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LEADER OF RELIGIOUS GROUP FACES UTAH ARRAIGNMENT

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Summary

The leader of a religious following in Michigan will be arraigned this month in 4th District Court on two second-degree felonies for allegedly performing a 1993 marriage in American Fork between his 13-year-old daughter and a 48-year-old friend.

State investigators allege that John Perry Chaney, 39, conspired to marry his daughter to Don Beaver on Sept. 28, 1993, so Beaver could fondle and have sex with the girl. Chaney, who asks to be called John Perry, will be arraigned Feb. 28 on a charge of conspiracy to commit rape of a child and a charge of conspiracy to commit aggravated sexual abuse of a child.

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The Utah attorney general's office charged Beaver with three felonies last year in 3rd Circuit Court and has issued a warrant for his arrest. Investigators believe Beaver may still be hiding in Utah.

Chaney was arrested last month in Michigan and was brought to Utah following a lengthy and highly publicized extradition hearing. In Michigan, Chaney is married to a 15-year-old girl who is now pregnant. The legality of that marriage is the subject of a civil proceeding in a Michigan juvenile court.

Chaney allegedly has a group of followers that practice marriage to young girls. According to court documents, Chaney believes girls are ready for marriage in God's eyes at the age of 12.

At Monday's preliminary hearing, Chaney told the judge that Utah courts have no jurisdiction over him

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