

Suspected killer of police chief arrested in Imo

From Chris Njoku, Owerri

THE Imo State Police Command said it has arrested one of the killers of a retired Chief Superintendent of Police, Christian Kpatuma, who was murdered by suspected cultists on Wednesday at Agwa in Oguta Local Government Area.

Kpatuma was abducted at his residence by a group of young men suspected to be cultists resident in Mgbala community in Oguta Local Government Area and took him to a nearby bush where they killed him and later dumped the corpse in front of his compound.

The command said one of the suspects, one Deberechi Chukwu, the alleged leader of the cult group, was arrested after discreet investigation.

According to the Command's spokesman, CSP Michael Abattam, the suspect was arrested while trying to escape to a border state.

Abattam said in a statement yesterday that following a report of a case of murder received by the Agwa Divisional Police Headquarters, on 01/02/2022 at about 2152 hours, a group of young men suspected to be cultists resident in Mgbala Community Agwa in Oguta LGA of Imo State, conspired amongst themselves, went to the house of one Christian Kpatuma, a retired Chief Superintendent of Police (CSP) and a native of Mgbala, abducted and took him to a nearby bush where they killed him and later carried the corpse back and dumped it in front of his compound.

He said on receipt of the information, the Imo State Commissioner of Police, Rabiu Hussaini, immediately dispatched the command's tactical teams to the Agwa community with a mandate to fish out the perpetrators of the dastardly act.

"On arrival, the teams commenced discreet investigation, and after diligent gathering of both forensic and technical intelligence, one of the suspects, Deberechi Chukwu, the leader of the cult group that killed the retired police officer, CSP Christian Kpatuma, was arrested while escaping to a border state.

In the course of investigation, he said, it was revealed that the suspect, Deberechi Chukwu, "is a notorious kidnapper and an escapee from the Imo Correctional Centre Owerri, Imo State."

According to him, the suspect, after escaping from the Imo Correctional Centre, recruited young men into his cult group and were terrorising the Agwa community.

"It is also on record that he was involved in the killing of a lot of security personnel in the state. However, he has made useful statement and have volunteered assisting the police in the arrest of other members of his gang pres-