

A doctor, who works as a police surgeon, told the High Court sitting in Ggaba, Kampala that Christopher Okello Onyum, the prime suspect in the killing of four toddlers at a daycare, at one time contemplated suicide. He also said he confided in him how he allegedly killed his step-brother in a bid to help him avoid life's troubles. Below is a slightly abridged version of Dr Emmanuel Nuwamanya's testimony to the court last Friday.

BY ANTHONY WESAKA & JULIET KIGONGO

Justice Alice Komuhangi Khaukha: Good morning, sir.
Dr Nuwamanya: Good morning, my lord.

Judge: Okay, can I have your name?
Dr Nuwamanya: My lord, I am Dr Emmanuel Nuwamanya. I am 52 years old.

Judge: What is your religion, doctor?
Dr Nuwamanya: I am a Christian.

Judge: Doctor, you are going to take the oath. Get a Bible, and swear to speak the truth.

Dr Nuwamanya takes the oath
Judge: Doctor, if you feel like sitting down, let us know.

Dr Nuwamanya: Yes, my lord.
Jonathan Muwaganya, Chief State Attorney: What are your full names again?

Dr Nuwamanya: I'm Dr Emmanuel Nuwamanya.

Muwaganya: Doctor, how old are you?

Dr Nuwamanya: I am 52 years old.

Muwaganya: What do you do for a living?

Dr Nuwamanya: My lord, I am a medical doctor, and I work as a police surgeon. Currently, I hold the post of deputy director of police health services.

Muwaganya: Where are you based?

Dr Nuwamanya: I am based at Nsambya, the Directorate headquarters. It also hosts the police health centre.

Muwaganya: Doctor, what are your qualifications?

Dr Nuwamanya: I hold a Master's degree from Makerere University, obtained in 2011. I also hold a Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery from Mbarara University, which I obtained in 2000.

Muwaganya: Do you hold any other qualifications apart from those two?

Dr Nuwamanya: My lord, I hold other qualifications in management and short courses on forensic medicine.

Muwaganya: For how long have you been practicing medicine?

Dr Nuwamanya: My lord, I have been practicing medicine for 25 years now.

Muwaganya: As a psychiatric doctor at the facility, what are your duties?

Dr Nuwamanya: My lord, at the facility, I work as a psychiatrist, but I also do



The prime suspect in the murder of four toddlers at Ggaba Early Childhood Development Programme, Mr Christopher Okello Onyum (circled), is led to the High Court sitting in Ggaba, Kampala, last week. PHOTO/ABUBAKER LUBOWA

Suspected baby killer contemplated suicide in the past, says doctor

general practice, which includes treating patients. I also examine assaulted persons brought to me by police of different categories, which include the following: victims of crime, suspects of crime, or people who have been injured.

Muwaganya: How do you come to examine suspects of crime?

Dr Nuwamanya: My lord, suspects are brought to me by police officers, and after assessing them, I make reports on the police form and hand them back to the police officers.

Muwaganya: Which police form?

Dr Nuwamanya: My lord, suspects are brought on police form 24 or..., depending on the case.

Muwaganya: On the police form 24 that you authored, how can you identify it?

Dr Nuwamanya: My lord, I can identify it through recognising my handwriting, my signature, and the stamp from the office.

Muwaganya: I want you to look at the form and tell the court if you recognise it.

Dr Nuwamanya: My lord, I can confirm that the form that was given to me is the one I authored.

Muwaganya: Who did you examine?
Dr Nuwamanya: My lord, it was in respect of the accused person, Christopher Okello Onyum.

Muwaganya: When did you exam-

ine him?

Dr Nuwamanya: I examined the person on April 7, 2026.

Muwaganya: Who was the requesting entity?

Dr Nuwamanya: My lord, it originated from Ggaba Police Station.

Muwaganya: Under what police reference?

Dr Nuwamanya: My lord, under CRB206/2026.

Muwaganya: Doctor, do you still recognise the person you examined?

Dr Nuwamanya: Yes, my lord.

Muwaganya: Is he in this court?

Dr Nuwamanya: My lord, the person I examined is the one across there.

Muwaganya: Please take the court through your findings.

Dr Nuwamanya: My lord, I found him to be 39 years old, and he had injuries on the right side of the forehead, which measured

1cm by 0.5cm; he had bruises above the right eye of the size 1.5cm by 1cm. He had bruises on his abdomen, on the left side of the size 4cm by 2cm, and more bruises on the abdomen

measuring 2cm by 1cm. He also had bruises across the back measuring 8cm by 3cm. The injuries were due to blunt force; they were dry and healing, about 3-4 days old. The mental examination showed he had normal behaviour; he was calm and cooperative, his speech

was coherent, his memory was intact, and he exhibited good judgment.

His thought process and content were normal, but he believed in wealth through human sacrifice. He was able to explain the reasons for killing the children as fortune hunting or enrichment. He got the idea from recalling childhood folktales of getting wealth by sacrificing people. My lord, I noted the following. He had a history of past mental illness.

Muwaganya: What was the source of what you noted?

Dr Nuwamanya: My lord, the source was from Mr Okello himself.

Muwaganya: What did he tell you?

Dr Nuwamanya: His tale was from his past mental illness treated between the years 2016 and 2025, which was associated with both auditory and visual hallucinations.

Muwaganya: What else did he tell you?

Dr Nuwamanya: That he killed his 2 to 3-year-old brother in 2016 or 2017, reportedly to save him from the troubles of this world. He also attempted suicide in 2023.

Judge: He was giving you that information?

Witness: Yes, my lord.

Muwaganya: He told you what?

Dr Nuwamanya: He attempted suicide in 2023.

Muwaganya: Did he reveal any other information to you?

Dr Nuwamanya: My lord, he revealed to me that he was suffering from

sickle cell disease and was on treatment. The findings above are suggestive of a mental condition with psychotic episodes.

Muwaganya: What did you base your findings on?

Dr Nuwamanya: My findings were based on the information that he provided in my note.

Muwaganya: Were you in a position to verify the information that he gave you under your note?

Dr Nuwamanya: No, my lord, I was not able to verify.

Muwaganya: Why?

Dr Nuwamanya: My lord, the only source of information was Mr Okello himself, and he had no medical documents, which is the reason I could not verify it.

Muwaganya: Doctor, how would the availability of the medical documents have affected the mental health assessment that you made?

Dr Nuwamanya: My lord, the availability of the documents would have stated whether his condition was cured and he was discharged as a functional person.

Muwaganya: And in your own assessment, you have told the court that he was able to explain the reasons for killing the children as fortune hunting or enrichment. According to your assessment, was this the reason that he gave for the killing of the children, caused by any abnormal mental state?

Judge: I do not understand the question, Mr Muwaganya. What is the question?

Muwaganya: My lord, the question is that the doctor says the accused told him that the reason why he killed the children was for fortune hunting and enrichment, so I am requiring the doctor, in his perspective and out of his assessment, would that reason given have been caused by any abnormal mental state or influenced for lack of better word?

Judge: Yes, doctor, you can answer that question.

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