Kidnapper's mansions demolished over queen's murder

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Damian Duruiheoma, Owerri

NO fewer than three houses belonging to a suspected leader of a kidnap gang, Okechukwu Uche, in Owaelu, Uratta in the Owerri North Local Government Area of Imo State have been demolished.

Uche, who is currently in jail at the Owerri Correctional Centre, was said to have masterminded the kidnap of the wife of the traditional ruler of the community, Ugoeze Comfort Okoro.

The 76-year-old woman was murdered in the kidnaper's den after her family had allegedly paid ransom for her release.

Her corpse was later found on a village road in Akabor community in Oguta council area of the state.

Angered by the death of the septuagenarian, people suspected to be members of the community and backed by the police, demolished the three mansions belonging to the suspected kidnap kingpin.

The police said Uche masterminded the kidnap of the wife of the traditional ruler from jail.

However, the police spokesperson, Orlando Ikeokwu told our correspondent on Wednesday that the police were not responsible for the demolition of the mansion of the lead suspect.

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Ikeokwu said that the police rounded up other suspects who were about collecting the second tranche of the ransom.

He said that the arrested suspects confessed that Uche who is in jail for another crime was their ring leader.

Ikeokwu said that police laid an ambush before arresting the suspects.

He said that two rifles belonging to the police which were snatched last year were recovered from the suspects.

Ikeokwu said: "Police did not demolish the house of the lead suspect but other suspects who were arrested by the police confessed that the person in prison custody is their ring leader.

"We recovered two of our rifles that were snatched last time from the suspects. Part of the ransom the suspects received from the victim's family has been recovered by the police. We will go to court to ask for Okechukwu Uche to be reproduced for re-arraignment."

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