

Residents flee Imo community after youths kill palm wine tapper

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By Praise Njoku

Residents of Umuduru village in Umunumo, Ehime Mbano Local Government Area of Imo State, have reportedly fled their homes for fear of being arrested, following the murder of a palm wine tapper by irate youths.

Though no reason has been given for his killing, the youths in their numbers were said to have stormed the residence of the palm wine taper, identified as Mr. Emmanuel Njoku, at night.

They dragged him out from his sleep and beat to death.

Vanguard learned that late Emmanuel Njoku had allegedly in 2013 shot and killed his younger brother, Mr. Chigozie Njoku, over a quarrel.

The matter had landed in him detention for a long time at Okigwe Prison before his acquittal at Isiala Mbano High Court.

However, at press time, there was no nexus between his killing by the youths and his alleged killing of his brother.

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Widow narrates incident

Narrating the gory incident, his widow, Mercy, a nursing mother, said at about 12 midnight on that ill-fated day, she heard some voices calling out her husband, who she said was already sleeping.

She said that the moment her husband stepped out from the room, the youths descended on him, leaving him with injuries that led to his death.

While she was attempting to rescue her husband, Mrs Njoku said the youths equally descended on her and also inflicted injuries on her, forcing her to abandon their home.

She alleged that the attackers also destroyed property worth hundreds of thousands of Naira in their house.

According to her, a whistleblower had informed them that some members of the community had earlier held a nocturnal meeting against her family, where the attack was planned.

The matter was reported at the Ehime Mbano Divisional Police Headquarters, while the remains of Njoku have been deposited in the mortuary in the area.

Spokesman of Imo State Police Command, SP Orlando Ikeoku, confirmed the incident, noting that five suspects have already been arrested in connection with the incident.

He said that the arrested suspects have been moved to the Imo Police Command Headquarters, Owerri, while further investigations are going on to unravel the circumstances behind the attack.

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