

# 2 die inside sewage system

**ODOGWU EMEKA ODOGWU, Awka**

**T**WO persons at the weekend died in a sewage system where they were trapped while trying to evacuate human waste (faeces).

Sunday Champion learnt the victims were said to be evacuating the faeces when the sewage system caved in and got them trapped before the time rescue team arrived the scene and exhumed them, the incidents were coming on the heels of an indefinite strike by the Anambra State Sewage Contractors Union, (ASSCU). Reasons include their strike for an alleged increase of its annual levy from N10,000 to N20,000 by the state government which they believe is too much for them.

Speaking with journalists, the vice chairman and secretary of ASSCU, Alexander Ezeobi and Ikechukwu Mbonu respectively said that Anambra State Environmental Protection Agency, ANSEPA, arbitrarily increased the levy without providing enabling environment for the sewage contractors.

The Union appealed to Governor Peter Obi to come to their aid, alleging that the part-payment of the levy, N240,000 which is being demanded from them have been paid in the Onitsha headquarters of ANSEPA without any receipt issued to that effect. The Union however resolved after their meeting at Onitsha not to call off the strike until ANSEPA reverted to N10,000 levy per company yearly. They further complained that some of their members' sewage vehicles were impounded by ANSEPA and each paid N20,000 and a fine of N10,000 each for not renewing their registration levy earlier.

In his reaction however, the Director/CEO of ANSEPA, Dr. Emma Udeh Akpe described the allegations as false, noting that for two years now the Union has not paid its levy to the state government despite repeated reminders given to the union, accusing the new executive of the Union of bringing disrepute to the image of the members.

Dr Ude-Akpeh added that the problem of non-payment started from the new executive members most of who have up to six vehicles but want to pay for one alone rather than the agreed payment schedule per vehicle.