THE SOLUTION WEEKLY BULLETIN

...a publication of Ministry of Information, Anambra state

.....Vol. 1 No. 14

Contact us via our email @ solution.bulletin@anambrastate.gov.ng
or moi@anambrastate.gov.ng | **+2348137946936**

ANAMBRA NEWS AT A GLANCE





AGUNECHEMBA IS BORN AND UDO GA-ACHI

(A Speech by the Governor of Anambra State, Prof. Chukwuma Charles Soludo, CFR on the occasion of unveiling of the Anambra Homeland Security Law and Launch of Special Security Operation, "Udo Ga-Achị" on Saturday, 18th January 2025)

Ụmụ Nne m Ndị Anambra!

Yesterday the 17th of January 2025 marked our two years and ten months in office as Governor of Anambra State. True to our promise last month to take decisive actions on security, it is auspicious that we mark this anniversary and begin the new year with the events of today.

Security, law and order remain pivotal to the attainment of our vision of a livable and prosperous homeland. The massive revolution by our administration in all sectors which are appreciated by Ndi Anambra must be cemented with a robust security system with zero tolerance for criminality. I want to assure you that despite the unique challenges of lucrative criminality adorned with deceptive ideology and propaganda, we are determined to fight criminality and ensure that Anambra becomes the safest state in Nigeria. The Homeland Security Law 2025 which I signed a few minutes ago, the special operation we are launching today (Operation Udo Ga Achi), deployment of technology, plus a gamut of other initiatives especially the massive support of the federal security agencies and citizens' collective action constitute our comprehensive and sustainable response.

The character and dynamics of criminality in the Southeast and Nigeria have evolved and become hydra-headed, and so our response must be thoughtful, deliberate and comprehensive, involving both the kinetic and non-kinetic agenda. For example, kidnapping for ransom is not new. I recall that my 78-year-old father was kidnapped in 2009 and he spent 15 days with his abductors in the bush. Earlier that year, the oil mogul, Chief Anthony Enukeme (Tonimas), Chief Paul Okonkwo (Pokobros), Chief G.U.O Okeke, etc. were kidnapped in the state. It was as if Armageddon had come. My predecessor tackled the menace head-on. However, in about 20 months before we assumed office in March 2022, a variant of the criminal gang under the guise of separatist agitation emerged with command-and-control centres. They killed policemen and soldiers at checkpoints and collected their guns. They attacked and burnt down many police stations. Sadly, most stakeholders kept mute. They set up camps in the bushes and forests and labelled themselves as "liberators". Most people did not pay attention and very few cared to ask how

WHAT IS SOLUDO DOING IN THE STATE CAPITAL AWKA???

✓ **LANDMARK PROJECTS**

- New Government House
- New Governor's Lodge
- Solution FunCity
- Solution Innovation District
- Revamped Great Awka Water Scheme
- Reconstruction of Ekwueme Square
- Awka City Shopping Mall and many others

✓ **ROAD PROJECTS**

- Ifite Amansea Road
- Aroma Overpass
- Club (Abakiliki) Road to Ngozika
- Regina Caeli Y-Junction Road
- Unizik Tempsite-Okpuno-Isuaniocha Road
- Chukwudifu Street
- Millennium Industry-INEC Road
- Umuogbu Road
- St Faith Road
- Meniru Street Amawbia
- Ngene Amawbia Road
- Works Road Junction/Bishop Crowther Road

National Awards for Fiscal Policies

- Ranked No. 1 in fiscal transparency
- Ranked No. 3 in fiscal performance
- Trained 25,000 youths on technology skills

And many other projects... You can verify

Support Governor Soludo To Do More!

these people with arms will be feeding from month to month or year to year or how they will be funding their operations.

Finally, the chicken came home to roost. Initially they turned on suspected politicians, killing innocent people without cause. We recall the gruesome murder of Dr. Chike Akunyili and many others in a commando style in crowded places. Candidates for the 2021 governorship election could not campaign freely especially in the south senatorial zone and the candidate for Labor Party, Mr. Obiora Agbasimalo was kidnapped enroute to a campaign event and has not been seen until date. No governorship candidate could hold a rally in Ihiala Local government, and election could not hold there on election day. Because most of the kidnappings and killings happened during the political season, most of us misread the situation as being largely politically motivated. Facts emerged later to show that the problem was deeper and structurally more systemic.

