

# Iggah crisis: 3 arrested over alleged murder of 5 security operatives in Enugu

● *Aggrieved community plans protest over continued detention of monarch*

By Anayo Okoli

**ENUGU**—ENUGU Police Command said three people have been arrested over the killing of two policemen and three members of Neighbourhood Watch during last Friday's Iggah crisis, in Uzo-Uwani council area of Enugu State.

It was learned that one of the arrested suspects is a notorious land grabber that allegedly hired mercenaries from a neighbouring state and paid plain clothed policemen to accompany them to the disputed land where the fracas that led to the death of the policemen took place.

While the commissioner also said that he has ordered manhunt for more suspects, it was gathered that the continued detention of the traditional ruler of Iggah Community, Igwe Herbert Ukuta by the police in Enugu is raising tension in his community following revelations that there was connivance between the land grabber and some top police officers in the state to charge the ruler to court on trumped-up charges.

Police sources said members of the community are planning to stage a protest at the Government House, Enugu to register their resentment and abhorrence to the ill-treatment of their traditional ruler who was not even in town when the incident took place and who has been raising alarm over the atrocities of criminal elements in his community including the nefarious activities of the land grabber in tandem with some police officers in Adani community.

However, the Police said the crisis was fuelled by elements they referred to as "harboured criminal members of the Iggah Community."

## How it happened —Police

Giving their account of what happened in the Iggah community, the police command in a statement signed by the spokesman, DSP Daniel Ndukwe, said: "The Enugu State Police Command wishes to inform the public of the unprovoked and unwarranted attack and gruesome murder of two policemen and three Neighbourhood Watch Group members by harboured criminal members of the Igga community in Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area, in the evening

hours of Friday, May 3, 2024.

"On the same date, a combined security team of three policemen and four Neighbourhood Watch Group provided security for a team of visiting investors from Lagos on a tour of a proposed agricultural investment site in the area.

"However, the team was ambushed and attacked by a large group of the criminal elements, who opened fire on them.

"Upon the unprovoked sudden attack, members of the team scampered for safety, while an Assistant Superintendent of Police, who led the team, one Neighbourhood Watch personnel, and the three-member team of investors were later rescued by a police team that immediately mobilised to the crime scene.

"But they eventually murdered members of the team and many went missing and unaccounted for.

"However, in the course of a full-scale investigation and a search and manhunt operation launched

thereafter, three males suspected to have masterminded the attack were arrested. Their revelations during interrogation led to the discovery and recovery of the slain policemen and Neighborhood Watch Group members in the forest on May 4, 2024.

"Their lifeless bodies were taken to the hospital, confirmed dead by doctors, and deposited in the mortuary for preservation and autopsy.

"Meanwhile, the Commissioner of Police, Kanayo Uzuegbu, has described the unprovoked criminal act of the gruesome murder of the personnel as inconceivable, dastardly, and unwarranted. Hence, he orders further deployment of the Command's intelligence and operational resources to sustain the manhunt of the fleeing criminals.

"He stressed that the police will stop at nothing to fish out and bring the perpetrators of the senseless act to book.

"Furthermore, the commissioner

has cautioned those who, in an attempt to misinform and mislead unsuspecting members of the public, are circulating unverified videos alleging the burning and looting of houses in the community by joint forces to desist forthwith.

"The Commissioner has also advised members of the Igga community, particularly the criminal elements directly involved in the unthinkable and wanton act of murdering serving police officers and others, to voluntarily surrender themselves to the Police without delay."

Police sources, however, intimated Vanguard that the attack took place after the land grabber invaded a disputed farmland with hired mercenaries and plain clothed policemen. According to the sources, "Our men that were killed in the cross fire were on illegal duty. We are also aware that the team was attacked by both members of the ESN who were going round forests in the area and some farmers including Iggah labourers."

## Imo professionals hail Uzodimma over plans for uninterrupted electricity supply

By Johnbosco Agbakwuru

**ABUJA** — AS the country continues to grapple with power challenges, professionals and businessmen in Imo State have applauded Governor Hope Uzodimma for his efforts to ensure uninterrupted electricity power supply in the state.

This is coming on the heels of the signing of the Imo State Electricity Law by Governor Uzodimma; a bold stride by the governor to enable the state to manage and activate electricity transmission and distribution infrastructure in the state particularly the Amaraku power project as well as Egbema Power Plant which had been abandoned for over 18 years.

Professionals, businessmen, and entrepreneurs in the state under the aegis of the Forum of Imo Professionals, FIP, have lauded Governor Uzodimma for securing President Bola Tinubu's approval for the transfer of the Egbema Power Plant project to Imo State Government.

The Forum in a statement by its coordinator, Ambassador (Dr) Greg Mbadiwe yesterday expressed

happiness that with the electricity initiative, Governor Uzodimma "has set the ball rolling for massive infrastructural development, rapid industrialization, revamping of small and medium entrepreneurship, spur youth creativity, boost employment, achieve self-sufficiency in all sectors while turning Imo into a major investment hub for the South East and the nation at large".

The professionals commended Governor Uzodimma for engaging a world-class power company from Egypt, Elsewedy Power Generation, for electricity generation, transmission, and distribution in the state, adding that they are confident that with the framework already established by Governor Uzodimma, there will be adequate electricity supply in all parts of Imo State within the next eight months.

The forum said, "As professionals and businessmen in various fields of life, our Forum, made up of engineers, lawyers, medical personnel, estate developers, industrialists, entrepreneurs, business owners, hoteliers, investors, builders, transporters, journalists, teachers, farmers and the rest, deeply appreciates Governor

Uzodimma for this electricity initiative.

"Electricity supply is sine-quanon to modern development. The people of Imo State are known for their innovativeness, creativeness, and quest for self-reliance. Many businesses have been forced to close down with attendant swell in job loss and consequential social dislocation and economic distress to millions of families. Our people have suffered years of serious retrogression in the productive sectors because of poor power supply.

"This informs why this radical move by Governor Uzodimma on electricity elicited spontaneous jubilation and hopefulness across Imo State. Governor Uzodimma has displayed an exceptional political will, which confirms his connection with the aspiration of the people; which is reminiscent of the visionary leadership of Dee Sam Mbakwe.

"With this bold stride by Governor Uzodimma, our Forum is confident that in the next 12 months, Imo State will witness a growth in industrialization, there will massive rise in small and medium enterprises."