

Five Rivers cultists arrested for killing man, collecting ransom

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Nigeria Police logo

By Dennis Naku

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Men of the Rivers State Police Command have arrested five suspected cultists for allegedly beating a 34-year-old man, Rowland Horsfall, to death after accusing him of generating a fake alert for hard drugs he purchased from them in the Trans-Amadi area of Port Harcourt.

The spokesperson for the state police command, Grace Iringe-Koko, disclosed this in a statement on Tuesday.

Iringe-Koko disclosed that after his abduction and death, the miscreants who were members of Iceland, a dreaded cult group, still collected ransom from the victim's distraught mother but little did she know that her son was no more.

She further said the suspects thereafter demanded the sum of N2.5m from her before freeing Horsfall, during which she now demanded to speak with her son and alerted the police when she became suspicious, saying the operative immediately swung into action.

The statement partly reads, “On the 1st of November 2024 at about 1410hrs, the Rivers State Police Command received a distressing report from one Gloria Iyenemi George of Peace Valley Estate, Woji, Port-Harcourt, suggesting that on the 10th of September, 2024 at about 1530hrs, her son named Rowland Speech Horsefall, aged 34, left home to attend meetings in Dr Peter Odili Road and GRA Port Harcourt respectively.

“She further informed the police that at about 2100hrs, she called the son to know his location and he informed her that he was heading back home. Shortly after that, all subsequent attempts made to reach him were unsuccessful until about 0505hrs of September 11, 2024, when the son called again and informed her that he was being held hostage and his phone seized and demanded that he should pay a ransom of N300,000 before he could have his phone back.

“After a while, the son called again and demanded the sum of N2.5m from her as instructed by his abductors, but she sent him N300,000.

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“The supposedly abductors sent to the victim’s girlfriend, pictures and voice notes threatening to kill him if they did not receive the N300,000 in a reasonable time and eventually, she sent the sum into the victim’s

bank account to secure his release, yet, the victim remained in captivity.

Upon receipt of this complaint, operatives of the command swung into action at about 1300hrs of 3rd November 2024 and arrested the prime suspect, one Endurance Friday Thompson, in his hideout at Woji town.”

The statement continued, “Upon interrogation, the suspect confessed that on the 11th of September, 2024 and at about 0300hrs, he met the victim behind the Port Harcourt Zoo, Trans-Amadi where he and his gang members held him captive and demanded ransom and the victim’s family inability to pay the ransom made him and his gang beat the victim to death and dumped his remains along Queens/Kings Bakery, Abuloma Road, Port Harcourt, but later the corpse was recovered by the police and deposited at the mortuary.

“Suspects arrested in connection with the crime include: Endurance Friday Thompson, (aged 23); Boma Otonye a.k.a. Excess Chief, (41); David Link Ishaku a.k.a Biggy (34); Moses Nsikak Benjamin a.k.a. Aboy (29) and Emmanuel Aniete (32) and all the suspects confessed to the crime.

While noting that remains of the deceased have been recovered and taken to a morgue, she said the command had intensified a manhunt to apprehend other fleeing suspects and make them face the law.

Iringe-Koko, a Superintendent of Police, advised young people to be careful of the company they keep and the places they visit to avoid falling prey to criminal elements which she said were on the prowl.