

Abia pastor allegedly strangles N1.5m ransom

Sunday Nwakanma, Umuahia

A pastor with The Apostolic Church, Umuahia, Salem Chigozirim, has been arraigned before a High Court sitting at Umuahia, Abia State, for allegedly strangling a 45-year-old housewife, Virginia Ndife, and a lady, Chioma Nwoke. He was arraigned on three counts bordering on murder and demanding a ransom. Chigozirim was said to



• Virginia

have strangled Virginia on September 21, 2021.

The deceased's husband,



• Chigozirim

Mr Christian Ndife, said his wife on the day of the incident went to their new house on 67, Agulu Street, Umuahia, to do some work with the suspect, who was also a plumber.

Christian said he was at their family house when his daughter informed him that his wife had been killed.

He said, "I rushed to the house, only to see the lifeless body of my wife. I reported to the police and the DSS. After two weeks, the DSS captured the suspect.

"I saw that my wife was strangled with a blue bathing sponge in the neck; the entire room was scattered. The defendant wrote something on a sheet and placed on the ground that he was looking for some documents and when he called my wife, she told him to do his worst.

"He said he had done some plumbing services for my wife and also sent same message to my brother-in-law, Anthony Okeke, that

he was looking for his keke documents."

Chigozirim, during interrogation by the DSS, was said to have confessed to the earlier killing of Chioma in August 2021.

The victim's mother, Mrs Clementina Nwoke, a member of Chigozirim's church, said she was called on August 20, 2021, that her daughter, who lived in Owerri, Imo State, had not been seen for one week.

"I started looking for her through the DSS in Umuahia and Owerri. I later got a message from my daughter's phone that I should pay N1.5m. The DSS asked me to offer N50,000; I offered N100,000. Using my daughter's phone, he (suspect) called me to come to Mbgoko Amiri in Obingwa LGA.

"On reaching there, a voice directed me to where to place the money. Though I was not seeing the person, I dropped the money at the foot of the pole I was directed to.

"I asked him about my daughter and he said after dropping the money, I would see her at Umuikwa Junction. This was on September 7, 2021. When I got to Umuikwa Junction, I did not see my daughter.

"Towards the end of September, the DSS asked me to show them the picture of Chioma and later invited me to Umuahia, where I met two of my pastors, and all of us went to our apostle at the World Bank Estate, Umuahia."

two women, demands

She said some of the church leaders later broke the news to her that Chioma's decomposing corpse was found at Mbano, Imo State.

Mrs Nwoke said her daughter was strangled with a head tie and "left upside down at the foot of a tree."

She said when the suspect

was arrested over Virginia's murder and his house was searched, he was caught with Chioma's phone and ATM card, adding that he withdrew a lot of money from the deceased's bank account.

While in court, the defendant informed the presiding judge, Uchechi

Enwereji, that he was photographed by certain persons, who threatened to deal with him.

But the judge assured him that nothing would happen to him in the custody of the Nigeria Correctional Service.

The case was adjourned till May 24, 2022.

Kano eye plucking: Suspected 100-year-old female cultist, two te



• The suspects

Tukur Muntari, Kano

THE police in Kano State have arrested a 100-year-old suspected female ritualist, Furera Abubakar, and two others, for allegedly plucking out the right eye of a 12-year-old boy, Mustapha Yunusa.

The other suspects are Isah Hassan (17) and Sani Abdulrahman (16).

The Kano State Police Public Relations Officer, SP Abdullahi Haruna, in a statement on Thursday, said the Almajiri boy was lured into a corner where his assailants removed his left eyeball on the orders of the woman.

The eyeball was to be used in preparing an "appear and disappear" charm.

The statement read, "On March 20, 2022, a report was received from a resident of Sheka Dantsinke

Quarters, Kumbotso Local Government Area, Kano State, that an unknown person took one Mustapha Yunusa (12) to Rimin Hamza Quarters, Tarauni LGA, Kano State, used a sharp knife and removed his right eyeball and fled with it to an unknown destination.

"On receipt of the report, the Commissioner of Police, Kano State, Sama'ila Shu'aibu Dikko, raised and instructed a team of Operation Puff Adder led by CSP Alfa N. Muhammad, Divisional Police Officer, Sheka, to proceed to the scene.

"The team immediately went to the scene and rushed the victim to the Murtala Muhammed Specialist Hospital, Kano, where a medical doctor confirmed that the eyeball of the victim was forcefully removed with a sharp object, and the victim was admitted to the said hospital.

"Sustained efforts coupled with

prolonged intelligence follow-ups led to the arrest of the principal suspect, Isah Hassan (17), with the help of a local vigilante on March 29, 2022.

"On investigation, the suspect confessed that he met his friend, Sani Abdulrahman (16), and asked him where he could get a charm that would make him disappear whenever he wanted.

"Sani directed him to his aged grandmother of 100 years old, Furera Abubakar. The principal suspect further confessed that he met Furera and she instructed him to bring the eyeball of a human being to her so that she could prepare the charm for him.

"He went and deceived a street beggar (Almajiri), lured him to a nearby bush, tied his hands and forcefully used a sharp knife and plucked out his right eyeball. He took the eyeball to Furera and she

'Abducted' Ko

Gbenga Odogun, Lokoja

THE President and founder of a non-governmental organisation, Enemona Josh Humanitarian Foundation, Gabriel Onoja, has been arrested by the police.

Earlier on Thursday, there