

Youths protest death of female crane operator in Abia



By Ugochukwu Alaribe

Tension is building at the Inner Galaxy Steel Company, Umuahala-Obuzor Asa, in Ukwa West council area of Abia State, over the death of a female crane operator, identified as Ocheze Ogbonna.

Ogbonna hailed from the company's host community, Umuahala Obuzor Asa. Vanguard gathered that Ocheze was allegedly pushed down from the crane by a Chinese manager of the company. She was said to have hit her head on a hard object and died.

Some workers at the steel factory told Vanguard that the Chinese manager never related well with Ocheze over the alleged rejection of love advances by the deceased.

However, the incident caused tension in the steel company as youths of the community barricaded the gates, insisting that they wouldn't leave until justice was done over the death of the crane operator. The protesting youths were later dispersed by soldiers guarding the steel company.

It was alleged that some of the protesting youths were shot and beaten up by soldiers.

"The Chinese people at Inner Galaxy company are dehumanizing Nigerians. The Chinese manager pushed Ocheze out of the crane. She fell and hit her head on the hard surface and died. We want justice done, our sister cannot die in vain, and the government must investigate the activities of the Chinese people at Inner Galaxy company. The soldiers guarding the company are shooting at us for protesting the death of our sister. They are subjecting Nigerians to much suffering. Enough is enough," one of the protesting youths told Vanguard.

Police Public Relations Officer, Abia State command did not respond to calls and text messages sent to her mobile number as at the time of filing this report.

Meanwhile, the member representing Ukwa West and Ukwa East federal constituency, Chris Nkwonta, has condemned the death of the factory worker.

In a statement, Nkwonta lamented that how the crane operator who is one of his constituents was killed, amounts to total disregard for the sanctity of life, an act of hatred and wickedness exhibited by the Chinese expatriate at the Steel Company against their host community, Umuahala-Obuzor.