

# Ebonyi widow laments son's killing by police, demands corpse

Edward Nnachi 29 September 2021

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A widow at Ndiechi village, Igbeagu community, in the Izzi Local Government Area of Ebonyi State, Mrs Maria Urehu, has asked the police to release the corpse of her son, Edwin Urehu, for burial or free him if he is still alive.

*PUNCH Metro* gathered that Edwin was shot on June 9, 2021 when security operatives invaded their compound.

His sister, Chiamaka, was also shot in the laps and her hand was broken by the operatives, who were suspected to be policemen from the state command.

The victims' mother accused a policeman attached to the command, Sani Bala, of leading the attack.

The 65-year-old farmer described Edwin as the breadwinner of the family and called on the police to release him dead or alive.

She said, "My son was the one taking care of me and his only sister. He started taking care of us at a young age my husband died. He was the one feeding us; he never engaged in any criminal act.

"On that morning, we heard heavy gunshots in our compound before they broke into our house and shot my son, who was sleeping. His friend, who visited him and was also sleeping in the same room with him, was not shot or touched by the policemen. After shooting my son, they went to my daughter's room and shot her in the laps. When I came out to ask what the problem was, they forced me to lie on the floor where my son was shot.

“Let them release my son’s corpse to me if he was killed or release him alive if he is still alive because since that June that they shot him, I have not set my eyes on him. I want my son’s corpse to be released so that he will be buried in his father’s compound. They didn’t tell me what my son did that made them shoot him.”

Chiamaka, 18, said the incident happened around 5am.

She said, “My mum and I were praying that time and I stood up to see what was happening. One of them peeped through the window and shot me in the laps. I told my mum that the policemen had shot me in the laps.

“The policemen ordered my brother’s friend to carry him after they shot him; they took him into their vehicle. They took us to the police headquarters, Abakaliki.

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“From there, they carried me into another vehicle. I asked them where my brother was and one of them told me to keep quiet or he would shoot me. They took me to a hospital, while my brother was lying inside the vehicle that carried us to the police headquarters.”

The Coordinator of the National Human Rights Commission in the state, Mr Chris Okorie, vowed to petition the state Commissioner of Police over the matter.

The accused police officer, Bala, said he only assisted Chiamaka to the hospital for treatment.

He said, "I was not part of the team that went for the operation. I am just the Investigating Police Officer. I helped the little girl to receive medical treatment because I took her to the hospital."

The state Commissioner of Police, Aliyu Garba, in a telephone interview with our correspondent, denied the incident.

He said, "Such a thing did not happen. The woman in question should stop crying around and come to prove her allegations. The days when people will stay in the comfort of their rooms and fabricate lies are gone. Our job is to protect lives and property. How then can we be the ones to take such lives? This is a mere allegation and it is unfounded. We are not aware of this."

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