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METRO

Fear of reprisal in Akwa Ibom as four policemen kill NURTW chairman



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By Lovina Anthony



Fear of reprisal attack has enveloped Uyo, the Akwa Ibom state capital, following the gruesome murder of the Chairman of the Nigerian Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW), Comrade Ubong Udo Udofia, by angry policemen.

It was gathered that Comrade Udofia, 45, also known as 'Evolution', was clubbed to death with guns by four policemen, after attempts to kill him through direct shooting met brick walls.

When some journalists met with the bereaved wife, Margaret Udofia on Friday at her 179, Ikpa Road, Afaha Oku, Uyo residence, she said that her late husband met his untimely death when

minor argument with a policeman resulted in full blown brawl.

Narrating her ordeal, she told journalists, “I was just returning from the market when I was called suddenly to witness what happened to my husband. When I got to the place, my husband was already gasping for breath until he gave up the ghost in my presence.

“A policeman parked his car and was loading passengers near the Itam motor park, when members of the task force working for my husband accosted him and directed that he should enter the park and load so others should not join.


“The Policeman, on mufti, resisted and the task force members demanded for the car key and he refused. The car, I was told was pushed into the park on the orders of my husband to adjudicate on the matter.

“My husband was inside another vehicle waiting for the car owner, not knowing he had called four of his colleagues, who arrived and immediately opened fire but when the bullets could not get at him, they resorted to using gun butts to club him till he became unconscious.

“Several other Policemen attached to construction firm, Julius Berger, were called for more reinforcement and more sporadic shooting followed leading to people scampering for safety including the task force officers.”

Mrs. Udofia, who lamented over what would become of her nine children left behind with the death of her husband, called the Inspector General of Police (IGP), the state Police Command and the government of Governor Udom Emmanuel, to ensure justice was done in the case.

“We have nine children to take care of and the eldest is just 15 and none has entered the university yet. So my appeal is that my husband should not die in vain because all the evidence



point to deliberate and premeditated murder because my husband and the task force members did not beat the Policeman.

“All they did was just to direct him to comply with the regulations of loading in the park and not constitute road nuisance by loading on the road side because touting is illegal in Akwa Ibom.

“Luckily, one of the Policemen who participated in my husband’s death was trying to escape from the scene and unfortunately for him, his identity card fell off his shirt and was picked up as evidence on the scene.

“The name of the Policeman is Sergeant Nwafor Silas, from Ebonyi State Police Command and attached to Julius Berger with service number; 425015,” she said.

Disturbed by the incident, it was gathered that NURTW officials were poised for protest, even as angry youths of Afaha Oku, were said to have plotted a reprisal attack.

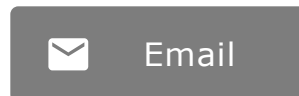
The Divisional Police Officer (DPO) of Itam Division, CSP Francis Irabor, who visited the deceased at the God’s Own Hospital, Park Road, before he died, promised full-scale investigation into the matter, assuring that appropriate punishment would be meted out to the culprits.

However, the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), DSP Odike Macdon, confirmed the incident, and assured that the whole truth would be unravelled at end of the investigation.

He urged the people to be calm and not to take laws into their hands.

Meanwhile, the remains of the late task force chair, according to the family, has been deposited at the Etang Ekak Mortuary along IBB Way, Uyo.

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