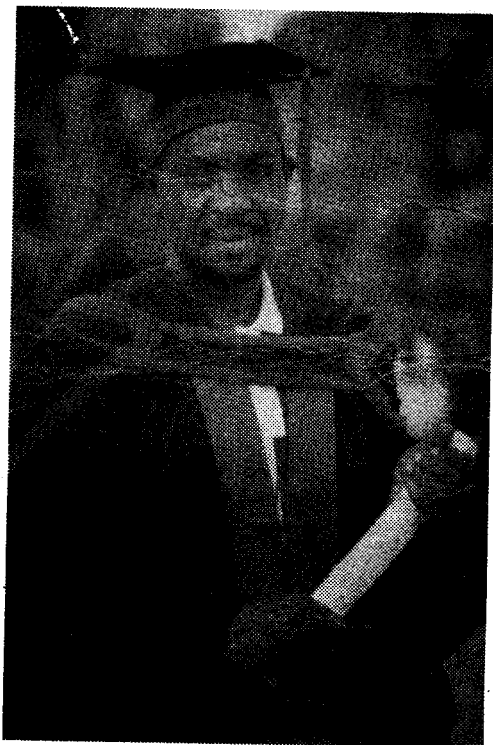


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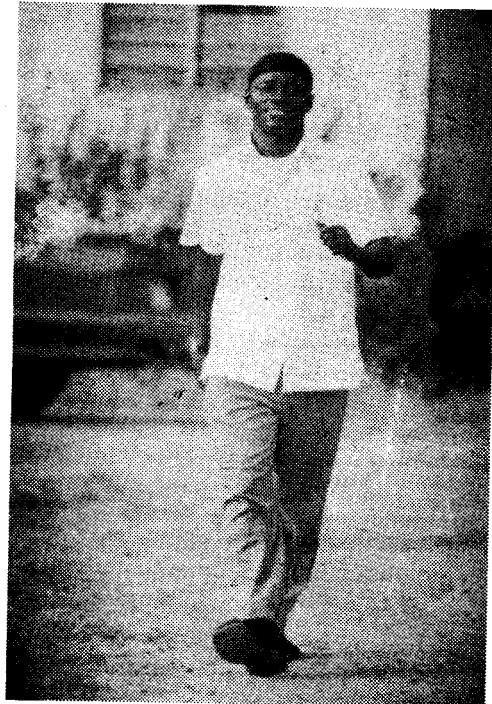
Editor: Judith Ufford

Tragic end of a crusader

By Chidi Nkwopara



The late Mr. Sylvester Chiagoro Anaele



Reginald, accused of killing Sylvester Chiagoro Anaele



Victim's severed neck

MONDAY, November 16, 2008, will remain evergreen in the memories of members of the Anaele family of Okwu Amaeze, Obibiezena, a sleepy rural community in Owerri North local government area of Imo State. The trauma is obviously worse for seven year-old Ugochukwu, who watched helplessly as his father, Mr. Sylvester Chiagoro Anaele, was brutally murdered by one of their kinsmen, Reginald Madujibeya. Sylvester, a father of six, was a trained tailor and worked in one of the oil servicing companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, before opting to return home in the late 1990s. On his return, he took up commercial motorcycling to earn a living. He was a strict disciplinarian and his sincere effort to change the lifestyle of a few youths in his community sadly cost him his life.

Bernard Anaele, the eldest in the family, confirmed that his late brother had on several occasions complained about the "sordid activities" of his assailant, Reginald Madujibeya and his colleagues. "Our brother complained bitterly about the sordid activities of Reginald and colleagues before he was eventually murdered. The complaint bordered mainly on varying criminal activities, including smoking of Indian hemp and other hard drugs sold by Akujobi Okere alias Malife", the aggrieved Bernard Anaele said.

