

suspects until February 18.

Garukaaya and three others Francis Ogwalo, Omala Kokasi, Nalodha Joseph, aka, Musunguzi Edison, are charged with murder of Yei Su on September 1, last

year. Yei, 50, was a cashier at Nile Steel and Plastics Company in Mukono District.

She was shot when armed assailants, disguised as customers, entered her office and

demanding money.

The deceased had a physical confrontation with the attackers before they shot her in the chest. She died on arrival at Namirembe Hospital in Mukono.

How police netted woman with bombs at border

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AMURU. Police last week foiled an attempt to smuggle into the country a cache of explosive weapons, pistols and more than 1,400 bullets from South Sudan.

Police said the suspect, Ms Flavia Akech, 42, and four men believed to be her accomplices, were arrested at Bibia checkpoint in Atiak, Amuru District, four kilometres from Elegu border point.

Their arrest near the highly guarded border point has raised questions on the possibility of connivance with security officials in the area.

There are four security checkpoints after Unyama Bridge that separate Elegu from Nimule Town in South Sudan.

The checkpoints are manned by the army and Police Field Force Unit, Uganda Revenue Authority customs officials and immigration staff.

Intercepted

A police officer, who preferred anonymity, said he first intercepted the weapons and arrested the four men at the third checkpoint.

He said at about 3pm, a Noah car with four occupants stopped at the checkpoint he was manning but were hesitant to remove a bag from the boot.

"When they stopped, I ordered them to produce their identity cards and other relevant documents. I later told them to open the car boot but they were not willing. After pressing them, they opened and we found four bags but one was very heavy," he said. Upon opening the bags,

he said they saw bullets, bombs and two pistols, prompting their arrest.

"We briefly interrogated the suspects on where they were taking the bombs but they all denied any knowledge of the items. They told us a woman who had hired them had used a boda boda and was waiting for them at Bibia Trading Centre," he said. He said the suspects later led the police to Bibia where Ms Akech was waiting.

"We saw her from a distance standing restless in some corridor wearing hijab and a black Sari dress. When she recognised the vehicle, she came running towards us. She did not know there were police officers in the vehicle. We later arrested her," the officer said.

"I interrogated the suspect briefly about where she got the cache of explosives, bullets and pistols and where she was taking them, but she only told me to receive Shs5m in cash in favour of her freedom," POLICE OFFICER

Once ensnared, he said, the suspect attempted to give him a Shs5m bribe. The officer added after realising that she had no escape, the suspect attempted a bizarre act – swallowing her ear pins, but she was stopped.

The officer suggested a high possibility of connivance with some security officers manning the border.

Aswa River Region Police Spokesperson Jimmy Patrick Okema said the suspects could have passed through the porous border points between Elegu

and Nimule Town. Mr Okema said preliminary investigations indicated that Ms Akech arrived at Nimule by bus on that day and later sneaked through the porous border into Uganda.

However, he said it would be difficult for one to cross River Unyama with such heavy load of weapons into Elegu.

Mr Okema said the suspect could have bribed security officers at the checkpoints before she was intercepted.

"...Ms Akech used three brokers whom she must have given enough money to bribe the police officers and get a free pass with the weapons. Those brokers used a simple technique of carrying all bullets, bombs and pistols in different wheel burrows on separate occasions from Nimule to Elegu," he said.

Daily Monitor was told the men Ms Akech used to convey the items knew all the plans and had arranged for transport.

Mr Oyoo, a driver who plies the Gulu-Elegu route, said he was contacted by one of the brokers to transport some passengers with their goods to Gulu Town.

He said he rejected the offer because his car only carries four people with light luggage, despite being promised a huge amount of money.

The five suspects were taken to Nalufenya detention facility in Jinja last week for further interrogation. They include Richard Kasirye, Vincent Otema, Ronald Nadome and Faiza Muzamil.

Efforts to reach police spokesperson Emilian Kayima on progress of the interrogations were futile as he did not answer our repeated phone calls.