Abuja pastor facing rape charges returns to pulpit after five weeks detention

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An Abuja-based pastor facing charges of raping a 14-year-old girl has resumed ministrations after securing bail for his release from custody on health grounds.  
  
Amos Isah, the founder and General Overseer of Prophetic Voice of Fire Ministry International, Gwagwalada, Abuja, shared a video clip on social media on Sunday showing him leading an ecstatic congregation.  
  
Mr Isah, who was arrested on 18 June, spent more than five weeks in the custody of the Force Criminal Investigation Department of the Nigerian police before the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) High Court in Abuja granted him bail on 25 July.  
  
Judge Enobie Obanor granted Mr Isah bail based on his claim of suffering from “pulmonary tuberculosis which has progressively deteriorated into a severe form of obstructive airway disease.” Mr Isah claimed to have contracted the ailment during his detention.  
  
However, days after his release from custody, he was captured in a video circulating on social media, showing him ministering to his church members after he was given an ecstatic welcome by the congregants.  
  
Checks by PREMIUM TIMES show that since his release, Mr Isah has conducted church services on 31 July, 2 and 3 August (Sunday). From the video clips uploaded to his Facebook page, the Sunday service appeared to have pulled the largest crowd, with protocol men in suit seen joining hands to form a fence to prevent the jubilant congregants from besieging the pulpit.  
  
Mr Isah, who faces rape charges, was also seen dancing on stage.  
  
Background  
  
On 18 June, the police arrested the cleric for allegedly raping a 14-year-old girl, who is a member of the media unit of his church.  
  
In an interview with PREMIUM TIMES at a hospital where she went to see a doctor regarding post-assault conditions on 30 June, the teenager, whose name is withheld over stigmatisation concerns, said she was raped on 26 May but kept mum out of fear.  
  
She said Mr Isah had invited her to his office, where the incident allegedly took place.  
  
She recounted her experience to her friend, who encouraged her to disclose the matter to her parents.  
  
After telling her parents, her father reported the issue to the police.  
  
She said she started experiencing abdominal pain and bleeding a few weeks after the alleged ordeal.  
  
The police arrested Mr Isah and subsequently charged him with four counts of rape, indecency and violence.  
  
On 22 July, he was arraigned before the FCT High Court in Abuja. He pleaded not guilty to the charges when they were read to him.  
  
His alleged offences are said to be contrary to Sections 1(2), 2(1) and 3 of the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act, 2015, and Section 285 of the Penal Code, 2015.  
  
Battle over bail  
  
Following his arraignment, Mr Isah filed a motion for bail with an affidavit, urging the court to release him on health grounds and lack of a prior criminal record.  
  
The police filed a counter-affidavit challenging the credibility of the medical report he submitted.  
  
However, the judge ruled in favour of Mr Isah, holding that the court “notes with concern the visible signs of ill-health observed during the hearing, notably a persistent and uncontrollable cough fit exhibited” by the accused.  
  
The judge also noted that the alleged offences were not capital in nature and granted him bail in the sum of N5 million, with two sureties, who must be civil servants not below grade level 12 and are residents of the FCT.  
  
Trend of rape cases in 2025  
  
Sexual abuse is an extremely traumatic experience for individuals of all ages, with a particularly devastating impact on minors that can cause lasting harm to their social life, mental health, and overall development.  
  
In January, PREMIUM TIMES compiled some rape cases to be noted in the year, reflecting a troubling trend that persists and signals the heightened risks girls potentially face from sexual predators.  
  
The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) also reported a hike in rapes cases reported to the commission in March.  
  
In May, the FCT High Court found Abdulhameed Ahmed, 27, guilty of raping a girl, who was 15 years old as of the time of the incident. He was sentenced to life imprisonment.  
  
The case involving Mr Ahmed is notable for its relatively swift conclusion, particularly given the prevalence of rape cases, where offenders are rarely brought to justice, often only after extended trials.  
  
In many instances, prosecution fatigue leads to the abandonment of cases or the failure to present witnesses and evidence in court, resulting in the acquittal of offenders.