

The Lifeline

Mayhem in Anambra community

• Security operatives storm Nteje, allegedly kill 22-year-old man, injure many • Residents flee, seek govt's intervention

From **Magnus Eze, Enugu**

THE crisis at Nteje Community in Oyi Local Government Area of Anambra State, has left the family of 57-year-old Emmanuel Anukwu and his wife, Tochukwu, in mourning.

Thursday, June 16, 2022, will remain a sad day in their memories, following the shooting of their son, Oluebube Anukwu, by yet-to-be-identified security operatives who came to the community for an undisclosed operation.

The 22-year-old Oluebube was hit by bullets fired by the team and he died as a result of the injuries he sustained. At least six others who equally suffered gunshot injuries are still in critical condition in different hospitals.

But the case of Chief Benneth Chinweze, acting president-general of Nteje, was different because he was blindfolded and his hands and legs tied after he was forced to stop his vehicle and was bundled into the back of a Hilux truck.

The 67-year-old community leader is still receiving treatment in a hospital following the rough handling and injuries the security operatives inflicted on him.

Daily Sun learnt that Nteje community has been embroiled in leadership crises of late and the cause was traced to its nearness to the recently constructed Anambra State International Cargo Airport, Umueri.

Value of land has continued to appreciate in the community, which could be accessed from the Enugu/Onitsha expressway from either Awka, the state capital, or Onitsha, the commercial hub of the state, from Awkuzu Junction.

Anukwu, who lost his son in the June 16 incident, said he would never wish to have a repeat of what he saw that day in his life. According to him, the day started normally for the residents of the community, as people were engaged in their daily activities until about 10.30am when they started hearing repeated gunshots in Amanato Ifite Nteje community.

Sensing danger, Anukwu said that most people, especially men, ran for safety to enable them ascertain the true picture of what was happening. He said it was from his hiding place that he received a telephone call from his wife that their son, Oluebube, was shot on his way back from the Eziudo side of Nteje on getting to Ashiama Liquor Spot, where he saw the masked gunmen kitted in black attire.

He said Oluebube told them that he was coming back on his motorcycle when they ordered him to stop, alleging that he saw Nnamdi Uwadiegwu and Paul Neli,



• Chinweze on hospital bed



• Oluebube



• Mr. and Mrs. Anukwu

popularly called 'Atiku', in the company of the strange visitors.

He said that the shooting that commenced shortly after Oluebube arrived made him to abandon his motorcycle and run. It was in the young man's bid to escape that they shot him.

Anukwu, who is the secretary of land committee in his village, added that it was in a nearby bush path where the son felt that people sighted him and drew the attention of his wife who then alerted him.

He said: "When I came out, we immediately hired a vehicle and rushed him to the hospital and it was there that he gave us these details.

"But due to the fact that it was big

security gun, which I suspect could be AK47 that the operatives used in shooting my son, the injuries were challenging for the medical personnel to control and, on June 18, he died in the hospital.

"After his death, we took his body to the Divisional Police Station, Nteje, and made a report."

Anukwu stated that the DPO told them his office was not informed before the operation took place, adding that he would do a report on the incident to the Anambra State commissioner of police on the matter.

He said the DPO thereafter directed his men to assist in helping to deposit the body of his son in the morgue.

Giving more details on the devastat-

ing June 16 incident, Anukwu said people ran away because the operatives who came in about five Hilux trucks covered their faces and conducted themselves in a manner suggesting their mission was to kill.

He said, before the incident, Amanato Ifite Nteje was having problems of leadership in the community. Anukwu, who explained that the level of crisis in the community had caused some people to abandon their homes, including himself, appealed to Governor Chukwuma Soludo to urgently intervene in the matter: "I plead with our governor to urgently intervene in the crisis currently rocking Nteje to restore peace in the area.

"I equally call on one of our prominent indigenes, Chief Mike Nwakalor, popularly known as Wowo, to help in restoring peace because, even though he (Nwakalor) is not residing at home, he knows most things happening in Nteje community."

His wife, Tochukwu, corroborated the account, regretting that their son died without accomplishing his ambitions.

"Oluebube trained in fashion business in Lagos, but was not settled by the person he served. So, he came and began to ride Okada with the aim of raising fund to enable him establish his own business, before he was killed," she said.

According to her, notwithstanding that her son was killed, the family is still living in fear due to threats by one of the persons causing crisis in the community, who at times entered their compound to threaten further action.

She said the security agents who killed her son, after their operation, carried some of the abandoned motorcycles away, including her son's.

The distraught woman lamented that, apart from her son, three other persons have lost their lives due to the crisis in Nteje community.

"We have three persons that their bodies are still in the mortuary. One has been there for three years, another has stayed two years and one has been there for about eight months, in addition to my son, making them four," she said.

She disclosed that the family would like to conduct the burial of their son soon, but the atmosphere in the community was still tensed.

"My son was killed exactly one month after the police released my husband after keeping him for five