

Neighbourhood Watch member dies in police custody

By Chinedu Adonu

ENUGU State Police Command is currently sweating over the death of a member of Independence Layout Neighbourhood Watch, Mr Okwudiri Ani, who was arrested and detained at its headquarters in Enugu.

Ani, had been in detention with Austin Ebe and Emmanuel Oganyi over the death of an alleged criminal whom they had attempted to arrest, took ill and was rushed to Parklane Hospital where he eventually died.

In a letter written to Governor Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi of Enugu State, Chairman of Independence Layout Neighborhood Watch Association, Chief Kenneth Agu, said some residents of the area reported a

case of theft to the group on December 22, 2020.

He said the group identified a suspect, Mr Udochukwu Amuka, who they arrested but while they were escorting him to New Haven Police Station, he fled and was given a hot chase by the security guards.

Unfortunately, Mr Amuka collapsed as he was running and despite the effort by the security operatives to revive him, he was pronounced dead at St Daniel's Hospital, Link Road, Enugu.

According to Agu, his men promptly reported to the New Haven Police Station where they were arrested and detained after their statements were taken. He said the matter was transferred to the state CID headquarters where an autopsy report, which came out

two weeks later revealed that the death of the suspect was not due to physical assault.

He said: "For almost three weeks after being wrongly incarcerated, Mr Okwudiri Ani collapsed in jail. He was taken to the Park Lane Hospital where he remained unconscious until he died several hours later.

Agu pleaded with the Governor to intervene in the matter to avoid further loss of lives, especially of the two security operatives who are still in detention.

Contacted, the state Police Public Relations Officer, Mr Daniel Ndukwe, said he would make enquires before he could respond.

It was, however, discovered that the body of late Ani was deposited at the Parklane Hospital mortuary by the police in Enugu.