

CRIME & OTHER STORIES

Group petitions Obiano over kinsman's death



The people of Isiama Igbo, a village in Agulu, a suburb of the Aniocha Local Government Area of Anambra State will never forget June 21. It was a day that one of their promising sons, Onyebuchi Okeke, an aluminium engineer, was allegedly murdered by the police. The incident, it was learnt, has brought untold grief to the family and the community at large.

The deceased was said to have left his 28J, Awka Road, Onitsha residence on that fateful day for work without any premonition of what was ahead. After the close of business activities on that very day, the deceased, a member of social group popularly known as One Love First Club, reportedly went to one of his club members' house to collect some money contributed by the members of the club to support his business.

His dream of using the money

■ Innocent DURU ■

to expand his business did not however see the light of day. He allegedly had an ugly encounter with a team of policemen on his way home and died in the process.

In a statement, the spokesman of the club, Chinedu Elijah alleged that the deceased was with a sum of N355,000.00 that he collected from his colleague when the incident happened.

He said the incident occurred around 6:30pm when the deceased got to Happy Bites Food Junction, a popular spot at Awka Road, Onitsha.

"A team of police men from Inland Town Police Division accosted him, demanding the licenses and particulars of a motorcycle that he was riding. When they noticed that he was with some money, they started forcing him to go to the station with them but he refused. Consequently, they started beating him until he fainted. They collected his money, wallet and motorcycle and quickly moved back to their station," he alleged.

He expatiated that the deceased did not die immediately after the incident. He said: "He was able to regain consciousness after a while. Luckily for him, a kind hearted Nigerian assisted him to go home. He later called the club member that he went to his house to collect money on the phone and narrated the incident to him.

"The club member could not visit him immediately but advised that he should visit the nearest hospital for medical attention, promising to visit him the following day. Unfortunately, when the club member got to his house the following morning, he found him dead."

He further alleged that the club members had visited the police station to know their position on the issue, saying: "One of our members visited the police station to check if the deceased motorcycle was really there. When they got there, the Divisional Police

Officer (DPO) was not around but they saw the motorcycle and some police men on duty.

"When he told them that we are looking for one of our members whose motorcycle was impounded at their station, a police officer came out and said 'na that boy who claimed that he was stubborn. Na we beat hell out from his head. He was proving stubborn and we had to beat him until he fell down and we carried his motorcycle'.

"He asked the police officer what he needed to do to secure the release of the motorcycle. Then, the police demanded the sum of N10,000.00 before they could release the motorcycle."

After some time, he said the club member met the DPO and narrated the incident, to him. "When the DPO heard about it, he inquired from the team of policemen on duty and they confirmed it. He later sent one of his men to visit the scene of the crime and the deceased's family. He instructed his men to take the remains of the deceased to the Onitsha General Hospital's mortuary. The police signed the deposition document at the mortuary.

"Since then the DPO had been pleading with the club members and the relatives of the deceased. He said that they are going to pay compensation to us but they have been avoiding us since then.

"We want to call the attention of our former governor, Anambra State,

His Excellency Peter Obi (Okwute Ndi Igbo), his successor, Chief Willie Obiano (Akpokue Dike 1 of Agureli), Dr. Senator Chris Ngige OON (Onwaa), the Anambra State Judiciary and other well meaning Agulu people, and Nigerians at large, who love life, to look into the unjustifiable murder of our son."

Attempt by our reporter to speak with the Public Relations Officer (PRO) of Anambra State Command, Mr. Chukwuemeka Emeka, was fruitless as calls and text messages to his mobile line were neither answered nor replied.



N18.6m scam: Another