

# Woman seeks justice after husband dies in police custody

By Precious Igbonwelundu On May 11, 2022



A widow, Ebere Nwankwo, has appealed to President Muhammadu Buhari and the Inspector-General of Police Alkali Usman to probe the alleged murder of her husband, Chukwudubem Nwankwo, in police custody in Anambra State.

She also asked that the state police command release her husband's body for burial after a thorough investigation into his death.

Chukwudubem, a member of Tricycle Owners Association of Nigeria (TOAN), was arrested on March 15, at UNIZIK Junction Park where he worked as a revenue collector and detained at the State Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department (SCIID), Awka.

Mrs. Nwankwo said: "March 15, Dubem left home as usual after taking care of some family needs. I bade him goodbye and my daughter waved at him.

"I continued with my daily chores as usual until I received a phone call from one of his friends who told me that the police stormed the motor park and arrested my husband in the company of others.

"I know my husband didn't engage in anything shady so I was confident he would be immediately released as there must have been a mix-up.

"On the third day of his arrest, he was paraded among other suspects. While he was being paraded, my husband was raising his hands asking why he was arrested and being paraded like a criminal but the policemen were shouting him down.

"They took him back to the cell. When we collected a copy of the press statement shared by the Commissioner of Police, his name was not in the press statement. We the police never allowed us to see him, even when we involved a legal practitioner."

Mrs Nwankwo said no documentation of Chukwudubem's offence nor name save his picture.

“After two months of parading Dubem, I was told that my husband died in the cell. I am left to manage our 22-month-old child all by myself.

“Why did the police kill my husband in cold blood? I suspect that someone paid the police to kill him. Let us assume that he committed any crime, was it right to kill him in the cell without being taken to court and condemned by the court?

“My 48-year-old husband was killed extra-judicially. He must not die in vain.

Checks by The Nation revealed that the command’s spokesman, DSP Tochukwu Ikenga, said the police received information on March 15 about attacks by a cult group on UNIZIK vigilante group at Miracle Junction, Ifite, Awka.

“The police succeeded in demobilising the gang and recovering a cache of weapons, which included the two AK-47 rifles earlier stolen from two policemen murdered on December 14, 2021.”

Ikenga told The Nation that Chukwudubem was arrested for alleged cultism and paraded by the police.

“The suspect was paraded by the Commissioner of Police, CP Echeng Echeng on the 16th March 2022 at State Criminal Department Office, Awka and the case is still before the Commissioner, please,” he said.