

## CRIME

# Pastor Arraigned for Alleged Murder of Two Women in Abia State



The deceased



The suspect

### Rebecca Ejifoma

**A** High Court sitting in Umuahia, Abia State, has arraigned an Apostolic Church pastor, Mr. Salem Chigozirim, for allegedly strangling to death 45-year-old Mrs. Virginia Ndiye, and his church member's daughter, Chioma Nwoke.

Chigozirim, who was said to have strangled Virginia last September, was charged to court for murder and also demanding ransom afterwards.

According to the husband of the deceased, Mr. Christian Ndiye, his wife had gone to their new house on 67 Agulu Street, Umuahia, to do some work with the pastor, who is also a plumber.

But what should have been a plumbing job turned into murder to the dismay of the Ndiye family.

The widower, who said he was at their family house when his daughter told him of his wife's sudden death, said: "I rushed to the house only to see the body of my wife. I reported to the police and the DSS. After two weeks, the DSS captured the suspect."

"She was strangled with a blue bathing sponge, which he saw around her neck.

The entire room was scattered."

After his arrest, the suspect said he was looking for some documents and when he called the deceased, she told him to do his worst.

Earlier, he had sent the same message to Ndiye's brother-in-law, Anthony Okeke, that he was looking for his commercial motorcycle documents.

Meanwhile, it was after he was nabbed for Virginia's death that

DSS interrogation revealed that Chigozirim admitted to killing Chioma last August before Virginia's elimination in September.

In Chioma's case, she had disappeared for

a week and that was when her mother, Mrs. Clementina Nwoke, a member of Chigozirim's church, was informed on August 20, 2021 that she had not been seen in Owerri, Imo State, where she lived.

She said: "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 urged me to offer the suspect N50,000 but I proposed N100,000. Using my daughter's phone, Chigozirim called me to come to Mbogoko 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 as I was directed.

"When I enquired about my daughter, he said after dropping the money that I would see my daughter 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."

She further narrated that some of the church leaders eventually told her that her daughter's decomposed body was discovered at Mbano in Imo State where

she was strangled with a head tie and left upside down at the foot of a tree.

Chioma's phone and ATM card were found in the suspect's residence, following his arrest over the death of Virginia and that point, he had withdrawn a lot of money.

During the hearing before the presiding judge, Uchechi Enwereji, the case has been adjourned to May 24 this year for further hearing.