On September 13, 2008, Sylvester Anaele addressed a one page petition, "Case of robbery against Chikaodi Akolonu and Akujobi Madujibeya", to the Commissioner of Police, Imo State. He narrated how the two persons attacked him along their village road, forcefully snatched his motorcycle and took it to an unknown place. "Other items in my handbag on top of the motorcycle are the sum of N28,000 cash, one Nokia handset valued at N6,500 and six packets of Indomie valued at N180. All efforts made for these two persons to return my properties to me proved abortive. I therefore appeal to you to order the arrest of Chikodi Akolonu and Akujobi Madujibeya, so that justice will be done in the matter", Sylvester Anaele pleaded. This plea was yet to be attended to when the ominous happened. It was no surprise that Sylvester reacted when he saw the same group drinking and smoking near his residence. Obviously uncomfortable with their presence, he appealed to them to leave the place and go home.

Continuing, the deceased's brother said: "On this same day, he told Reginald and his group to quietly go back to their respective homes and stop their drinking and smoking spree, especially as it was already late. Reginald was offended, rushed and grappled my brother ferociously. It took the combined effort of my late brother's wife, Chibunma, my younger brother, Ignatius and my 84 year-old mother, Lolo Mary Ann Anaele, to extricate Sylvester from the vice-grip of Reginald". Apart from being hit with a big dry

stick on her head, the old women directed Bernard to safely lead Reginald back to their house and hand him over to his mother. This was strictly obeyed but Reginald defied his mother's (Mrs. Angelina Madujibeya) plea that he should go to bed. "Reginald told me in clear terms that my brother had reminded him what he normally did in other lands. He also said that he will neither forgive nor forget this incident. I thereafter left for home, to help treat my mother who was injured in the initial fracas", Bernard recounted with grief.

Late Sylvester put the fracas behind him and took his seven-year old son, Ugochukwu for a meal in his aged mother's house, but on seeing that his old mother was nursing a wound inflicted on her by Reginald, he left without eating the food set before him. "None of us knew that Reginald laid ambush for our brother at a dark

corner, with a sharp knife. On sighting Sylvester, he quickly attacked his victim with the knife. We were only attracted to the scene by the shrill cry of Ugochukwu", Bernard said and could not continue the narration.

Continuing the story from where his elder brother stopped, Mr. Ignatius Anaele said that he did not know that his "brother was lying in a pool of his own blood and as I approached Reginald, he started flinging the sharp knife dangerously in a bid to keep me at bay". In the process, Ignatius sustained cuts in his right finger and two places in his lower abdomen and noticing that he had been injured, he kept a distance. Reginald however took to his heels as soon as he realized that people were being attracted to the scene, he fled towards the direction of Cyril Okere's house. "With the aid of a torchlight, I saw where my brother was lying in a pool of his own blood. A careful observation revealed that my brother had cuts in the head, neck, right fingers and around his thighs. We left that night to invite the police", Mr. Ignatius

Anaele said. Little Ugochukwu obviously will remain traumatized for the rest of his life. He still cannot believe that his father, who took him to his grandmother's house, was dead. He gazed endlessly as he tried to recall what happened that night. "I don't know why Ndaa Regi killed my father with knife. He cut my father's neck with the knife and I don't know what he wants us to do now without our father. Please tell Ndaa Regi to bring back our father. We are begging him", little Ugochukwu pleaded.

The Imo State Police Command has waded into the matter. The Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO, Mr. Linus Nwaiwu, an Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP), confirmed the story but could not immediately disclose the number of people in their custody in connection with the crime. Some Amaeze Obibiezena villagers confirmed at press time that Reginald Madujibeya has handed himself over to the Police. What is very clear is that Ugochukwu's wish will remain unfulfilled, while the trauma will remain with him for life.



Views of outrage over Ribadu

By Mike Ebonugwo

THE authorities of the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS), Kuru certainly stirred the hornet nest of public outrage following their refusal to award the Institute's certificate of participation to former Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) Chairman, Mallam Nuhu Ribadu after he had completed the relevant course programme along with other participants. The situation was made worse by a near-ugly incident during the graduation/certificate award ceremony as Mallam Ribadu was reportedly forced to leave the venue.

