

# Hoodlums kill police constable, levy Enugu communities

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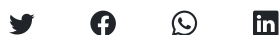


Map of Enugu State



By Raphael Ede

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Gunmen have killed a police constable, Christopher Ukwuaba, at his residence in Onitsha, in the Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area of Enugu State.

This is coming as the hoodlums were reported to have been going from community to community, collecting levies from wealthy individuals and traders in the area.

Community sources, who spoke to our correspondent, said Ukwuaba was killed in his bedroom on Friday, when two hooded gunmen forced his door open and shot him at close range.

A family member said the hoodlums killed him after dispossessing him of his money and mobile handset.

The relation, who did not want his name in print for security reasons, said, “My uncle was inside the house with one of the children when two gunmen stormed his house. They were making noise; his wife did not know they were looking for him.

“He didn’t know what was going on and asked his son what was the problem. Immediately the hoodlums traced his voice to his room, they pulled down his door and asked him to bring out his phone. After that, they asked him to bring money and while he was bringing out the money, one of them shot him and they disappeared.”

Meanwhile, communities in Igbo-Eze North and South local government areas of Enugu State have been under the siege of hoodlums.

*PUNCH Metro* learnt that the gunmen usually called wealthy residents for payments, while they went round the local markets to collect monthly levies from traders.

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The affected communities included Aguibeje, Iyi Onu, Umuida and Umuopu in Igbo-Eze North, and Unadu, Alor Agu and Itchi communities in Igbo-Eze South.

“The criminals now kill at will, set property ablaze and escape into a forest bordering Enugu and Kogi states,” a source in one of the affected communities said.

He said four corpses were discovered on the streets in Igbo-Eze North last week.

Another source disclosed that the gunmen usually stormed local markets to forcefully collect levies from traders.

“Whenever they attack traders, they beat up anybody in sight and rob traders of their stock, especially food items. Our lives are now in danger. We want the government to beef up security in our communities. They come around the market monthly to collect levies from traders, including foodstuffs,” the source said.

The state Police Public Relations Officer DSP, Daniel Ndukwe, confirmed the killing of the constable, adding that investigation was ongoing.

“We are in receipt of a report on the murder of the said person by yet-to-be-identified armed men. Investigation and manhunt of the culprits have been initiated, please,” he said.