



**Breaking News:** Chief of Army Staff Lagbaja is dead

National

# Enugu court orders police to apologise, pay N20m for custodial killing

By **Lawrence Njoku, Enugu**

05 November 2024 | 5:21 am



*CP Kanayo Uzuegbu*

An Enugu State High Court, chaired by Justice C.O. Ajah, has ordered the State Commissioner of Police and Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Chidobe Ekeleme to pay N20 million in damages for violating the right to life of the late Chika Chukwu Onwe.

Justice Ajah ruled that the fine was due to the murder of Onwe in police custody without trial, which he described as an apparent disregard for due process.

Onwe was arrested in 2019 alongside Izuchukwu Ani in Agbani, Nkanu West Local Council, following a suspected cult-related clash. Both men were detained at the Anti-Cult Police Post without bail and, from their arrest, were neither brought to court nor granted family access.

Counsel to Onwe, Mr Chukwunonso Ogbe, informed the court that all efforts by Onwe's mother, Confidence Nkechi, and his uncle, Anayo Ume, to ascertain his whereabouts were repeatedly dismissed by the police. In pursuit of justice, they reported the matter to the State Panel on Police Brutality and Extrajudicial Killings, yet the findings of the panel remain undisclosed.

In his ruling, Justice Ajah said Onwe's continued disappearance after his arrest constitutes a violation of his right to life under Section 33(1) of the Nigerian Constitution. The court directed the police to produce Onwe, whether dead or alive, without further delay.

The court further ordered the police to issue a written apology to Onwe's mother, Confidence Nkechi, and publish it in two national newspapers for violating her son's right to life.

In this article

Chidobe Ekeleme

Chika Chukwu Onwe

## Related