

Enugu pastor arrested over four siblings' death

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Map of Enugu State

| By Raphael Ede

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A pastor in one of the white garment churches has reportedly been arrested in connection with the death of four siblings in Igbo Eze South Local Government Area of Enugu State.

Although the council chairman, Mr Ferdinand Ukwueze, confirmed the arrest to *PUNCH Metro* during a visit to the deceased's family on Saturday, he could not name the suspect, who was said to be a member of the Sabbath Church located in the area.

The children named: Kamsiyochukwu Ezema (seven), Ezinne Ezema (six), Ujunwa Ezema (five), and Chinedu Ezema (two), were allegedly gruesomely murdered with a pestle by the pastor alongside other accomplices who are currently on the run.

According to local sources, who spoke to our correspondent on the condition of anonymity, the motives behind the incident are not yet clear as the police hadn't revealed the outcome of their investigation.

However, speaking during a visit to the family of the deceased's children shortly after visiting the scene of the crime, the LG boss condemned the dastardly act, vowing that justice must be served.

Ukwueze, consequently, ordered that the premises where the incident took place be sealed with immediate effect.

Regretting the unfortunate incident, he said: "Our community was shaken by the tragic and heinous murder of four innocent children in Ibagwa-Aka, Igbo-Eze South Local Government Area.

I am deeply saddened by this act of senseless violence and extend my heartfelt condolences to the family of the victims.

“Today, I visited the crime scene in the company of officers of the Nigeria Police Force, the DSS, the civil defence and other relevant security operatives to assess the situation firsthand and to ensure that immediate steps are taken to bring the perpetrators to justice.

“Following preliminary investigations, law enforcement agencies have apprehended some key suspects in connection with the crime, while still searching for others yet at large.

“Additionally, the premises reasonably believed as alleged to be used for unauthorised herbal medicine operations, rendering of informal psychiatric services and other yet-to-be fully explained spiritual activities, alleged to be linked to the prime suspects and the crime scene have been sealed by the Igbo-Eze South Local Government Authority pending the outcome of the investigation report by the police.”

He emphasised the council’s support for a full and thorough investigation to unravel the circumstances surrounding the incident and ensure that justice was served.

“I wish to assure the people of Igbo-Eze South that we will continue to collaborate closely with security agencies to strengthen surveillance, enhance community safety, and prevent such grievous incidents from recurring.

“We ask for the continued cooperation of law-abiding members of the public, the civil society organisations, as we urge anyone with relevant security information to exercise the liberty of assisting law enforcement authorities with same, as confidentiality is always guaranteed,” he said.

The parents of the deceased, Mr/Mrs Chinonso Ezema, demanded justice, saying, “We want the police to thoroughly investigate this and ensure the culprit is brought to book,” he said.

Meanwhile, Enugu State Police Command has remained silent over the incident as efforts to speak with the command’s spokesperson, SP Daniel Ndukwe, were unsuccessful as he could neither take his calls nor respond to a text message seeking his comment as of the time of writing this report on Sunday evening.

| Raphael Ede