

# Trader slumps, dies after brawl in Abuja market

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| By Nathaniel Shaibu

FCT CP, Olatunji Disu

A trader identified as Ifeanyi on Wednesday died, after slumping during an altercation with a fellow trader, one Eze Onuh, at the Utako Ultra Modern Market located in the Abuja Municipal Area Council of the Federal Capital Territory.

In a Facebook post, an eyewitness, Dr Uche Nwurah, narrated that while no one was certain of what led to the fight, both men who sold underwear, exchanged blows, before Ifeanyi slumped and died, adding that Eze had been taken to the market police station.

The post read, “I called at Utako Market Abuja this morning to sort out my phone screen guard and a fight suddenly broke out between two Igbo brothers (Ifeanyi and Eze) who sell underwear. No one knows exactly what led to the fight. Blows were exchanged and Ifeanyi suddenly slumped and died. Eze himself has been taken to the market police station. Terrible thing anger in this challenging economic time.”

When our correspondent contacted Nwurah on the telephone, he further stated that both men were said to be origins of Ebonyi State and may have been fighting over allotted spaces in the market before the incident occurred.

“I was at the market when it happened. They said they were brothers from Ebonyi State, and it was like they were fighting about space. When it happened, some of the other traders gathered there so I didn’t go close. They took Eze to the Market Police Station. But later, I saw two officers taking him away in a tricycle, maybe to the FCT Police Command. And they took Ifeanyi’s body to a hospital,” he said.

A trader who shares a stall with the late Ifeanyi, but declined to be named in this report, told our correspondent that other traders had made efforts to resuscitate him, and rushed him to the hospital, where it was confirmed that he was dead.

“I was not around. But when I returned, I was told some people fought, someone fell and they poured water to revive him. When they could not revive him, they took him to the hospital, and they said he was dead,” the trader said.

He added that the rift between both men had been on for over five years, noting that the fact that both men were into the sale of men’s underwear didn’t help matters.

“It was Ifeanyi who brought Eze here. Before, Ifeanyi’s goods were slightly different. But when they started selling almost the same brands, they started having contentions. They’ve been having the issues for nearly five years before today,” he added.

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The Chairman, Dynamic GSM Association at the Utako Market, Isa Adamu Goma, said he was informed of Ifeanyi’s death, at about 9 am on Wednesday morning, adding that the altercation started after arguments about the demarcation between both shops.

“This morning, around 9 am, the management of the market called me and said something happened to my deputy, Mr Ifeanyi. They said that somebody had killed him. I asked who killed him, they said it was his neighbour, one Eze Onuh. They said he held Ifeanyi by the neck and was pressing it. People tried to separate them, but he refused.

“I had my bath and rushed to the clinic where he was taken. I met the police and they narrated everything to me before we took him to the mortuary. Then, I went to the police station and met the Divisional Police Officer. They asked him what happened, and he said it was just a little demarcation between both shops that caused the quarrel. There’s only a small board that separates their shop, and they accused each other of encroaching. That was when Eze grabbed him by the neck and then pushed him, and he fell. They poured water but he couldn’t be revived. Eze is in the custody of the police at the Utako Division until tomorrow, because they want his family to come first,” Goma stated.

Confirming the incident, the Public Relations Officer of the FCT Police Command, SP Josephine Adeh, in a statement made available to our correspondent, said operatives who responded to a distress call from the market at about 9:30am, arrived to find Ifeanyi’s lifeless body on the ground, adding that the suspect was currently in police custody.

“The FCT Police Command has arrested one Onu Simeon following a fatal altercation that led to the death of Ifeanyi Chukwu at Utako Market, Abuja.

“On February 5, 2025, at about 09:30 AM, the command received a distress call regarding a fight in Utako Market. Police operatives swiftly responded to the scene, where Ifeanyi Chukwu was found lying unconscious on the ground. He was immediately rushed to the NNPC Hospital, Utako, by police operatives, where a medical doctor confirmed him dead.

“Preliminary investigations revealed that Simeon Onu of Anguwan Biggy, Jabi Daki Biyu, and one Ifeanyi Chukwu of Kuchigoro, Lugbe, had earlier engaged in a dispute over a space to display their goods for sale. The disagreement escalated into a physical confrontation, during which Ifeanyi Chukwu suddenly collapsed and lost consciousness. His remains have been deposited at a general hospital for further investigation, while the suspect, Simeon Onu, is currently in police custody as investigations continue. Further updates will be communicated in due course,” the statement read in part.

Meanwhile, the FCT Commissioner of Police, Olatunji Disu, has urged residents to “adopt peaceful means of resolving disputes”, adding that violence often leads to tragic and unpredictable consequences.