

## Reign of Terror: Editor killed in Anambra

● DSS detains Ndibe

● Nigeria not safe place for journalism practice — Freedom House

BY UDUMA KALU

**T**HE year 2013 started with ugly stories for the Nigerian media.

An editor was killed in Onitsha, Anambra State while celebrated columnist and author, Professor Okey Ndibe, was detained by agents of the Department of State Services, DSS, last week.

Already, US based watchdog dedicated to the expansion of global freedom and democracy, Freedom House, in its 2012 Freedom of Press report on Nigeria said, "Despite the backing of the federal courts in attempts to extend protections for a free press, Nigeria remains a dangerous place to practise journalism."

Nigeria's vibrant and active media sector continues to face numerous attempts by state and nonstate actors to suppress political criticism and intimidate journalists.

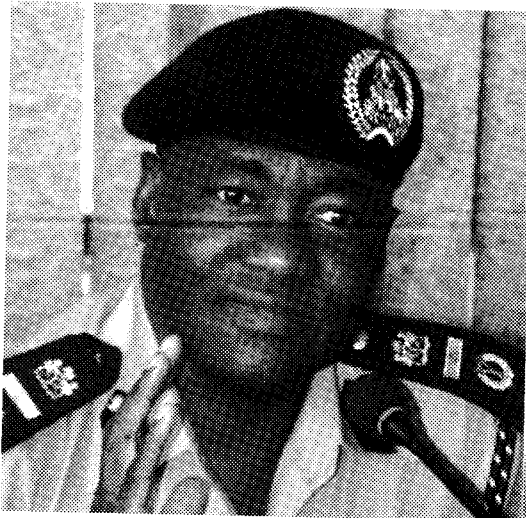
Libel is a criminal offence, and several journalists have been charged in recent years.

With the media landscape becoming dangerous, assassins had killed Ikechukwu Udendu, editor of Anambra News, a monthly newspaper based in Onitsha, last Saturday, January 12. This becomes the seventh journalist in the world this year to be slain.

He was on his way home to Ogidi from Onitsha when he was murdered. Udendu had gone to a commercial printing house in Onitsha to check if his monthly paper was ready for distribution.

Gabriel Baglo, Africa director of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), in reaction said, "Nigeria has become a country of impunity for those who have attacked and killed journalists. This is a real press freedom regress."

Muhammad Garba,



• IGP Muhammed Abubakar

president of the NUJ in his reaction said: "Journalists now live in perpetual fear of being either arrested by security operatives or attacked by faceless assailants without any just cause."

Worried by the ugly trend, the New York-based press freedom watchdog, the Committee to Protect



• Ndibe

Journalists, called on the Nigerian authorities to investigate and bring the perpetrators to justice.

Still, on January 8, 2013 Ndibe who lives in the United States, was detained on his arrival at the MMA, Ikeja for more than 10 hours.

He told Vanguard that,

"The SSS kept me at the airport for more than 10 hours (from Saturday night to Sunday morning). I understand the Yar'Adua government had put me on a list of state enemies. I was told that the list had been destroyed, but this was the fifth time I was

stopped coming in or leaving Nigeria."

At the airport, a plain-clothed immigration officer, after checking his passport, took Ndibe to a DSS man who seized his passport. He was detained for 10 hours. He was however later asked to report the following Monday morning at the agency's office in Ikoyi to see the director for his passports. The director told him he committed no crime and that the agency should have removed his name from the list long time ago.

It would be recalled that in 2008, President Umaru Yar'Adua included Ndibe on an enemy list of critics and activists.

But President Goodluck Jonathan reportedly ordered that the enemy list be discarded.

## Role of media in conflict resolution

## CBS to launch pan-African