

How many children do you have together?

occasions, he put the child outside in the rain even at night and warned that if I ever took the child into the house, he

Do you think his action was influenced by alcohol?

children.

I want dad's killers prosecuted — Son of murdered ex-Imo policeman

Hamilton, a journalist and the son of a retired policeman, the late Francis Onuchukwu, who was reportedly killed on July 29, 2022, by gunmen in the Orlu Local Government Area of Imo State, shares his grief with CHIDIEBUBE OKEOMA

What is your relationship with the deceased?

The deceased, the man lying cold in the mortuary as I speak to you, is my biological father. His name is Nze Francis Onuchukwu. He was a retired police officer.

Where and when was he killed?

I am from Ezike-Oma Ubaha in Udogadi Okporo autonomous community, Orlu Local Government Area of Imo state. My beloved father was killed on July 29, 2022, in his home, Ezike-oma, Ubaha, Okporo, right inside his compound.

What do you think might have led to his murder?

Let me tell you. The incident happened some days but as a Journalist, as someone who was close to his father, I know everything happening in my compound. Sometime last year, my father reported a case to the Orlu police division, a case of threat to life, assault, and trespass on our family land. When the matter was reported, the suspects tried to act funny. I personally transferred the case to the state criminal

investigation and intelligence department for justice. The suspect from my village beat up my father and left him with wounds. The police saw it as just a malicious act of greed. They referred the matter for further investigation to the community chiefs because it is a land issue. The community chiefs started investigating the matter as directed by the police. This happened last year.

How did the chiefs carry out the investigation?

When my community chiefs started investigating the matter, they called my father for an explanation, but the other party refused to respond to their call. While these were happening, the issue of insecurity became worse in Okporo, so the matter was put on hold. The community leaders in my village who were supposed to look into the matter all left due to insecurity. These people (suspects) kept threatening my father. My father was a police diarist. He did not believe in anything abnormal and anti-social. I am strongly telling you that my father was a man of peace.

Who do you suspect is responsible for your father's murder?

Before my father died, he always called me and informed me about how these people (suspects) kept accosting him wherever he went. We are suspecting people. It is not only related to a land dispute. The issue of insecurity in Orlu where I hail from is another suspicion. As a family, we suspect the people who issued threats to my father.

There were no family issues at all. The entire Onuchukwu family is at peace. My father was the second child and second son of his. His elder brother is still alive. There was no issue at all and we do not suspect that a family dispute led to his death.

Has anyone been arrested in connection to his murder?

They are on the run now. They have not been arrested. They have deserted the community. We suspect quite a

number of people, especially those who threatened him when he was alive. My father was gruesomely murdered and we are not happy about it. Killing an 82-year-old man in such a manner is unacceptable.

As soon as he was killed, we reported the matter to the police. In fact, there is no way we would not have reported the incident because it was a murder case. I am a journalist by profession. I understand how the police work. No mortuary will admit a corpse with bullet wounds without the police being aware.

How was your father shot?

My father was shot in three places: in the left side of his chest, stomach, and hand before he gave up. Even as I speak with you now, the bullets are still lodged in his body in the mortuary.

What does your family want out of this case?

My family members have decided that justice must prevail. The killers of my father must be unveiled. They must face the law. We are not going to back down on that. That is why we are calling on security agencies and the governor of the state, to act and live up to expectations. Secondly, I understand that my life as a journalist is at stake because they (suspects) know, right from time, that I never fail to do my work as a journalist. I transferred the matter to the police headquarters with the help of the commissioner of police. They (suspects) are issuing threats that my years in my profession as a journalist will be cut short because I believe in justice and the rule of law.

What kind of a man was your father?



My father was a custodian and a traditionalist, apart from his career as a public servant. He was well respected in the community. My father was a chief security officer in my community. You can see that such a man did not have a criminal record. He had the traditional title holder of Nze. He was also a Christian.

I will miss my father. He never allowed any form of attack or embarrassment to come our way. He was a dogged fighter. Secondly, he was a historian. My father used to tell us how he fought the Biafran war before he joined the Nigerian Police Force. My father was a God-fearing man. He was 82 years and that must have justified his relationship with God, man and his ancestors. My father was educated. He was a good communicator too. He used idioms and proverbs well. My father coordinated his family well. My family wants justice. We want his killers found and prosecuted.