

Widow Of Okada Rider Killed By Soldier Cries Out

By **Our Correspondents** - August 14, 2019



Aba – The pathetic situation of the Nwaogu's family of Ezido na Ife, Amaise Umuokerekengwa in Obingwa Local Government area of Abia State has continued to elicit anger, tears and sorrow following the murder of their breadwinner, Chimaobi Nwaogu.

Nwaogu was gunned down in a most gruesome manner last Wednesday by a trigger- happy, Lance Cpl. Ajayi Johnson who is said to be detained by the 82 Division of the Nigerian Army. The young widow of the deceased, Chiamaka Chimaobi, 19, in tears while relieving her last moment with the husband to Daily Independent said the soldier has cut short her joy and life without him appears meaningless.

She appealed to President Mohammadu Buhari, the Inspector General of Police and the Chief of Army Staff not allow the death of her husband be swept under the carpet.

On the fateful Wednesday morning, her husband had left strong assurances that he will return in a jiffy to take their first son, who was sick to where he would receive medical attention. "My husband was faithful in all ramifications, especially when it involves keeping to family responsibilities.

"Sometimes when we are broke to the point of not having food in the house, he will rush out to catch up with the early morning business to make sure that he provides food for the family, (she suddenly cuts in while gazing at the sky saying) "I am on a cross road and don't know where to go from here".

She continued, later in the day, around noon, the hope of taking their sick son to where he

would receive medical attention was dashed, as the mother of two (the first son two years, and the second seven months) joined other sympathisers to where her husband was lying in a pool of his own blood few metres away from their house.

Indeed, the heavens were let loose as pandemonium reigned supreme. Angry youths in their hundreds, including the deceased wife and mother with their sons, even the first child who was at the point of death took to the streets to seek justice.

The protest, was to avenge the killing of a hard working young man, who took to commercial motorcycle riding to fend for his family.

Artisans, community women, among other groups took to the street in unison to protest this extra-judicial killing which the Abia state governor, Okezie Ikpeazu described as "a murder too many".

Despite assurances from Governor Ikpeazu to take care of the deceased family, which even extended to the fatherless children's education, the young widow is also appealing to other well-meaning Nigerians to come to her rescue by providing financial support. She is also demanding nothing short of justice.

If Chiamaka is in a painful mood, it is a far cry from what her mother-in-law, Mrs Patience Nwaogu Jeremiah, is passing through.

"Dede, they have snatched my breadwinner, my only Chimaobi from me", Mrs Jeremiah sobbed intermittently.

Her greatest comfort is that "whatever a man sows, so shall he reap"; and he who kills by the sword shall be slain by the sword".

Mrs Jeremiah enthused that she would be angry even in her grave, if justice does not prevail on the head of her sixth child, Chimaobi.

The deceased immediate elder brother, Mr Eziha Nwaogu narrated how his younger was gunned down few metres away from their house because of N100 bribe. He described the experience as not only painful but gruesome.

He appealed to government and other well-meaning Nigerians to come to the rescue of the family by providing succor to the wife, two children and aged mother.

For the youths of the community on the aegis of Amaise Umuokerengwa Youth Forum, the culprit must be brought to book and the appropriate punishments meted-out on him.

The president of the group, Comrade Chika Isigwe said that they cannot stand the spilling of the blood of an innocent son of the community. They youths say they need action and not words, and have given the appropriate authorities two weeks to do the needful.

Sometimes governments renege on their promises, they make promises sometimes and don't redeem them. We don't want that to happen in this situation.

According to Isigwe the usefulness of the army in internal security has expired as they now take to womanising, meddling in domestic affairs, and mounting roadblocks on major track

roads, especially in rural communities collecting tolls, ranging from N100 to N500.

Onyekachi Uzoukwa, a cousin to the deceased, described the deceased as a hardworking, peace loving and amiable person, whose gruesome murder has left a vacuum in the family. Daily Independent reports that Chimaobi Nwaogu(aka Ezeboy), an okada rider was allegedly shot to death by a soldier mounting checkpoint at Ohanze, along Aba- Ikot Ekpene Road. It was gathered that Nworgu, who hails from Amaise Umuokerengwa in Obingwa local government area of the state was accosted by soldiers at the checkpoint, where the soldiers allegedly demanded a bribe of N100 but he refused to part with the N100.

The soldier chased the deceased and shot him few metres from his home in Amaise Umuokerengwa.

Abia state government had earlier announced the arrest of the suspect, Corporal Ajayi and two of his colleagues.

The murder of Nwaogu has also generated mixed reactions, Hon. Solomon Adaelu, member representing Obingwa, Osisioma and Ugwunagbo in the House of Representatives who visited the bereaved family ,described the deceased as another victim of extortion, intimidation and continuous killing of Nigerian citizens by the Nigeria security agencies, adding "It is disheartening that in this period of our national development a lot of people have died on our highways for their refusal to offer bribe as low as N50/N100 to the police or any other security agency. This eloquently testifies how cheap the citizen's life has become in Nigeria".

According to Gov Okezie Ikpeazu,"This is one murder too many. We will do everything possible under the law to get this murderous soldier and bring him to justice. Whatever it takes, we will do. We will go to Abuja or any other place to ensure that this soldier doesn't go scot free. The death of this young man is extremely painful and cannot go in vain. This is my position and this is the position of the Government and people of Abia State".

The murder has also renewed the debate on the suitability of the military to contain internal insecure. A human rights activist, Okechukwu Nwanguma contends that:"The right approach to address rising insecurity is not to continue to deploy the military. Military training does not equip or make them suitable to deal with internal insecurity. Police training does. The military are to be deployed only in exceptional circumstances and are not to permanently take over the functions of the police. This comes with dire consequences".

"The standard argument seems to be that the military are brought in to intervene in internal security challenges due to the ineffectiveness of the police. But what is it that makes the Police seem to be ineffective and the military effective, arguably? Is it their training? No! Is it better equipment? That, to me, seems to be the 'magic'.

"The army is composed of human beings (not magicians or super humans) just like the Police. Equip the police (as much as the army), motivate, train and retrain them, and you will see that they will be prepared and fit to more effectively and even more professionally discharge