As expected, the development did not escape the attention of bus-stop parliamentarians who have since it become public knowledge been expressing their feelings on it. This was the case on Tuesday at the Mile Two Bus-stop in Lagos where some parliamentarians almost went hysterical in condemning the shabby treatment reportedly meted out to Ribadu.

"I have always said that Nigeria is a country where good and honest people don't usually survive in government. Only crooks and greedy people who will not think twice about looting public money are the ones who are allowed to survive. See the kind of treatment they are giving Ribadu; a man who single-handedly fought corruption to a stand-still before he was removed from office. If not for Ribadu many crooks who called themselves public office holders would have escaped with the billions of naira they stole while they were in office. But Ribadu went after them and recovered a lot of money from them. And I'm sure that he would have caught up with many others if he had not removed him from office. But instead of being grateful to a man who did all this for us they are busy harassing him up and down," declared parliamentarian Fred Eseka in an angry tone.

Parliamentarian Charles Ekpo concurred, adding: "That is Nigeria for you. The fact really is that it's those that Ribadu dealt with while he was EFCC chairman that are now fighting back against him. Like you rightly observed, most of the people in government are crooks. So when a good man comes along and tries to put things right, he ends up stepping on powerful toes who have for many years been feeding fat on government money without any eyebrows being raised. And of course they will not allow him to succeed in putting *sansan* inside their garri. I believe that is the crime that Ribadu committed. He stepped on powerful toes while fighting the anti-corruption war and after they have conspired to remove him from office, they want to teach him a lesson on how not to mess with the powerful and mighty again".

Parliamentarian Frank Iriogbe spoke more or less in the same vein as he said: "Yes, Nigeria is a rotten country. If not why should anybody want to mess up Ribadu just because he tried to clean up the stinking corruption mess in this country? And it's the same rotten set of people behind this rubbish right from independence to date. They are the ones who eliminated Murtala (Mohammed) when he started fighting corruption as Nigeria's military head of state. They sponsored a coup against him and killed him in the process. The same thing was almost repeated when Idiagbon and Buhari took over government in 1984. They did not last up to a year before this same mafia people sponsored a coup that removed them from power. And what was their crime? They declared a war against indiscipline and corruption. And so they were removed so that the corruption culture could continue and that was what was happening until Obasanjo appointed Ribadu EFCC chairman".

Charles rejoined by blaming President Umaru Yar'Adua for Ribadu's ordeal. "It's President Yar'Adua that I blame for what is happening to Ribadu; he is the one encouraging corrupt politicians to attack him and use IG Mike Okiro to harass him

every now and then. And that is why I believe that he is not really serious in fighting corruption; he is just pretending that he is against corruption. Well one is not really surprised; it's corrupt politicians who assisted him to become president. And he is paying them back by trying to embarrass and eliminate Ribadu. That is why he removed him as EFCC chairman and appointed someone else to take over; that is someone who is so harmless that she will not dare touch his powerful political friends," he submitted with conviction.

But parliamentarians Ahmed Jato disagreed. According to him: "It's not as if Yar'Adua is against Ribadu per se. The point is that Yar'Adua has declared from the beginning that he was going to operate according to rule of law. And this means that he cannot condone the kind of method Ribadu employed while he was EFCC chairman where he will arrest and detain people without investigating charges or allegations against them. Yar'Adua is not like Obasanjo who sees himself as a democrat but behaves otherwise. The fact is that Yar'Adua is a democrat to the core and when you're that kind of democrat you will not want a body like the EFCC to become an instrument of terror in the hand of somebody like Ribadu".

Fred's response to this was: "Rule of law my foot! Democrat my foot! So, because somebody calls himself a democrat, he should then allow corruption to flourish in the name of not wanting to trample on the right of corrupt people. The most important thing in leadership is to ensure that State resources are used to the best benefit of the people. But when you have corrupt people in government stealing everything, how do you expect the government to provide the people what they need? That is what Yar'Adua is encouraging by removing Ribadu and using the Police leadership to harass him unnecessarily".

Ahmed tried to respond to this but his attempt in this regard was drowned by a babel of opposing voices.