# I was poisoned because of Onebe's murder case – police office

By Michael Odeng and Barbra Kabahumuza

A police officer claims he was poisoned while investigating a murder case in which businessman Francis Onebe is accused of killing his wife.

Onebe, an accountant by profession, is accused of murdering his wife, Immaculate Mary Blessing Aiso, and later dumping her body in a septic tank.

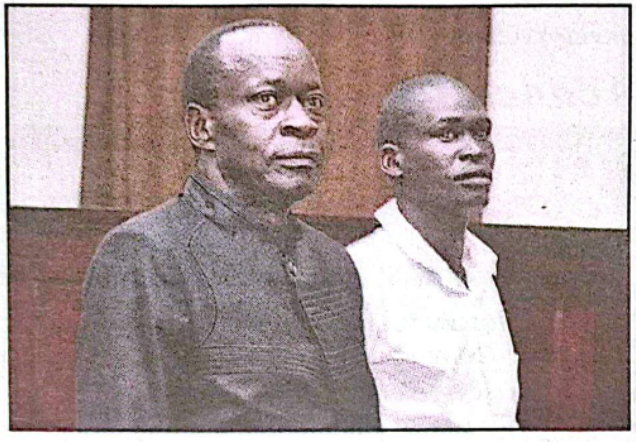
The businessman is jointly charged with Bonny Oriekot, a security guard attached to Pentagon Security Company. Murder carries a death sentence, upon conviction.

Assistant Superintendent of Police Nobert Ochom on Monday told Justice Andrew Khaukha, the Judicial Training Institute head, that he was poisoned by Onebe's friends during the course of the investigation.

"I was poisoned because of this case, but I cannot disclose the evidence to the defence team."

Ochom was being cross-examined by defence lawyers Patrick Kasumba, Joshua Emorut and David Oluka. The case is being prosecuted by chief state attorneys Joseph Kyomuhendo and Sharifa Nalwanga.

When Kasumba asked whether he had evidence that Onebe's friends were responsible for the alleged poisoning, Ochom said he did not.



Onebe (right) and Oriekot appearing in the High Court in Kampala on October 25, 2023

Kasumba then asked court to have the poisoning allegations expunged from the record.

Emorut argued that such statements were intended to create the impression that Onebe and Oriekot were responsible for Aiso's murder.

As a result, Justice Khaukha disregarded the poisoning allegations, saying the court's focus was on the murder charge before it.

Ochom told court that when he first interviewed Onebe, the businessman was not a suspect in the case, but his co-accused, Oriekot, was.

He said after reviewing Onebe's statement and noticing inconsistencies, he appointed a human intelligence source to secretly monitor the businessman.

The witness did not disclose the identity of the person he tasked with spying on Onebe, although the defence team believes it was Charles Okello, the general manager of Pentagon Security.

Defence lawyers said Okello was still a serving police officer and has never been discharged from the force, but Ochom said Okello told him that he had retired.

**SEARCH**

Ochom testified that when operatives conducted a search at Pentagon Security, they discovered that Aiso was not permitted to use company vehicles despite being the managing director. Asked whether he obtained a search warrant, Ochom admitted that the search was conducted without a warrant.

He further stated that two d were recovered from Aiso's r However, when defence la asked him to examine the d and tell court whether there any threat written therein ag the deceased, Ochom said there nothing.

The witness also conceded investigators did not condu forensic examination to co whether the handwriting in diaries belonged to the deceased

Ochom alleged that investiga concluded that Onebe participa the murder of his wife because three people (couple and On were staying at their matrimo home in Munyonyo, Kampala, at time she (Aiso) disappeared.

He said the deceased's body w later recovered from the septic ta at the same home. The witn added that Oriekot initially claim that Aiso had been kidnapped wh he (Oriekot) was with his girlfriend at the time when the incident allegedly happened.

According Ochom, investigators also noted several suspicious circumstances, including the changing of cover sheets in the house after Aiso's disappearance, claiming this was Onebe's alleged attempt to leave the country.

## BACKGROUND

On January 6, 2021, Onebe reported a case of his missing wife at Buziga Police Post and investigations commenced. He claimed that his wife was picked up by plainclothes operatives travelling in a 'drone' and taken to an unknown destination.

A week later, Aiso's body was recovered from a septic tank at the couple's residence by the joint security team headed by the Criminal Investigations Directorate operatives.

Preliminary Police investigations revealed that Onebe and Aiso, parted ways, but reunited after 14 years and were formally married until her murder.

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