

Edo vigilantes brutalise families protesting relations' murder

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BENIN

Relatives of victims of murder in Benin, were yesterday brutalised by personnel of the Edo State Vigilante Service.

A 63-year-old mother of seven, Mrs. Lucy Nwaorie, and 38-year-old father of one, Tony Bassey Imo, were murdered allegedly by a man identified as Osagie Efua aka Stone.

They were killed on May 20, 2021 by a gunshot Stone allegedly fired at No 1, Efehi Street off College Road, Aduwawa, Benin.

The families, aside from the pain of losing their breadwinners, had injuries inflicted on them by the members of the Edo State Vigilantes, who were against their peaceful protest to the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) Press Centre in Benin.

The families were protesting what they described as the unseriousness of security agents investigating the case.

Nwaorie was from Enugu State while Imo hailed from Akwa Ibom State.

The protesters armed with placards bearing different inscriptions such as "We want justice," "Justice for late Mrs. Lucy Nwaorie and late Mr. Tony Bassey Imo," etc, were

received by the Chairman of the Edo State Council of the NUJ, Sir Roland Osakue, who advised them to continue to be peaceful while going about their protest.

However, this did not go down well with the vigilantes, who laid ambush for them on the Reservation Road GRA, manhandling and inflicting injuries on them.

Nwaorie's first son, Uche Nwaorie, was beaten to a pulp and had his lips broken by one of the vigilantes, who hit him several times with the butt of his gun.

"You can't protest here. We don't want any protest," the vigilantes chanted.

The vigilantes collected and tore the protesters' placards.

They also seized a journalist's phone for taking pictures of the attack on the protesters.

Uche, an unemployed graduate of Banking and Finance from the University of Benin (UNIBEN), narrated his family members' ordeal.

He said: "What happened to my mother and her customer is what we are here to protest peacefully; no violence, just placards. But look at what they did to me and our family members. Even the conventional police with all the backing from the constitution will never stop you

from organising a peaceful protest.

"The same vigilantes killed my mother, and her customer, Tony. The same people are saying that I should not protest. Do they want me to go and carry a gun or to take laws into my hand?"

Uche also explained what happened the day his mother and her customer were murdered.

He said: "It was indeed a black Thursday for us at 1, Efehi Street

, off College Road, Aduwawa, Benin. About 10am, two guys, Osagie Ufua aka Stone and Charles Oseghale aka Agada, came around the neighbourhood and engaged in smoking cannabis Sativa (Indian hemp) while at the same time taking assorted alcoholic substances. At a point, Stone ordered Agada to board his already stationed tricycle (Keke) to fetch him (Stone) his double-barrelled gun which Agada quickly did and he got it delivered to him."

Scorpion Squad storms Awka as jail breakers unleash

Okey Maduforo
AWKA

A new militia and Vigilante Group, known as "Scorpion Squad," which is akin the former Bakassi Boys has since Saturday taken over the security operations in Awka, Anambra State capital.

The militia group, it was learnt, since its security operation in the state had so far arrested 23 suspected armed robbers and cultists, while four of them were said to have been killed in the process.

Similarly, the outfit was said to have also recovered arms and stolen Keke tricycle and apprehended owners of Keke tricycles operating during prohibited hours and released them to their right-

ful owners.

The storming of Akwa by the Scorpion Squad is coming three months after some criminal suspects released during jailbreaks by unknown gunmen and EndSARS protests of last year unleashed terror on Anambra State robbing the people, snatching phones, breaking into market shops and attacking eateries.

Before the arrival of the Scorpion Squad, residents of Awka and its environs were alleged of going to bed before 7pm, while others attend emergency all night church crusades to avert being attacked by criminals in their homes.

Similarly, cultists were said to have been having a free day by engaging in shooting of rival cult groups in day light, as well as those they branded "as police