



Albino girl murdered in Tanzania

Five people have been arrested in north-western Tanzania for killing a nine-year-old albino girl on Sunday night, police have told the BBC.

Police commander of Kahama district Shaibu Mohamed said the attackers broke down the door to her home and dragged her outside and cut her throat.

They chopped off her lower legs and some hair which they made off with.

About 30 albinos have been killed in Tanzania this year, their parts wanted by witchdoctors for "get rich" potions.

The girl's murder - in Segese village - happened hours after President Jakaya Kikwete promised to do more to protect people with albinism.

" They used pangas [machetes] completely cutting her two legs and they took some hairs "
Police commander Shaibu Mohamed

He met the organisers of a protest in the commercial capital, Dar es Salaam, on Sunday, and promised that those behind the killings would be brought to justice.

Mr Mohamed said the attack happened at midnight local time when the family was asleep. Her older sister, who also has albinism, was not touched.

"They used pangas [machetes] completely cutting her two legs and they took some hairs; that's why we're of the opinion that this is a killing linked to witchcraft," he told the BBC's Focus on Africa programme.

Earlier this year, a BBC reporter in Tanzania posed as a businesswoman who wanted to get rich and went to various witchdoctors.

In some cases, she was offered, for a starting price of \$2,000, a potion made of an albino's body parts - including legs, hair, hands, and blood - to make her wealthy.

Albinos in neighbouring Burundi were forced to seek police protection this month after three people with albinism were killed by gangs apparently seeking to sell body parts to Tanzania.

Albinism affects one in 20,000 people worldwide, but in Tanzania the prevalence appears to be much higher.

The Albino Association of Tanzania says that although just 4,000 albinos are officially registered in the country, they believe the actual number could be as high as 173,000.

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