

TheMetroSection

Angry youth hijack corpse, block road in Anambra over killing of man by alleged vigilance group

From Uzoma Nzeagwu, Awka and
Osiberoha Osibe, Awka

• Gunmen kills ATMA officer in Anambra

THERE is an uneasy calm in Nawfia, a community in Njikoka Local Council of Anambra State over the death of a 40-year-old man, Chukwudi Ejikeme, who died one-month after an alleged attack masterminded by vigilance group. Some members of the community, who returned home for the Christmas were said to have decided to visit the disputed Uruoji communal land where some excavations of sand were taking place.

It was gathered that, Ejikeme, tricycle operator was attacked by some armed youths on January 7, 2022, where he sustained a serious injury on his right eye. No fewer than six other persons were also said to have sustained degrees of cuts on the upper eyelids,

head, neck, arms and back, following the attacks.

Youths in the community linked his death to the attack on him and carried his corpse from Nimo mortuary and blocked the Old Enugu-Onitsha Road by Afor-Nawfia Market, to protest his death.

Bonfires were made with disused tyres and planks, while the rioting youth prevented vehicles from plying the route.

One of the protesting youth, Chibuzo Onwujekwe, an Engineer, accused a lawyer from the community of hijacking leadership of the community and allegedly fueling crisis.

A viral video of the altercations at the sand quarrying site showed a man ordering excavator operators

and tipper driver to leave the sand dump, which he claimed was illegally entered into at the behest of the lawyer.

When contacted, the traditional ruler of the community, Igwe Chijioke Nwankwo said that the crisis erupted over claims of certain number of plots by the lawyer, who he accused of over-stepping his bounds on the land area.

Igwe Nwankwo said that the lawyer encroached into other lands outside the plots of land he got through a court judgment.

He said that the Land Use Act of 1978 entrusted the custody of all communal land on the traditional ruler of every community, contending that, "some people are trying to take over the communal land

in a commando form, as if they own the communal land."

According to him, the ploy by those who want to use outright fraud to take over communal land was the reason his traducers attempted to remove him as the traditional ruler of Nawfia. He said that the forceful entry into communal land is agitating the youths of the area who he said have been cautioned to remain calm and not take laws into their hands.

MEANWHILE, an unidentified man was short dead in the early hours of yesterday at Akwulobia, Aguata council area in Anambra State, by gunmen.

The hoodlums were said to have invaded the town in two vehicles. It was gathered that the victim, putting on Anambra State Road Traffic Management Agency (ATMA) uni-

form, was on duty near the Ekwulobia car park when he was gunned down.

The state Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), DSP Tochukwu Ikenga has confirmed the incident, saying the hoodlums shot sporadically in the area in attempt to disarm a mobile police officer on patrol.

"The Anambra State Police Command today 08/02/2022 embarked on a robust patrol around the state with the aim to apprehend suspected hoodlums sighted along Ekwulobia, Umunze road this morning.

"Preliminary information reveals along Umunze road that the hoodlums in attempt to disarm a mobile police officer on patrol, started shooting sporadically, the police returned the fire immediately, which made the gunmen flee the scene."