screams from her playmates and nearby traders.

It was gathered that the suspect pinned the girl to the ground, raised his knife to kill her when a passerby, Muritala Mahmud, an Islamic cleric, saw him.

Mahmud told *The Nation* that he accosted Abdullahi but the suspect bit his finger in an attempt to escape.

He said: "I was returning from Lagos Island and I followed a back street to connect Oyingbo Market when I saw the man holding up a knife. I looked down and saw that he had a little girl on the ground and was about killing her.

"I rushed and grabbed the man but he bit my finger and made to run. I held him still but there were other northerners around there and they came out and started beating me that I was fighting their brother.

"I had to raise the alarm at that point and area boys, traders including the child's mother came to the spot. They now explained that the man kidnapped the girl while she was playing and they had been looking for her. He was then handed over to policemen at Denton Division."

The victim's mother, Ashiatu Durojaiye, said her daughter was still in shock. She thanked God that the Islamic cleric saw the suspect before he could kill the girl.

She said: “My daughter is still in shock. I was in the market selling my wares and my daughter was playing with other kids. But people started shouting my name around 3pm that someone had stolen my daughter. We looked for her everywhere but we could not find her.

“Then, we later heard one *Alfa* shouting that one Hausa man wanted to kill a little girl and we went there. That was how he was caught and he was handed over to the police.

“He claimed that he was doing it for survival and that it was one Alhaji that told him to be killing children. He said he doesn’t know what the man does with the bodies of the children but that he was doing it for survival and that he usually took the bodies to the man at Marine Beach. He also said he was not the only one doing it.”

A police source confirmed the suspect was in custody, adding that two others- Akilu Isah and Abdullahi Salisu- had been arrested.