

METRO PLUS

Teenager, five others arraigned for cultism, robbery, murder

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Ekiti State CP, Amba Asuquo

- *Ekiti man remanded for cultism, drugs possession*

Bola Bamigbola and Abiodun Nejo

Nineteen-year-old Mariam Adesewa and Mukaila Raji, 60, on Wednesday, appeared alongside four others before an Osun State Chief Magistrates' Court sitting in Osogbo for alleged membership of an unlawful society and murder of two persons in Ede.

The other suspects are Kasali Serifu, Alabi Sefiu, Nureni Tirimisiyu and Taiwo Kareem, who were also accused of being members of a secret society, the *Apete-Isagba* cult.

They were arraigned before Magistrate Olusegun Ayilara on 13 counts bordering on conspiracy, armed robbery, murder, cultism and malicious damage.

The prosecutor, Elisa Olusegun, said Serifu, Sefiu, Tirimisiyu, Kareem and Raji shot dead one Omoniyi Olukunle and Tajudeen Lukman at different times in Ede.

He added that the accused also attempted to kill Surajudeen Kareem and Yinusa Sherif when they shot at them.

Olusegun also said five of the accused dispossessed Olukunle of his Bajaj motorcycle and the sum of N5,000 before they killed him.

Mariam was alleged to be a member of the *Apete-Isagba* group.

The offences were said to be contrary to and punishable under Section 324 of the Criminal Code, Cap. 34, Vol. II, Laws of Osun State of Nigeria, 2002.

The plea of the accused was taken for malicious damage and membership of a cult group, while the court declined taking their plea for murder and armed robbery.

Okobe Nagite and Kehinde Adepoju announced appearances for the accused and applied for their bail.

Ruling on the application, Ayilara said the counsel should file a formal bail application.

The magistrate remanded the six accused persons in the Ilesha Correctional Centre and adjourned the matter till July 8, 2020.

In a related development, an Ekiti State Chief Magistrates' Court sitting in Ado Ekiti, on Wednesday, remanded a 24-year-old man, Adetomiwa Ogunleye, in police custody for being a cultist and having in his possession weeds suspected to be Indian hemp.

Chief Magistrate Abdulhamid Lawal ordered that the defendant be remanded pending advice from the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions.

He adjourned the case till June 3, 2020, for mention.

Ogunleye is standing trial on two counts of membership of the *Eiye* Confraternity and being in possession of weeds suspected to be Indian hemp.

The police prosecutor, Inspector Caleb Leranmo, said the defendant committed the offences on May 24, 2020, in Ikole-Ekiti.

He said, “The defendant confessed that he was a member of the *Eiye* Confraternity. Weeds suspected to be Indian hemp were also found in the possession of the defendant.

“The offences contravene sections 4 (i) of the Secret Cult Abolition Law, 2017 and 5 (b) of the Indian Hemp Act.”

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