

Murder of hunchback: Police nab suspected ritualist in Abia

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By Anayo Okoli

UMUAHIA—Abia State police command has arrested a suspected ritualist, Marshal Nwankwo, of Dikeukwu autonomous community in Umuahia North Local Government Area of Abia State, for allegedly killing a hunchback, Mr. Ukata Iheme, for money making purposes.

The suspect, who was said to have committed the crime with another suspect, Emeka Okoye, now at large, allegedly killed and buried the victim.

Abia State Police Public Relations Officer, PPRO, Mr. Onyeke Udeviotu, who confirmed the incident, said the suspect was arrested, following information that he was alleged to have been sighted last with the victim before his disappearance.

According to the Police, the suspect on interrogation made useful statements that led to the discovery of the grave where the body of the victim was buried.

Following his confession, the decomposing corpse of the victim was last Tuesday exhumed from the grave.

Udeviotu said the police investigation was still on-going and appealed for calm.

Sources from the community said the victim was reported missing on Saturday, October 10, 2015.

His disappearance was reported to the Police and public announcements also placed on local radio stations.

The sources said the arrested suspect and his accomplice on the run, claimed to be pastors.

Acting on information, the youths of the community were said to have stormed the residence of the fake pastor who, however, denied any knowledge of the whereabouts of the missing hunch- back.

But not satisfied with his answers to questions put to him, the curious youths handed the suspect over to the Police for further interrogations.

According to the youth leader of the community, Mr. Chukwudi Egwu, when the suspect was confronted, he told them that he went to Benin on the day of the said incident, not knowing that his wife had earlier told them that he went to Lagos.

“We got information that the suspect was seen on that fateful day at Dubai market Onuimo, drinking wine with the pastor.

“Some people also said they later came to a beer parlour at Dikenta village drinking together. But the pastor denied

setting eyes on him that day,” Egwu said.

He said the youths decided to conduct a search at the pastors’ churches where they saw a pair of shoes identified by the victim’s son as his father’s.

“This boosted our morale and as we continued combing the area, we also saw his shorts in a nearby cassava plantation.

“It was at that point that we combed the entire place and saw a mound of red soil which we strongly believed must be a grave.

“We, therefore, decided to contact the Police who came and we opened the shallow grave and found his decomposing body inside, with his genitals and hunchback missing”, the youth leader said.

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