## Anambra security operatives shoot dead 17-year-old boy near market

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Photo: The gun recovered from the Agunechemba operatives.

By Ikenna Obianeri Kindly share this story:











There was pandemonium around Ifejike Street by Sokoto Road, near the popular "Biafra Market" in Onitsha South Local Government Area of Anambra State, when stray bullets from operatives of the Anambra State "Agunechemba" allegedly hit and killed a 17-year-old boy.

It was gathered that the incident occurred on Thursday, when the victim, who was sitting on a culvert nearby, was hit by a stray bullet from the "Agunechemba" operatives.

The Anambra State government launched the "Operatives of the Agunechemba and Udo-ga-Chi" in March to complement the efforts of the police and other sister security agencies in the fight against insecurity in the state.

Some eyewitnesses near the scene said the "Agunechemba" operatives were on a mission to arrest a fleeing suspect when they suddenly started shooting into the air, and the bullets hit the innocent boy.

One eyewitness said, "The young boy was sitting on a culvert beside the Nwangene Drainage, apparently on his way to use a nearby toilet when the bullet fired by the trigger-happy operatives hit him.

"Immediately, the boy fell to the ground and lay in a pool of blood. The security operatives attempted to flee the scene in their vehicle, but they were stopped by angry residents and traders, who immediately trooped out, blocked them, and insisted that they must not abandon the boy's corpse at the scene.

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"The two Agunechemba operatives, however, eventually carried the corpse away after being overwhelmed and pressured by the crowd, which included traders, residents, and members of a local vigilante group in the market. These operatives have been notorious for similar extrajudicial killings, which often go unpunished."

In an online trending video, the two Agunechemba operatives were seen carrying the lifeless body of the victim into the back of their vehicle, which bears the operation number ANSG 0060.

When contacted on Friday, the spokesman for the Anambra State Police Command, SP Tochukwu Ikenga, confirmed the development, adding that the two suspects have been arrested by the police.

Ikenga said, "Police operatives attached to the Onitsha Main Market Police Division, leveraging the support of some traders, have arrested two suspects allegedly involved in the murder of a 17-year-old boy and recovered one automatic pump-action gun.

"Eyewitness accounts revealed that the suspects, who were allegedly security operatives attempting to arrest a suspect, started shooting indiscriminately and, regretfully, a bullet hit the innocent boy.

"The Commissioner of Police, CP Ikoiye Orutugu, while frowning at such avoidable and unprofessional behaviour of the security operatives, ordered the immediate transfer of the suspects to the State Criminal Investigation Department, Awka, for a comprehensive investigation."