

Anambra CP orders police squad's detention for allegedly killing man

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| By Ikenna Obianeri

The Anambra State Commissioner of Police, Nnaghe Itam, has ordered the detention of members of a patrol team that allegedly killed a 24-year-old man along the Onitsha-Owerri Road in the state.

It was gathered that the victim, simply identified as Ebuka, was killed after he was shot by a group of policemen while moving along the Onitsha-Owerri Road on Wednesday.

Eyewitnesses around the scene said the deceased was immediately rushed to a nearby hospital for treatment where he was later confirmed dead due to the gunshot wounds he sustained.

The sources said, "The police officers who shot the boy immediately ran into their vehicle and quickly left the scene. The deceased's body has been deposited at the hospital's mortuary."

Also reacting to the development, an X.com user, Harrison Gwamnishu, who claimed to be privy to the incident, said the deceased was shot by the police on Wednesday while moving on the highway.

Gwamnishu added that the police officers who committed the murder immediately went into hiding to evade justice. He shared pictures and videos of the incident on his X page.

He wrote, “(A) 24-year-old Ebuka was allegedly shot and killed today by some police officers along Onitsha/Owerri road.

“The officers involved are currently in a hideout. Ebuka was rushed to the hospital and confirmed dead. His body has been deposited at the mortuary.”

He called on the office of the Inspector General of Police and the police authorities to respond to the development and ensure the officers were brought to justice.

Reacting, the spokesman for the Nigeria Police Force, Muyiwa Adejobi, described the incident as sad, promising that the force would intensify efforts to ensure the culprits were punished.

Adejobi said, “This is sad. The Force Headquarters has ordered the CPs in Anambra and Imo to fish out the men and carry out a thorough investigation into the matter.

“The FHQ will not in any way condone this kind of act. This will be looked into, and we will compel the command whose AOR this occurred to update us all. May his soul rest in peace, while justice must be done.”

Also reacting to the incident in a press statement late on Wednesday, the Anambra State Police Command’s spokesman, SP Tochukwu Ikenga, said the police officers in the patrol team had been detained.

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Ikenga added that the CP ordered their detention and a preliminary investigation fingered a corporal among the patrol team, as the one who committed the act.

He said the CP's directive followed an ongoing investigation into the murder of the victim.

He said, "CP Itam orders the detention of police patrol team members over the murder of an unsuspecting member of the public along the Onitsha-Owerri Road, Onitsha.

"A preliminary investigation indicates among the patrol team, a police corporal is the suspect in the act.

"The CP directs an immediate transfer of the case to the State Criminal Investigation Department, Awka, sues for calm and assures that the command will ensure a thorough investigation into the case for justice to prevail.

"Further development shall be communicated."

Recall that on October 13, 2023, a 29-year-old, Chibueze Nwakor, father of three children, who hailed from Owerre-Ezukala, in Orumba South Local Government Area of Anambra State, was reportedly shot dead near Sokoto Road, Main Market in Onitsha, allegedly by policemen attached to the Onitsha Area Command.

The deceased, who was said to be on his way to the market to purchase a food item, was shot by the security officers for his inability to help them locate the direction in which they were heading on the said date.

After shooting him, the policemen were said to have jumped into their ash-coloured commuter Hiace shuttle bus and zoomed off.

The mother of the victim, Stella Nwakor, petitioned the Inspector General of Police, Kayode Egbetokun, but to date, nothing has been heard about it.

In recent times, residents, motorists and commuters have lamented that the Onitsha-Owerri Road had become notorious for several police checkpoints used to carry out incessant harassment and extortion. They alleged that the level of extortions by the security operatives at the roadblocks had become unbearable for the road users.

In June, one Kingsley Ebuka narrated to journalists how he was detained and almost lost his life when he initially refused to be extorted by the security operatives.