

70-year-old woman killed over alleged witchcraft in Bauchi, four suspects arrested

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Bauchi State Police Command has confirmed the gruesome murder of 70-year-old Talatu Joshua, who was allegedly attacked by four men in Gobir village, Kirfi Local Government Area over allegations of witchcraft.

The assailants— Rilwanu Usman, Ali Isa, Ila Alhaji Marafa, and Jamilu Malam Usman, were said to have ambushed the elderly woman on March 2, 2025, inflicting multiple injuries, including a severe wound beneath her left ear.

The victim was rushed to the General Hospital in Kirfi, where she was later pronounced dead.

According to Spokesperson of the Bauchi Command, CSP Ahmed Wakili in a statement issued on Wednesday, following an investigation, the State Police Command arrested four suspects on March 8, 2025, and detained them at the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) for further questioning.

The statement detailed further that the attack was reportedly triggered by a traditional healer's claim that Talatu was responsible for the illness of Ramatu Yusuf, the wife of one of the suspects.

Acting on this accusation, the suspects allegedly confronted Talatu, accused her of witchcraft, and threatened her life before attacking her with sticks, leading to her death.

Meanwhile, a petition was submitted by ADA-LIGHT KWALTINGS, SAMUEL & PARTNERS alleging that officers at the Kirfi Division failed to arrest the suspects

despite being aware of their identities.

According to the petition, on March 2, 2025, at approximately 1600hrs, Mama Talatu was attacked while returning home from St. Benedict Catholic Church.

The suspects allegedly used sticks, knives, and cutlasses, inflicting fatal injuries before bystanders could intervene.

“The complainant immediately contacted Police ASP Jerry via mobile phone to report the incident,” Wakili explained, adding: “Upon arrival with a team of officers, he found the victim already deceased.”

The petition further stated that officers from Kirfi Division confirmed her death but told the complainant he would receive updates the next day, leaving the body without further instructions.

By the next morning, when no update was received, the complainant contacted ASP Jerry again, who reportedly advised him to proceed with the burial, claiming all necessary information had been collected.

Furthermore, the petition alleged that since the March 2 incident, the police failed to take action against the suspects, despite witnesses seeing them flee the scene.

It described their actions as “inhumane, illegal, and unjustifiable, endangering the community’s peace.”

Responding to the petition, Ahmed Wakili stated that the petition contained “several assertions that lack substantiation.”

Referring to Paragraph 4 of the petition, he clarified, “It states that policemen at Kirfi Division confirmed the death of the deceased and left their office, informing the complainant that he would hear from them the next day, while the corpse was left without further instruction.

“It is crucial to note that law enforcement officers are not medically qualified to determine death.”

He further dismissed Paragraph 6, which alleged that the police failed to act against the fleeing suspects.

“The Police, as an independent entity, adhere strictly to professional protocols and procedures.

“Every investigation follows a methodical process that must be diligently observed,” he stated.

“We remain committed to uncovering the full circumstances of this tragic event,” he said.

Providing an update on the investigation, CSP Wakili confirmed, “The suspects were apprehended on March 8, 2025, at about 5:30 AM and are currently in custody at the Criminal Investigation Department (CID).”

Wakili warned against misinformation, saying, “ordinarily, the Command would have overlooked these allegations, but it has become necessary to set the record straight, as misleading statements are circulating among the public.”

He urged all parties to “refrain from spreading false information that could undermine the integrity of the Police and disrupt the peace in Bauchi State.

“The Bauchi State Police Command remains dedicated to handling this case with the utmost professionalism and objectivity.”