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NIMBO, an obscure, sleepy, agrarian community in Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area of Enugu State came to limelight in April 2016, when some alleged bloodthirsty Fulani herdsmen reportedly ambushed the community and heartlessly murdered scores of innocent, harmless young and old men.

Today, the vampire is no longer the Fulani herdsmen; it is now some disgruntled and criminally minded members of the community that kidnapped and murdered one of their own. And the incident has created so much tension such that some members of the community have fled to the neighbouring communities of Ugbene-Ajima, Abbi and Nrobo in the same local government area. The fear of reprisal is in the air.

Genesis

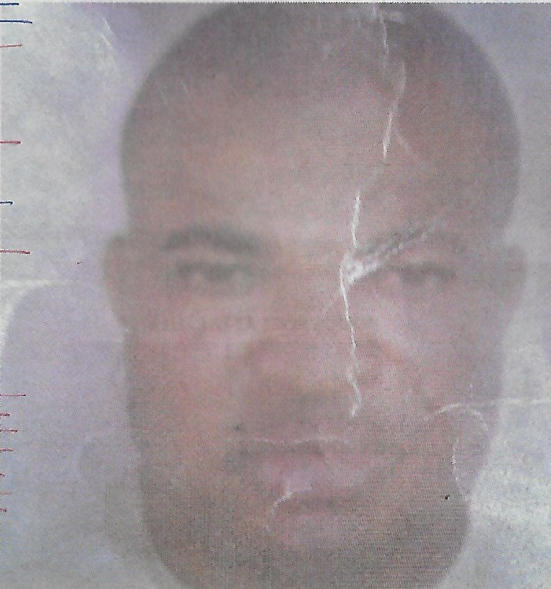
Nimbo community was taken aback on December 13, 2016; when the Special Assistant (SA) on Security to the Uzo-Uwani Local Government Transitional Chairman, Mr. Ejiofor Enechi was kidnapped.

The 44-year-old Ejiofor was allegedly ambushed and abducted at Ekoru Bridge as he was returning to his home town, Ukpa-bi-Nimbo, from Opanda, another community in Nimbo. He was said to be riding his motorcycle when the armed kidnappers attacked and abducted him. It was gathered that about 30 persons planned the abduction but only 25 persons actually went for the evil operation.

According to the Enechi family spokesperson, Okechukwu Enechi, the alleged kidnappers

MURDER OF SECURITY CHIEF, COUSIN FRESH TENSION IN NIMBO

• Residents flee to neighbouring communities



According to the Enechi family spokesperson, Okechukwu Enechi, the alleged kidnapers contacted the family through a phone call on December 14 and demanded a ransom of N10 million. He said the family went into negotiation with the kidnapers and finally agreed on N2 million, which was paid on December 16; three days after the incident.

The unexpected

The agony of the Enechi family as well as the apprehension in Nimbo heightened after the ransom was paid and the victim was nowhere to be found; and neither did the family hear from the kidnapers again.

Confused by the development, the family was left with no choice but to inform the Anti-kidnapping Squad of the Nigerian Police, Enugu. A detachment of police ant-kidnapping squad stormed Nimbo, made few arrests and started investigation into the incident. It was gathered that the investigating police officer took the number with which the kidnapers used in contacting the victim's family to the office of the mobile network that owns the line for identification and the photograph of the owner of the phone number was made available to the police and the victim's family.



EJIOFOR ENECHI, KIDNAPPED AND MURDERED

Major breakthrough

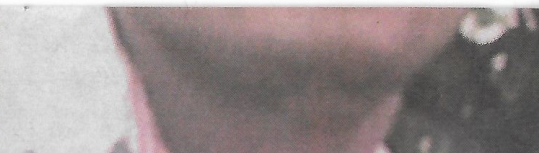
Investigation revealed that one fateful day, after the police had arrested one person in connection with the kidnap but still trying to unravel the mystery behind the whole incident, a passenger bus travelling to Nsukka from Opanda, got to Ameke, Ukpabi Nimbo and stopped to discharge passengers. And in the process, some bystanders at the bus stop peeped into the bus and identified one of the passengers as the same person in the picture, which police got from the mobile network. The suspect was allegedly forced down from the bus and handed over to the police and in the course of interrogation; he confessed that it was people from Nimbo that kidnapped Eji-for Enechi. His arrest turned out to be the greatest breakthrough in the investigation as he knew so much about the incident.

Speaking on the arrest, Okechukwu, said: "When it happened, everybody was confused and terrified. We thought it was the Fulani herdsmen until the police made

a big breakthrough. I must commend the Enugu State police command, specifically the State Anti-kidnapping Squad, for a fantastic job. If not for them, we would have believed that it was the Fulani herdsmen that did it. The arrested suspects confessed that it was a certain group of people that planned and carried out the operation. We later learnt that the ransom we paid was shared within Nimbo community by members of the group."

On the possible reason that could have made members of the group carry out such a dastardly act, he said: "According to police account, the suspects confessed that my brother was giving out their names to the security agencies. A key reason they gave was the suspected attack on Fulani herdsmen in Kogi State, killing of their cattle and abduction of one of the herdsmen. Members of the group believed that it was my brother, as SA on Security to the Transitional Chairman, who informed the security agents of the incidents."

However, just as the community



EMMA OKEJA, CAUGHT AND ALLEGEDLY MURDERED IN ODA NIMBO WHILE LEADING POLICE INVESTIGATION TEAM

was in grief about the sad incident, the victim's cousin, who was assisting the police in their investigation was brutally murdered by the same people being hunted by the police.

Murder number two

On January 3, 2017, the victim's cousin, 33-year-old Okeja Emmanuel, was allegedly murdered at Oda Nimbo. According to his father, Okeja Paul, he was in the company with policemen who went in search of the suspected kidnapers when the incident happened. "He led the police to the place where the alleged kidnapers were hiding at Oda Nimbo because he knew them and could recognise them. He did that because when it was clear that they were staying at a particular place, the police said they needed somebody from the community, who knew the terrain very well, to lead them and that was how my son volunteered to lead them. He did that bearing in mind that the per-

son who was kidnapped and murdered was also his cousin, distraught father said.

How he was killed

On how he was killed while in company with the police investigation team, Mr. Okeja said: "Some saboteurs informed the kidnapers in advance that policemen were coming to arrest them so they laid ambush on the policemen, and in the process, all civilians that went with the policemen ran to different directions while the officers also fled. We learnt that my son ran to somebody's house for safety but unfortunately it was the same man that contacted the kidnapers on phone to inform them that my son was hiding in his house. They traced my son to the man's house, took him away and tortured him to death. After they killed him, they planted a bomb on him and announced that they caught an armed robber and killed him to death. They also took