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'Why ACN Boss, Nwike, Was Killed'

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THE former governor of Anambra State, Dr. Chukwuemeka Ezeife, has described the death of late Chief Chudi Nwike, his deputy when he was governor, as very shocking and disturbing.

He also lamented what he described as a new and dangerous twist in the pattern of kidnapping that has engulfed the state and the nation.

Nwike, whose lifeless body was reportedly found and identified by his party members, was kidnapped two weeks ago by unknown gunmen. The abductors later demanded a N30 million ransom for his release.

It is not clear whether the ransom was paid before he was killed or whether he was killed as a result of failure to deliver the alleged N5m already raised.

Another school of thought says that he might have identified some of his abductors; hence they silenced him forever.

Speaking with reporters, Saturday, Ezeife said that during his tenure, he had a good working relationship with the deceased, adding that Nwike was diligent.

"He was my deputy and he worked so hard while we were in office. He would work from 7am, morning to evening, and we enjoyed a good and harmonious relationship. I am shocked at what happened. It is indeed sad."

The Anambra State Elders Forum is to meet with Governor Peter Obi with a view to finding solution to incidences of kidnapping in the state.

Ezeife said, "Security matters in Anambra State would be looked into and very soon Anambra Elders would be meeting to discuss that. We, as elders have to come into the matter and examine the situation properly before taking action. We are not going to do it alone.

"We shall have a meeting with the governor and, possibly, members of the security councils. There must certainly be a way out of this. You know that security matters are not discussed openly."

Executives of the Anambra State chapter of the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), led by the chairman, Chief Obidike Amechi, have paid a condolence visit to the Nwike family.

ACN leader in the South East, Senator Chris Ngige, has directed that flags be flown at half-mast in the zone for seven days and for condolence registers to be opened at all party offices, as a mark of respect for Nwike, who until his death, was the National Vice Chairman of ACN for the zone.

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Fear has also gripped residents of the state over the alleged killing of persons that came with money to secure the late Nwike's release.

In a statement, the ACN in the state, through its Publicity Secretary, Mr Okeluo Madukaife, said: "We are tremendously ashamed of the circumstances of his death and wish we could erase from history the fact that a former Deputy Governor of a state in Nigeria died in this manner.

"Since security agencies did not succeed in tracking down Anambra's Deputy Governor in life, we urge them to rise and smash all obstacles on the way to unearthing the abductors and killers of the rare gem. We urge them to leave no stone unturned and not be beaten by any decoy until the nation has the right answers to the nagging questions. For we may know who will be next?"

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