

Police Launch Manhunt For Vigilante Over Killing Of 21 Year Old In Ebonyi

By **Obinna Ogbonnaya** 1 Day Ago in News



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The Ebonyi State Police Command said it has launched a manhunt for a local vigilante member in the Afikpo local Government Area of the State, named Eze Ibiam Irem, over his alleged involvement in the killing of a 21 year old young man, Emmanuel John Igboko.

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The suspect Eze Ibiam, who is still at large, was said to have shot and killed Igboko on the night of October 25, during the “Ebikpo” cultural celebration, a traditional event that marks part of the Ogo initiation process for young men in Unwana.

The Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), SP Joshua Ukandu, said that the command has commenced investigation into the matter, adding that the suspect will soon be apprehended and interrogated to ascertain the cause of the shooting.

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A member of the community, Chilezie Duke, who confirmed the unfortunate incident, said it threw the community into shock and apprehension, adding that the killing was uncalled for and barbaric.

Duke told LEADERSHIP that the Ebikpo night is a revered and age-long tradition where initiated men go around the community, singing satirical songs about individuals, mostly women, whose actions or lifestyles are seen as morally questionable.

He said that the event also serves as a time for communal reflection, humor, and correction through song.

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Recounting the events of that night, Duke said “During the exercise, it is a taboo for women or uninitiated men to see the Ogo participants, who often carry out the rituals under the cover of the night.

“Emmanuel, who reportedly admired the cultural practice, decided to join his peers that evening out of youthful excitement.

“He was seen moving from one compound to another, singing and participating in the event, unaware that tragedy awaited him.”

Duke said trouble started when the group of young men entered the compound of one Eze Ibiam Irem, said to be a member of a vigilante security outfit in the area.

He said Eze, upon seeing the boys, allegedly ordered them to leave his premises immediately, threatening dire consequences if they refused.

“Eze went inside his house, brought out his gun, and fired a shot that fatally struck Emmanuel.

“He was not armed, not violent, and meant no harm. He only came to participate in a cultural tradition that his people have practiced for generations,” Duke recalled.

He said Emmanuel died on the spot, while his friends fled the scene in shock and fear. His body has since been deposited in the mortuary.

LEADERSHIP gathered that Eze Ibiam Irem has been on the run since the unfortunate incident happened, as community members call for his immediate arrest and prosecution.