

Man sets his 2-year-old son ablaze



the building where the incident occurred

From Tony Adibe, who was in Mbaïse

There was confusion in Umuahim Ikenga village, Eziudo autonomous community of Ezinihitte, Mbaïse Local Government Area of Imo State, when one Mr. Uchechi Nwaogwugwu allegedly poured petrol on his little son before setting him on fire.

Sunday Trust gathered that the man allegedly set his only child on fire because he defecated on his body.

Our reporter, who visited the area, learnt that long before the tragic incident, Nwaogwugwu had repeatedly threatened to kill at least seven persons in the community but could not

give reasons for his intended action.

The traditional ruler of Eziudo autonomous community, His Royal Majesty, Eze Desmond Oguguo, who confirmed the sad incident, said he was tired of the disgraceful things happening in his domain. He, however, said, "The police arrested him and took the boy's corpse to Aboh Mbaïse General Hospital. It is an abomination."

"He has been threatening to kill people but we did not take him seriously. His wife had to run away when she was threatened," a source at Eze's palace revealed.

Speaking to Sunday Trust, a neighbour to Nwaogwugwu, Mrs. Chioma Nwosu, narrated how he soaked his only

child, Maduabuchi with fuel and set him on fire, adding that the boy died around 12 midnight.

"On Saturday, May 10, 2014, around 8pm, I was preparing to cook soup when Mr. Nwaogwugwu returned on a bicycle for the first time. I noticed that he was carrying a container of fuel, which he said was kerosene. He later threatened to teach his son a bitter lesson for defecating on his cloth. Subsequently, there was a thick smoke from his compound, after which he emerged with fire on his hand. He threw the flame at his son and ran away.

"And when I asked about his son, Maduabuchi, he replied, 'Are you asking me of the boy that is roasting in the fire?' Unfortunately,

before we could rescue the child, he was completely roasted," Mrs. Nwosu narrated.

Another version of the story, however, has it that the man had bought kerosene and petrol, and when he attempted to light his lamp, it exploded because he had mistakenly mixed both substances and poured in it.

A police source at Itu, who spoke to our reporter added: "As he battled with the fire, which burnt his hands, he ran out and mistakenly threw the burning rag or whatever was burning his hands on his son who was sitting in the corridor. But because the man is known as a stubborn person, members of the community assumed that he set his son ablaze."