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HERBALIST FOUND WITH ALBINO ARM ...MALAWIAN SHAMAN, FOUR OTHERS ARRESTED AFTER BEING FOUND WITH BODY PART SUSPECTED TO BE PART OF ARM CUT OFF IN HORRIFIC ATTACK ON 20-YEAR-OLD PREGNANT ALBINO WOMAN

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. Kumwenda

POLICE have charged five men – among them a herbalist – with attempted murder after recovering what is suspected to be part of the right arm cut off from a 20-year-old pregnant albino woman of Chama, in Muchinga Province.

One of the accused, Pathias Nyirenda, was said to have befriended the victim, Miriam Kumwenda, and is suspected to have played a key role in organising the savage attack on her few weeks ago, according to police.

Police spokesperson Esther Katongo named the other four suspects as Smith

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Nyirenda, a traditional healer from Malawi, Frank Mvula, Mabvuto Nkowani and Jesus Mtonga.

Ms Katongo said in an interview yesterday that police had already charged the five with attempted murder and that they had already appeared in the Lundazi magistrates' court for mention.

Ms Kumwenda, who is three months pregnant, was attacked at night by a gang that dragged her out of her home in Chikwa village in Chama, cut off her right arm and left her for dead.

She survived the attack and was picked up by members of the public the next morning and taken to Chama South Hospital where she spent one month being treated for her injuries.

Ms Katongo said police recovered the arm after it was found with Smith Nyirenda in Madede area in Mzimba district north of Malawi where Mvula and Nkowani were apprehended by police.

"After the incident happened, this traditional healer, Frank Mvula and Mabvuto Nkowani went to Malawi but were apprehended by police in Madede area in Mzimba and part of the arm cut off from the victim was recovered after it was found with the traditional healer," she said.

Mtonga and Nyirenda were apprehended within the district.

Ms Katongo said Nyirenda allegedly lured the victim by pretending to know her before he set the trap that led to her shocking attack.

Ms Kumwenda's brutal attack has been condemned by the Foundation of Persons Living with Albinism, executive director John Chiti.

Mr Chiti told the Times of Zambia that in interviews with Ms Kumwenda after the attack, she narrated how she heard one of the attackers directing his partners in crime to start by cutting off her left hand with an unknown object, but as soon as he started the chopping, he was stopped by his colleagues.

Mr Chiti said Ms Kumwenda was now in a safe house run by the foundation in Lusaka where she was recovering, adding he feared that if she went back to the village, she could be attacked again.

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