Police detain ARM Pension executive director over sexual assault claim

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The Lagos State Police Command has detained an Executive Director at ARM Pension Managers (PFA) Limited (name withheld) following allegations of sexual assault levelled against him by a colleague.  
  
The female colleague (name also withheld) reported to the police that the incident occurred on the night of July 18, 2024.  
  
The state Police Public Relations Officer, Benjamin Hundeyin, told PUNCH Online, on Friday, that the accused is in custody.  
  
“The said director at ARM Pension Managers is in our custody. His case has been referred to the Gender Desk, Lagos State Police Command,” Hundeyin said in a phone chat.  
  
According to the victim, the assault took place after an office party hosted by ARM Pension.  
  
She said she was abducted and raped at a popular hotel on Chevron Drive, Lagos.  
  
The victim disclosed this in a statement obtained by our correspondent where she alleged that the accused had “penetrative sexual intercourse” with her after her drink was “spiked.”  
  
She recalled that she consumed a small amount of Jameson Whiskey mixed with Coke and one cocktail at the party.  
  
She added that her last memory was around 7.30pm to 8pm, after which she experienced a blackout, only to wake up undressed in the hotel room around 3am.  
  
“I checked the time, it was around 3am, and my private parts were sore and felt like someone had invaded me.  
  
“I walked out of the room and looked around for a clue of the name of the hotel to even have a sense of where I was, I saw the name XYZ Hotel (name withheld). I googled it, and I found that it is on Chevron Drive. I asked the receptionist and security man to help me get a taxi so I could go home,” she said.  
  
Meanwhile, the company in a Wednesday statement addressed the assault allegation, stating that the accused executive had been placed on administrative leave pending the outcome of an independent investigation.  
  
The statement read, “ARM Pension Managers (PFA) Ltd is aware of a serious allegation of assault involving our employees. We are deeply disturbed by this and are committed to addressing the situation with the utmost seriousness and sensitivity.  
  
“First and foremost, our thoughts are with our colleague who has come forward. We want to express our deepest concern and support for her during this tough time. Sexual assault is a grave matter that has no place in our organisation and society at large, and we stand firmly against all forms of harassment or violence.  
  
“This incident reportedly took place outside the office premises on the night of July 18, 2024, after an office team bonding event and involved two of our colleagues. We have initiated a thorough and independent investigation into the allegation, and we are fully cooperating with the law enforcement authorities to ensure that the investigation is comprehensive and impartial.  
  
“The accused employee, an executive in the company, has been placed on administrative leave pending the investigation’s outcome. Additionally, we are offering support services to the complainant who has come forward, including counselling and any other resources she may need during this time.”  
  
The statement concluded by emphasising the company’s commitment to creating a safe and respectful workplace for all employees, pledging to support the investigation, and ensuring transparency throughout the process.  
  
“We understand the gravity of this situation and the impact it has on all involved. Hence, we will handle this situation with the highest level of integrity and transparency,” it read.  
  
Rape is a heinous crime that violates the dignity and humanity of individuals, leaving deep scars that persist long after the act itself.  
  
In Nigeria and many other parts of the world, this abhorrent act has become a disturbing endemic, undermining the fundamental rights and safety of countless people.  
  
PUNCH Online reported that the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Ibrahim Lamuwa, was suspended by the Office of the Head of Service over a sexual harassment allegation in June.  
  
The Head of Service, Folashade Yemi-Esan, said the permanent secretary would be on suspension pending the outcome of a probe into the allegation against him.  
  
“The permanent secretary has been suspended pending the outcome of the probe by the committee set up, “ a senior director in the OHCSF told our correspondent in Abuja.  
  
The complainant, one Simisola Ajayi, accused Lamuwa of serial sexual harassment.  
  
Ajayi, in the petition filed by her lawyer, Femi Falana (SAN), outlined alleged instances of harassment.  
  
In 2020, the International human rights organisation, Amnesty International, called on the then-President, Muhammadu Buhari, to declare rape as a national crisis in the country.  
  
Amnesty International said that it joined its voice to other civil societies demanding justice over the incident of rape and murder of a 22-year-old student of the University of Benin, Uwavera Omozuwa, as well as 18-year-old Barakat Bello in Ibadan, Oyo State.