

③ Soldiers 'kill' vigilante operative, housewife

• They were armed hoodlums, says army

PANIC has gripped the people of Eke Village in Udi Local Government Area of Enugu State, following the killing of a volunteer member of the community's neighbourhood vigilante and a housewife from by soldiers from the 82 Division, Nigerian Army Enugu.

Three injured vigilante members shot several times by the said soldiers were battling for their lives at the hospital.

It was gathered that the vigilante operatives identified as Ebuka Oke (deceased), Emeka Anigbo, Chinedu Okolo and Obinna Ofor were on their way to combat armed robbers, who blocked the major road leading to the popular Catholic Church Prayer Center (Ugwudinso) and Eke, from Ama Breweries on Thursday evening, when the soldiers asked them to stop and started shooting them.

Our correspondent learnt that while Ebuka Oke was shot dead at close range, Okolo, had his genitals and legs shattered by the soldiers' bullets with Ofor shot on various parts of his body and had been in the intensive care unit.

The development, it was gathered, threw the community and its neighbourhood into panic.

From Damian Durulheoma, Enugu

One of the operatives, Anigbo, narrated how the incident happened to newsmen from his hospital bed in a private facility.

He said it took the intervention of some policemen to save the rest of them as the soldiers had shot him several times and even stepping on him while he was on the verge of death.

Anigbo, who is the Assistant Chief Security Officer of Eke Security Neighbourhood Vigilante Watch, said: "We were at 9th Mile Corner on Thursday night where we had gone to felicitate with our colleagues who were being inaugurated as neighborhood watch members. It was there that we got a distress call that armed robbers blocked the major road leading to the popular Catholic Church Prayer Center (Ugwudinso) and Eke, from Ama breweries.

"On receiving the call, we abandoned the food and drinks we were about consuming and swiftly drove out with a view to confronting the criminal elements. But due to heavy traffic occasioned by the blockage of the road, we could not get to the scene with our vehicle."

He further narrated that they decided to park their vehicle along the road and started



• The surviving vigilante operative

moving towards the place.

While approaching the scene, he continued, they figured three armed soldiers who ordered them in a loud voice to stop.

Anigbo said they obeyed the soldiers and stopped, and started telling them that they were neighbourhood vigilante watch guards.