

at the University of Port Harcourt, Professor Anthonia Okerengwo. She is the first child of the last wife of her grandfather.

"Immediately after the first burial rites for my father which took place in October, when we went home, my father's sister, that is, Professor Anthonia, told the king to ask my mother to leave all my father's properties and leave his compound. The king told her it wasn't possible. This stand was also taken by the sons of the family. The refusal was based on the fact that since she had never been married, and had two brothers, she couldn't ask for her father's property. In Igboland, only the men have the right to ask for property. Besides, that could only be done after one year had passed. She, however, insisted that she would have her way," she said.

#### **'Thugs beat up members of my family, threatened to set them ablaze'**

Following the dust that was beginning to unsettle as a result of the demand that the property be shared, the king distributed notices that no member of the family should attend any meeting to such effect.

"That night the letters of notice were distributed, she came with thugs, who drove in the bus of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU). The thugs came, beat up my mother and destroyed my father's house. When I was called, before I could come to my mother's rescue, and called in the police, they almost destroyed my car.

"When we got to the police station, I was asked to take my mother to the hospital immediately. Unfortunately, my younger sister's son, whom she had after eleven years of waiting, fell from my mother's arms, during the fight at the house, hit his head on the tiles, and eventually died.

The police arrested four of the thugs. That day was December 30, 2014. The thugs kept coming until January 1.

The third day, they came and were so many. During one of their attacks, they attempted to set the house on fire, even with members of my family inside. The traditional ruler was also aware of the situation. The saving grace was God and the police. That night, they nearly burned down the police station.

"All of a sudden, my aunty came and said her younger sister, who came from Abuja, was beaten at the scene of the incident. She also said that her younger sister was dead. I visited the house during the Christmas celebrations, but I didn't see that her younger sister. Even while

**Dr (Mrs) Chizomam Ibe**

we were battling with the case, all those who wrote statements at the Divisional Police Office didn't mention that younger sister's name. I was not required to write a statement because I was not at the house when the incident occurred."

#### **'The DPO had to reach out to the traditional ruler to assure our safety'**

"After some time, she brought her mother down to Ibadan to recuperate. The police asked that she inform them when her mother had recovered fully. However, without prior notice, Dr Ibe said policemen from Abuja came to Ibadan and requested to see her mother. At this time, her mother had been taken to Benin to stay with some other family members. She was, however, told by the policemen from Abuja that if she couldn't produce her mother and sisters, they wouldn't let her go. Despite what the doctor said to the contrary, her mother was moved from Benin to Ibadan. Her other sister, who lost her child during the fracas, also came from Port Harcourt and another sister, based in Ibadan, also came around. Her mother collapsed when she got to Ibadan and was said to have been rushed to UCH.

#### **Detained at state CID**

All the while her mother was being moved to Ibadan, Dr Ibe had been detained at the state CID for three days before her mother came. She was released on bail so she could take care of her mother with the promise that when her mother felt stronger, they should report to Abuja.

According to her, her two sisters, who were arrested in December 2015, were still in prison.

#### **'Police asked us to pay N300,000; we paid N150,000, yet nothing was done'**

The lawyer went to Abuja with a petition stating that the case had been on for a while and that they had not been allowed to state their case. The policeman in charge, when he heard the case, asked a unit to take up the case. A team was set up to investigate the case and according to Dr Ibe, they were asked to pay N300,000 for mobilisation. She was to pay in N150,000 while her in-law was to pay N150,000 as well. She claimed they paid N150,000 into an