



World Breaking News

I killed 110 children, claims witchdoctor

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POLICE have arrested a man in southeastern Nigeria who said in a television documentary he had killed 110 children he believed to be possessed by evil spirits.

Rights campaigners say fraudulent pastors or "witchdoctors" in some parts of Nigeria convince parents that their children are possessed and will bring misfortune if exorcisms.

Some accused children fall into the hands of child trafficking networks after being handed over by their parents.

"We are working on the orders of the state governor to arrest all those involved in all forms of child abuse and trafficking," Akwa Ibom state's commissioner for information.

Umanah said Bishop Sunday Ulup-Aya, arrested in Mbo close to the Atlantic coast with six other suspects, had claimed in a documentary to have killed 110 children.

"I am not denying that I am a witchdoctor, but what I killed are witches in my patients with herbs, not children," Ulup-Aya said while in detention.

Akwa Ibom is one of Nigeria's top oil-producing states but poverty is pervasive and many are superstitious. The state has the highest incidence of child-trafficking, which is widespread.

Sam Ikpe-Ituama, whose group Child Rights Rehabilitation Network is spearheading the rescue of children accused of witchcraft in the state, said Ulup-Aya may be innocent.

"No corpses were discovered in his church, but two kids held captive for supposed deliverance, as well as some fetish items, were taken from there by the police," he said.