

Tears as Abia community buries Catechist beheaded by gunmen

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ONITSHA— As the menace of gunmen continued unabated in various parts of the South-East geopolitical zone, tears flowed freely yesterday at Umutu Autonomous community, Lokpaukwu-Umuchieze in Umunneochi Local Government Area of Abia State as the headless body of Chief Clement Umeh, Catechist of St. Clement's Catholic Church, Lokpaukwu, was buried.

The late Umeh, according to sources, was beheaded by about 20 gunmen that invaded his home in the village last Sunday.

The sources said the gunmen had on arrival dragged the catechist outside from his parlour, tied his hands, beheaded him, set his house ablaze and made away with his head.

At press time, there was no clue as to what prompted the gunmen to murder him in such a manner.

Confirming the incident and his burial, President-General of Umutu Autonomous Community, Victor Emeh, told newsmen on phone that the circumstances surrounding Umeh's murder remained a puzzle to the entire people of Umutu and beyond.

Emeh further confirmed that the police authorities were informed about the incident and they dispatched some policemen, who came and took photographs and video records of his headless body and the burnt house before his burial

Some elderly men from the area, who spoke on anonymous condition, said by their custom, any compound where such a sacrilegious incident occurred is usually regarded as a bad land, which is no longer fit for human habitation, except certain sacrifices are performed to clean the compound.