

Family of slain tailor cries for justice

From **Ogbonnaya Ndukwe,**
Aba

THE family of Agbai Isaac of Akanu Item in Bende Local Government Area of Abia State has been in a quandry since January 7, 2022, when some unidentified persons suspected to be members of a vigilance group shot one of their sons, Solomon Isaac, to death.

They have cried out for justice, saying that only fishing out and bringing the culprits to book would pacify their hearts and give peaceful rest to the soul of the deceased.

Daily Sun learnt that the 24-year-old tailor based in the commercial city of Aba was on his way back to his shop along Uratta Road when the security men said to be chasing hoodlums, inadvertently fired in the direction of their No. 6, Obuda Street, Aba, residence. The young man was allegedly hit by their bullet, which killed him.

The family is, therefore, calling on the Abia State government, the state's commissioner of police, civil society organisations and other related groups to assist in ensuring the arrest and prosecution of those behind the killing.

They appealed to people and groups to pressure the police area command, Aba, and its Uratta division to carry out thorough investigation into the killing and arrest those involved.

The family said it was disturbed that nothing significant had come out of its official complaints to the Uratta division and the area command about the incident.

Father of the deceased, Agabi Isaac, told *Daily Sun* that police had not visited the scene of the incident, but only blamed him for taking his wounded son to a hospital for urgent treatment, though he was proclaimed dead as they reached the medical facility.

According to him, the operatives at the Uratta Police Division said the matter was reported to them three hours before his arrival, but could not disclose who reported it to the officers on duty.

"Police said the matter was already reported to them when we arrived at the station, but did not tell us who did and the person's interest in the killing.

"They blamed us for not bringing the wounded boy first to the station before taking him to hospital.

"As a father, I have a responsibility to ensure my children's safety but since Solomon has died this way, it is my plea that his killers be found so that his spirit will have rest.

"I trained him in the tailoring profession. I am a tailor, and I opened a shop for him. I am not happy about the way he got killed and want the authorities to act accordingly," he said.

He also bemoaned the increase in criminal activities in the area, saying Uratta Road was notorious for armed banditry, hard drugs usage by youths and



• **Solomon**

snatching of people's belongings, including handbags and cell phones.

He further said that bad roads and other environmental hazards in the area provide a safe haven for those engaged in criminal activities in the rather rural enclave, hence the use of local vigilance group by residents.

Daily Sun gathered that Solomon's elder brother, Chijioke, who had gone out of the gate to buy detergent for washing his clothes, witnessed the killing of his sibling.

Chijioke said he was just stepping into the compound when bullets hit his younger brother and he (Solomon), fell into his arms, shouting: "Ha agbagbuola'm o (They have killed me)" and then slumped on the ground.

He claimed that the men of the vigilance outfit were shooting randomly, pointing their guns with live ammunition towards their compound and gate, when some of the bullets hit his younger brother, who was coming out at the time.

He said efforts to trace the "security operatives" were not successful initially, due to the immediate actions taken to save the life of the deceased.

Another of Chijioke's siblings, Sunny Agbai, who was invited to the family's house soon after, said Solomon was taken to two hospitals for urgent treatment in a bid to save his life, but was refused treatment, while the police at the Aba Area Command, whom they had approached to report the incident, referred them to the Uratta police station.

He lamented that, "The victim was taken to the Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) Hospital, in Ogbor Hill, where he (Solomon) was declared dead, and his body was later deposited in the hospital's morgue."

Police spokesperson in the state, DSP Geoffrey Ogbonna, would not speak on the issue, but a senior source within the Aba Area Command said the matter was reported to it and was referred to Uratta divisional headquarters for investigation.