

# Palm wine tapper hacks wife to death in Imo

Tony Adibe, Enugu

The Umuoduka village in Oboama Autonomous Community, Ezinihitte Mbaise LGA of Imo State was thrown into confusion and wailing early yesterday when a palm wine tapper, Mr. Richard Anochirionye (alias 'Okpoka'), hacked his wife to death with a plank.

*Daily Trust Saturday* was reliably informed that the man had patiently waited till all his male children went out before he reportedly sent his daughter on an errand apparently to enable him execute his secret agenda.

A source said the trouble started yesterday morning when the man had a serious misunderstanding with the wife over a matter, prompting the wife to hit his mouth repeatedly with a persistent threat to kill him.

"He waited until their children were all out of the compound. Then he tricked their daughter to go and buy something for him but before she could return, the wife was clubbed to death," revealed a native who didn't want his name in print.

*Daily Trust Saturday* recalls that in July 2017, the same man, Okpoka, was said to have bought 25 litres of petrol with which he reportedly set the family houses ablaze due to the sale of his motor-cycles by his sons without his knowledge.

One of the burnt houses was a five-room bungalow while the other was a three-bedroom building, according to an indigene of Oboama community, who added that the compound is directly opposite the Ezinihitte Mbaise LGA Stadium.

Our correspondent gathered that before the wine tapper burnt the houses, he went round the village and announced to whoever cared to listen that his children should return his two

motor-bikes or else he would take an action that would make front-page news in the newspapers.

"He even contacted the village heads - the chiefs and nzes - threatening that if the children did not bring back his motor-bikes with which he goes about his palm wine business, he was would take a very drastic action on them, an action he said they would live to tell till the end of their lives," the source told our reporter.

Reports say Okpoka had gone on exile to his maternal home since 2017 when he allegedly committed the arson. However, after the children erected another building, he returned recently only to club the wife to death.

A source said after returning from the errand, the daughter saw her mother's

corpse on the ground and raised the alarm which attracted residents who rushed to the scene and eventually caught the man who was quickly handed over to the police.

Okpoka, said to be a former commercial driver who later became a palm wine tapper, was said to have been nursing bottled-up anger towards members of his

nuclear family since his motor-bikes were sold, according to a native.

The woman's corpse was deposited in the mortuary at a neighbouring community, Ibeku in Aboh Mbaise LGA of the state.

When contacted, the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Imo State Police Command, Mr. Orlando Ikokuwu, said he would contact the DPO of Ezinihitte Police Station and get back to our reporter, but up till the time of filling this report, he did not get back or answer his calls or message sent to his telephone number.

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