


Row over poly graduate shot dead by police in manhunt for IPOB members

•Parents demand release of corpse

By Chris Njoku Last updated Oct 17, 2021



The police in Imo State have a puzzle to unravel over the death of a native of Umudire in Umunakanu Owerre Autonomous Community, Ehime Mbano Local Government Area, Imo State, allegedly shot dead by the Anti-kidnapping Unit of state's police command. 

Chigozie Nwaiwu, a graduate of Abia State Polytec his head in public glare near his home penultimate F his friend, Christian Uchenna Chukwu, in Umuezea Uchenna was arrested by the police. Unfortunately,

In a petition titled "Murder of Mr. Nwaiwu Chigozi Uchenna by Anti-kidnapping Unit, Imo State Police Police(AIG) Zone 9 Umuahia, Abia State by the so parents of the late Chigozie and detained Uchenna, and signed by the principal partner to the firm, Sir Ebuka Igwe, the solicitors gave an account of how Uchenna was arrested and how Chigozie was killed.

- Advertisement -

According to the petition, on October 6, 2021, three detectives from Anti-kidnapping Unit of the Imo State Police Command, driving a red Venza (Toyota) visited the shop of one Christian Uchenna Chukwu in search of one Mr. Chidera who shares the same shop. But the detectives only met Chidera's wife and dropped their contact details with her, telling her to inform the husband to reach out to them.

On their way out, according to the petition, the detectives saw Uchenna, who lives in the same premises where Chidera's shop was located, and arrested him. The late Chigozie, who saw what had happened, approached the policemen to ask why his brother was arrested, but one of the policemen got angry and pulled the trigger, killing him instantly.

- Advertisement -

Some residents of the area, who spoke with our correspondent, corroborated the foregoing account. A community leader and Chairman of the National Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE) in Imo State, Comrade Ebem Njoku, said the detectives were about to drive off when Chigozie asked them why they were taking Uchenna away.

Njoku said: "The three occupants of the car, who wore plain clothes, shot Chigozie dead. The car zoomed off and people gathered to see what had happened. Then suddenly, the same car came back and the onlookers ran helter-skelter.

- Advertisement -

Uchenna father and mother

"The car's occupants then picked up Chigozie's lifeless body, put it in the car and zoomed off." He said the deceased Chigozie was Uchenna's closest. He said that when he approached the operatives, one of them was probably overtaken by an evil spirit. Hence he shot and killed Chigozie.

"Only one bullet was fired. There was no exchange of gunshots as claimed by the police." he said.



According to Njoku, the families of Chigozie and Uchenna were arrested on October 8 when the Imo State Police Command issued a warrant for the arrest of a member of the outlawed secessionist group, the Indigenous People's Party (IPP).


However, the spokesman of the Imo State Police Command (CSP), insisted that Chigozie was an IPOB member.

He said: "The police came to arrest Uchenna, who is a member of the IPP, along with other members of the group to rescue him. The late Chigozie was brought down."

Abattam said when the police brought down the deceased, “we ran a check on his profile and discovered in one of his Facebook pages details his membership of IPOB,” he told our correspondent who visited him in his office at the command’s headquarters in Owerri.

He had earlier alleged that Uchenna played a major role in the killing of police officers and burning of police stations in Imo State and had long been declared wanted by the police. He said he (Uchenna) was arrested following credible information that made the police to storm his shop at Ehime Mbano area to arrest him.

“While this was on, the already alerted members who came in their numbers to rescue him engaged the police in a gun duel, and in the process, one of them was neutralised while others escaped with bullet wounds,” he stated.

He added that one locally-made double barrel pistol with two expended cartridges, two live cartridges and charms were recovered at the scene. Abattam also said the suspect was undergoing interrogation and had made useful statement to the police. 

Read Also: No sit-at-home on Monday,

But the families of both Chigozie and Uchenna are insisting that their sons have nothing to do with IPOB

Uchenna’s father, Nze Eugene Chukwu, a retiree, said he has friends from the same autonomous community. Speaking to the press, he said he is at home that their son would never hurt a fly.

