

Two die in clash over control of tipper operations in Anambra

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Anambra

Gunmen have killed two persons, who attempted to scare away sand miners and tipper drivers to enforce collection of sand at Odekpe axis of Ogbaru Council of Anambra State.

A witness said that bullets shot at the leader of the enforcement team, Sunday Anaekwe (alias Otum) could not penetrate his body, prompting his assailants to stab and club him to death. The other victim, whose identity was not immediately known, died instantly by a gunshot.

Senior Special Assistant to Governor Willie Obiano, Stanley Nkwoka, told The Guardian that Anaekwe was his colleague in the Anambra State Tippers Association (ASTA) led by Augustine Akaigwe, supported by the state government.

According to the witness, ASTA had, in the past few months, attempted to exclude the Great Tipper Drivers Association of Nigeria (GTDAN) from the collection of the joint welfare ticket charged per trip of sand.

It was learnt that GTDAN and Sand Miners Association of Anambra State (SMAAS), both duly registered with the Corporate Affairs of Commission (CAC) a few years ago, had resisted plans by ASTA, backed by the state's Ministry of Transport, to engage some contractors in the collection of the tipper levy.



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The latest fracas came when Anaekwe, according to the witness, harassed and chased away workers at the beach, who later mobilised for a free-for-all, during which the fatality occurred.

The Guardian gathered that the Ebuka Unekwe-led GTDAN, who conveyed sand from members of sand miners to the end-users, initiated the joint welfare ticket of N500 per tipper load.

In a Memorandum of Understanding signed by GTDAN and SMAAS, the parties agreed to provide for the welfare of members at the fee of N500 per six cubics of sand payable by every tipper driver.

The MoU, signed by GTDAN's President. Davidson Unekwe; and Secretary-General, Jerry Ifejika; as well as SMAAS President, Christopher Mbaegbu; and Secretary, Obiora Chukwuma on June 17, 2020, specified that the welfare was payable for every truckload of sand from the beach.



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When contacted, Anaekwe and Ifejika contended that they were not present at the scene of the fracas, stressing that information they got from Ogbaru indicated that Stanley Nkwoka was allegedly using his contact with the state government to sabotage efforts of GTDAN and SMAAS to collect the welfare ticket.

The Commissioner of Police, who spoke through the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Haruna Mohammed, said that clashes occur at the beach from time to time, adding that the police were already investigating the matter and would give details of their investigation in due course.