Stepmother faces trial for alleged sexual assault, grievous bodily harm on child

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A Lagos Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Court has heard how a defendant, Chinyere Osondu, allegedly inserted a stick into her step-granddaughter’s private parts for bed wetting.  
  
  
  
The third prosecution witness, a make-up artist, Mercy Osondu, told the court presided over by Justice Rahman Oshodi that her stepmother (Chinyere) inflicted injuries on the six-year-old girl’s body and inserted a stick in her private parts.  
  
Osondu is standing trial on a four-count charge bordering on sexual assault by penetration, assault, wounding and grievous bodily harm.  
  
The state government alleged that her offences contravene Sections 173, 261, 245 and 246 of the Criminal Laws of Lagos State, 2015.  
  
At yesterday’s resumed proceedings, the witness was led in evidence-in-chief by the State Counsel, Ms Inumidun Solarin.  
  
She told the court that she learned how the defendant, Chinyere (alias Mama Chekwube), was maltreating the girl when she went to her father’s house for a condolence visit after his death in August 2021.  
  
She also told the court that the girl (survivor), whose father is based in Dubai, lives with the defendant at Iyana Ibiye, Morogbo, in the Badagry area of Lagos State.  
  
She said: “My niece told me that Mama (Chinyere) hit her head with a padlock because she wet the bed.”  
  
The witness further told the court that she took her niece to her house after getting information from a neighbour in the compound.  
  
She told the court that she discovered bruises and wounds on her body beside the head when she wanted to bathe her.  
  
  
  
“When I directed her to bend down to rinse her private part, she could not bend down, and after so much persuasion, she confessed that Mama Chekwube pushed a stick in her vagina because she wet herself at home.  
  
“My brother and I called Mama on the phone to ask why she did that, but she hung up on us. My brother and I reported the case at the station, but the Divisional Police Officer (DPO) locked my brother in the cell. He insisted he would not release my brother if we did not drop the case and that Mama was trying to teach the girl a lesson.”  
  
“We later dropped the case but when her father, Ifeanyi, who is in Dubai learnt about the case, he contacted an NGO and government officials (Welfare) and the case was reported at Panti.”  
  
Justice Oshodi adjourned to November 5 to continue the trial.