He said: “Uchenna is my son and the deceased boy, Chigozie, was my brother’s son. My son is a welder whose shop is very close to the place where the policemen came for the arrest of one Chidera, an Almaco dealer.




father and mother of Chigozie

“On Wednesday October 6, at about 4pm, my son, Uchenna, was in his shade working when three policemen in plain clothes arrived, saying they were looking for one Chidera who is an Alumaco dealer. They met my son and he referred them to Chidera’s wife who told them that her husband was not in the shop.

“They asked her to call him on the phone, but the wife said her phone was not with her as she was charging it at a place called Aba branch. So, the policemen dropped their contact details, including a phone number, asking her to tell her husband to call their team leader, one Prince Chikadibia, whenever he came back.

“Unfortunately, as they were going back to their red Venza car which had no number plate, they held my son by the waist of his trouser and ordered him to enter the car.

- Advertisement -

“While they were dragging the boy into the car, the late Chigozie was returning from where he went. He asked them where they were taking Uchenna to, but one of them was angry at his approach and ordered him to leave.  As he was about to leave, he shot the boy from the t

“The policemen realising that they had killed an innocent man to die. The villagers gathered around the corpse and pool of his blood when the policemen returned after driving the villagers away, and they took the corpse away with :

“I called the (Uchenna’s) number, but the person that answered when we got there and called the number, it was said that some policemen came to whisk my son away.

“Shockingly, the following day, the police announced that they had killed an IPOB member and that my son was the leader of the group. I have told them to come to the community to ask people if my son is a member of IPOB. Even the deceased boy was not; he had just finished his youth service in Akwa Ibom State.



“Our son is one of the finest boys in the community and a bread winner of the family. We are Catholics. He woke up the fateful day to his workshop and the news we heard later was that the police had arrested him.

“If he were a bad person, we the parents should be able to know about his activities, because we live with him.”

Uchenna’s mother, Lolo Pepetual Chukwu, speaking amid tears, appealed to the government and the police authorities in particular to release her son, saying he is the bread winner of the family.

She said: “I am appealing to the government to intervene and release my son to me. My son is the bread winner of the family. People love him because of his honesty. He knows the welding job.”

“We are poor and have nothing. They should release him because I am going to die if anything happens to him. The deceased is so that we can bury him.”

The parents of the late Chigozie, Chief Ugochukwu Chukwu’s statement. Nwaiwu said his deceased son

He said: “We were outside when we heard a loud noise. I was bold to tell me that the police had shot and killed my son.”

“I asked why they killed him in broad daylight but nobody was able to find an answer. My heart bleeds.

Tears rolling down her cheeks, Lolo Nwaiwu said: “I am still shocked that my son that was with me in the morning is dead. They killed him because he asked where they were taking Uchenna to. Is that a crime? I want them to give me the dead body of my son.”

She called on the government and good-spirited Nigerians not to allow such cold murder to go without those who killed her son being prosecuted.

“I want the government to institute a panel of inquiry into the gruesome killing,” she said.

An elder brother of the deceased Chigozie, Emmanuel Nwaiwu, a Sergeant in the Nigerian Army, 2 Battalion, Kaduna, said he was shocked when his younger sister told him that his younger brother was shot dead.

“They sent me the video and I saw how blood was gushing out of his mouth, ears and nose,” he said, vowing never to allow the killers of his brother go free. “I swear to My God, I will never allow this to be swept under the carpet. I will never allow them to go free,” he said.

Another elder brother, Ifeanyi Nwaiwu, a teacher, said he was there when the incident occurred.

He said: “My brother was standing by the policemen car. One of them warned him not to come near the car. As my brother was about to go, one of the policemen drew out a gun and shot him at the back of his neck.

“After they killed my brother and drove off, they returned to collect the piece of paper where they wrote the number of their team leader, Prince Chikadibia. But before they could get there, Chidera’s wife had run away, so they left with corpse of my junior brother, Chigozie.

“When we got to the Anti-kidnapping Unit, we tried the number but they kept the line busy, and after some minutes, the line went off. The next day, they branded my late brother as IPOB member.”



“I am now convinced with what happened to my jur tagged IPOB members were not IPOB members; the blood.”

Contacted by our correspondent, the Public Relations Superintendent of Police, said “it is not all petitions assigned to PCP are the ones I know. If it is a celebrity department investigating it and the extent they have

“I will find out the section handling it from the AIG and get back to you.”

He had not got back to our correspondent at press time.

