

SOUTH EAST VOICE

By Chinenyeh Ozor

Lawyer accuses Enugu police chief of blocking murder trial

A TOP police officer in Enugu State has been fingered as the stumbling block in the prosecution of four suspects who were arrested in connection with the killing of one Chinedu Nnaji last year.

The officer, is said to be at the centre of a disputed piece of land, lying a few kilometers off Enugu, the state capital.

Nnaji, 35, from Umunenshi, was ambushed and killed on December 17, 2014, while allegedly inspecting the controversial Egbrigba, Ugwuonyia land, alongside other kinsmen.

Survivors and an eye witnesses had identified the assailants as members of the opposing Umuewoukwu kindred.

However, the Umunenshis and Umuewoukwus of Amaechi-uwani in the Enugu South Local Government Area have been contesting ownership of the large

Mohammed determined to scuttle the prosecution of the murder suspects.

"Four of them who were released on bail by the police, have now jumped bail while the state police command under CP Mohammed appear to have no interest in re-arresting them.

A team of police prosecutors which came from Force CID, Abuja on Monday, October 12, 2015, were presented with a fait accompli when none of the suspects on bail was available for arraignment," he added, pointing out that although his series of petitions to the police high command in Abuja had made it take over the matter, "CP Mohammed is still determined to ensure the suspects are not arraigned or prosecuted even as the deceased whose remains are yet to be interred, has continually been denied justice."

Anyanwu then shared a text message in his phone wherein

The lawyer exhibited documents including various police reports and petitions to the Force Headquarters, Abuja, wherein he restated his case against the state police boss allegedly acting in connivance with some elements within the Umuewoukwus.

one of the police prosecutors from Abuja highlighted the seeming meddlesomeness of the state police commissioner which effectively hampered the work of the Abuja team.

According to the text message, the police boss had apparently blocked arraignment in court of two of the sureties who had taken some of the murder suspects on bail.

"CP Enugu is refusing us to arraign the two sureties to court... Already, charge against each of them have been forwarded to Chief Magistrate Court 8, Enugu," he said.

The two charge sheets prepared for the sureties: Rev. Fr Okechukwu Ani, and Innocent Ugwu, with numbers MEN/251C /2015 and MEN/250c/2015, respectively were signed by an

unidentified Assistant Superintendent of Police, ASP, related to the sureties' inability to produce suspects which they took on bail. They had taken two suspects each on bail. Rev. Fr Ani took Christian Ugwu and Okwudili Ugwu on bail while Innocent Ugwu reportedly took Messrs Afamefuna D. Ugwu and Domnic Anigbogu, on bail.

The sureties were to be charged with "...conspiring with suspects, in a case of conspiracy and murder under investigation, to obstruct, prevent, pervert or defeat the course of justice by failing to produce the above mentioned suspects you took on bail and thereby committed an offence punishable under section 155(1) of the Criminal Code Cap30, volume II, Laws of Enugu State of Nigeria."

Stakeholders urge Enugu govt to adopt