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... Lagos, yesterday. Photo: Bunmi Azeez.

Security in Imo worsens as gunmen kill monarch

BY CHIDI NKWOPARA

OWERRI—THE security situation in Imo State worsened Monday night, following brutal murder of Eze Stanley Akuneto, traditional ruler of Umueze-Abazu, Ogwa, Mbaitoli local government area of the state.

Vanguard investigations revealed that the two gunmen, who were operating on a motorcycle, stormed the royal father's palace at about 9pm when most people had gone to sleep.

It was further gathered from a villager, who did not want his name in print, that the gangsters did not betray their principal mission when they asked after the traditional ruler.

"When they were taken to where the traditional ruler was relaxing, they quickly shot him at close range and sped away on their motorbike into the dark night," the villager recounted with grief.

Another woman, who could not hold her emotion as she spoke, described the late royal father as "a lover of his people, soft spoken, sincere to a fault, unassuming and a fine gentleman".

She wondered why anybody or group of persons would have conspired to snuff life out of the man, even as she denied that there was any form of crisis in the autonomous community.

Efforts made by Vanguard to get in touch

with the community's President General, Engr. George Obinna Asi, failed as he was said to be "out of town on a business trip."

When Vanguard called the Police Public Relations Officer, PPRO, Mr. Sam Oodee, for his comments, the fellow that picked his

phone claimed the gadget had a problem which he was fixing and urged our correspondent to call in the next 30 minutes.

Court jails six MASSOB members in Asaba...for wearing Biafra regalia

BY AUSTIN OGWUDA

ASABA—SIX members of the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra, MASSOB, were yesterday sentenced to prison by a chief magistrate's court sitting in Asaba, Delta, for wearing regalia of defunct Biafra and proclaiming to be members of the group.

Sentenced to six months imprisonment on each of the three-count charge of conspiracy, unlawful possession and proclamation to be members of MASSOB were Sunday Okoro, Ifeanyi Igbozurike, Francis Onigbo, Sebastian Nworie, Emmanuel Nwafor and Chidi Okafor.

One of the convicted persons, Sunday Okoro, was said to have been arrested by men of Delta State police command at the Asaba end of the River Niger Head Bridge in February for being in possession of Biafra paraphernalia, including flag and chaplet.

It was reported that the next day, other members of the group from neighbouring Anambra State stormed the Asaba police station where Okoro was held in solidarity visit

but that while on that visit, five of them were detained along with Okoro for also adorning Biafran regalia.

In jailing the accused persons, the Asaba Chief Magistrate court presided over by Mr. S.C. Ehikwe stated that it was the duty of the court to check the excesses of miscreants out to cause confusion in the

nation.

However, counsel to the convicted members of MASSOB, Mr. W.O. Ezeanwo, said "we are not satisfied. There is no evidence that MASSOB is an illegal organization. So we are going to get the True Certified Copy, CTC, of the judgment and file our appeal in a higher court."

UNIZIK VC canvasses increase in number of admitted students

BY VINCENT UJUMADU

AWKA—THE VICE Chancellor of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Prof. Boniface Egboka, has advocated an increase in the carrying capacity of the institution, in view of the increasing number of candidates applying to study in the institution.

Nnamdi Azikiwe University was the second most sought after institution in this year's Joint Admissions and Matriculations Board, JAMB, examination, a development which Egboka said made it necessary for the university to be given approval to

admit more students.

In this year's Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination, UTME, a total of 1,503,931 candidates applied for the examination, with the University of Lagos ranked first as the most sought after university with 83,865 candidates, followed by UNIZIK with 82,148, while the University of Benin came third with 80,048 candidates.

Prof. Egboka lauded the Federal Government for encouraging establishment of more tertiary institutions in the country to cater for the growing number of applications for university education.