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Traditional ruler's driver arrested for child theft

I'm a victim of circumstance —Suspect

ALPHONSUS AGBOR-ASABA

AS communal crises in Abavo, Ika South Local Government Area of Delta State nosedived into a worrying dimension, a driver has been arrested for allegedly stealing a nine-month-old baby.

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the state.

He said the union had reliably gathered that Benue State government was contemplating mass sack of the striking teachers, but said the teachers would not be deterred by the threat.

"Aside Benue and Plateau, we don't have any other issue to confront with as far as 27.5 per cent is concerned or the national minimum wage. In Benue and Plateau, we still have those matters going there. That is two out of 36 states. It is still a pass mark, but we are not resting on our oars," he said.

The suspect, Ebose Osakpanwan, 32-year-old and driver to the Obi of Abavo was arrested by the youth of the town, where several houses have been burnt, but the suspect, while being paraded in Asaba wept sorely, claiming that he was a victim of circumstance.

According to him, the mother of the child, Blessing Igbinowamahia, was close to him and other Bini people in Abavo to the extent it has become a family affair.

He said he was playing with the child in his golf car parked in the premises of the mother for over 30 minutes on January 14, day of the incident.

"Later, I wanted to buy food some distance away and I decided to go with the boy.

"I even brought bobo drink for the child and we were coming back to the house and just five poles away, some youths accosted me that I have stolen a baby."

He said when the mother of the child saw him being

beaten by the youth, she intervened and pleaded that she knew him so well.

All efforts made by reporters to get across to the woman on Wednesday proved abortive.

The acting state Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Charles Muka, disclosed that the Blessing Igbinowamahia had raised the alarm over the missing child, which led youths to mobilise and nabbed the suspect.

Meanwhile, security has been beefed-up in the Abavo community, following breakdown of law and order, as those opposed to the traditional ruler, Obi Uche Irenuma II, alleged that he was responsible for the sudden death of a 40-year-old man, which the police said could not be proven.

The police, however, expressed concern over the false alarm recently raised by the traditional ruler, alleging that his mother was kidnapped and killed, knowing some to be fallacious.