

Enugu-Ezike killing: Royal father preaches peace, banks hope on inquiry panel

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The traditional ruler of Aji/ Essodo community in Igboeze North Local Government Area of Enugu State, Igwe Simeon Osisi Itodo, has condemned the recent killing of a popular medicine dealer in the area, Chibueze Uramah, by people suspected to be members of a neighbourhood watch. He commended the Governor of the state for his quick intervention by setting up an administrative panel of enquiry over the incident.

Igwe Itodo who was speaking to newsmen in his palace stated that vigilante groups should not take laws into their hands by torturing suspected victims of any crime, adding that they can only apprehend and hand them over to the police for interrogation and prosecution.

According to him, what could have culminated into an ugly situation was averted by the timely visit of the state police boss, Balarabe Suleiman to the scene and it helped in calming down frayed nerves in the community. "I must thank the state governor, Hon. Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi for setting up the nine-man administrative panel of inquiry headed by a former Commissioner of Chieftaincy Matters in the state, Bar. Goddy Ogbo with Bala Ayogu, as Secretary.

The Royal father expressed surprise over reports of serial killings in Aji Community stating that such reports are capable of creating unnecessary tension between Aji and Ogurute communities. "The governor's intervention by setting up an administrative panel of inquiry that had capacity of unveiling the circumstances surrounding the killing and proffer solutions for everlasting peace in the entire Igboeze North, not just Aji and Ogurute, is timely and the best solution to the situation. The governor is a man of peace who applied the fatherly role to quench the situation by setting up the panel to look into the killing and report back to him."

He said that he has warned members of Aji community to be law abiding and follow the dictates of the state governor and allow the panel of inquiry to carry out their assignment and called on any person or group of persons who have anything to say about the unfortunate incident to submit it to the panel than rushing to the media to

trigger tension. “The unnecessary publication is not the way to find lasting solution to community issues. Both Aji and Ogurute communities should be law abiding and follow the instructions of the state governor.”

Igwe Itodo warned both communities to stay away from recalling past issues pending in court of law or still under investigation by the police, adding that people should go about their normal businesses since the governor has set up the panel of inquiry to look into the alleged killing in the area. He, however, praised the efforts of the state governor in community, human and resource development, adding that the payment of N5 million community development funds by the state governor was the first of its kind since the creation of Enugu State in 1992.

“The three geo-political zones of the state have witnessed tremendous changes in infrastructure development, network of roads both in urban and rural areas of the state. Workers are paid regularly together with pensioners while over 4,000 teachers were employed. What more could the public demand from a governor that believes in peace, security, transparency, accountability, equity and justice? I must also warn those fanning embers of discord to desist from it and queue into the state government’s policy programmes for lasting development.”

The royal father further noted that all cases in the recent past in Aji community were handed over to the police for investigation and prosecution, adding that the recent situation in the community has been taken over by state government and called on members of the public to express their grievances if any, to the panel of inquiry handling the issue. “Governor Ugwuanyi has called a meeting of stakeholders including traditional rulers and chairmen of neighbourhood watch groups from the communities and sued for peace. I must thank him for the timely intervention and setting up of the panel of inquiry,” he stated.