On assumption of office, we met almost a war situation, with eight local governments literally under the total control of the criminals. We declared a state of emergency and responded massively: held security summit; inaugurated the Truth Justice and Peace Commission; engaged with multiple stakeholder groups; offered to re-train and re-integrate those in the bush if only they would surrender their arms; etc. We set up a vigilante strike force structure that worked with federal security agencies to root out criminals from our forests and remote areas. Within 12 months, we recovered the eight local governments under total siege.

Over time, some of the criminal elements returned to some locations. Several of the diverse criminal gangs/camps claim to be Biafra agitators. The IPOB has repeatedly issued multiple press statements dissociating itself from the criminals in the bush but Simon Ekpa with his organized criminal gangs continued to wreck untold havoc, with kidnapping for ransom as their main source of financing. From the thousands of arrests so far, about 70% of the criminals are not from Anambra state: we understand that they flock to Anambra because that is where the money is. Second, kidnapping for ransom quickly became the most lucrative criminal enterprise—better than drug trafficking or oil bunkering. The NBS reported that about N2.2 trillion was paid as ransom in 2024. We estimate that for every one Naira reported, there is probably about 5-6 Naira not reported (amounting to more than N10 trillion in ransom payment in 2024. No sector of the economy, with little capital investment could muster that kind of revenue/return). With a culture that celebrates wealth without work and does not ask people for their source of livelihood, even kidnappers and drug barons are also celebrated.

Besides kidnapping and armed robbery, there are other related challenges which reinforce each other—cultism, drug epidemic, land grabbing and touting. Add to these the warped ideology and value system that increasingly celebrates 'magical wealth' (ego mbute) plus the resurgence of criminal idolatry which offers the criminals a sense of invincibility and hence their dare devil brutal activities. Idolatry is the fastest growing religion in the Southeast. Because these criminals in the bush have converted to idolatry, there is a serious clash of religions to the extent that it is no longer sacrilegious to kidnap men of God or even Reverend Sisters. The pointed and vicious threat to Christianity in the Southeast is not yet appreciated by many. Our various security agencies--- the Police, DSS, Army, Navy, Airforce, Civil defence, as well as our Vigilante and other special forces--- are doing their best to confront these crimes under the existing laws.

What has become evident is that for systematic long-term solution, we need to strengthen the legal framework as well as the institutional organization, logistical capabilities, social re-engineering and citizens mass action. The Anambra Homeland Security Law 2025 attempts to provide a framework to progress along the above pillars. It not only establishes our new vigilante architecture (Agunechemba), but also provides a framework for community/citizens ownership and participation in the sustainable security and social re-engineering of our homeland. Agunechemba at the community and local government levels underscore the point that most cases of insecurity are local. The State Agunechemba is a strong strike/intervention force that will be agile and mobile, underscoring that effective kinetic architecture will require a simultaneous interplay of bottom-up and top-bottom forces. In sum, Agunechemba assists/complements the federal security forces especially the police. But brute force will probably address about 50% of the challenges, as the first and necessary step. We can't defeat warped ideology and value system with guns alone. Over the medium to long term, we need to redeem the soul of our society by reinventing our fundamental values of enterprise/hard work, compassion and integrity—as the foundation for sustainable security, law and order. We will not only ramp up our civic and social reformation campaigns but also seriously reward and celebrate those who distinguish themselves in the virtues that define us. A society ultimately becomes what it celebrates. We cannot allow the 0.01% of our society who are criminals to define the 99.99% of us. Ndi Anambra are known for enterprise and excellence and we must completely take back our homeland. We invite you to read the new law carefully. It should be the Handbook for every citizen and resident of Anambra state. It should be discussed in schools, markets, churches, communities, motor parks, etc.

We should deepen and strengthen what we are doing that work. For example, Anambra State Special Anti-Touting Squad aka SASA, a body formed in October 2023, is living up to its established mandate which requires they get touts off the streets, transport environment and markets, and is on a stranglehold mission on these touts and drug peddlers. They have picked over 3,000 of such criminals. Upper Iweka and environs can breathe better now. We shall work with the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency to implement the National Drug Control Masterplan, which is a comprehensive framework for controlling drug related issues across the country, towards developing a formidable strategy against drug related

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crimes across all 21 local government areas and all communities in the state. Meanwhile, our new Homeland Security law requires the forfeiture of any property used for manufacture, use or sale of hard drugs to the state government. I have signed a number of relevant laws that will facilitate prosecution of touts and drug dealers.

Today, we launch a Special intervention force code named: "Operation Udo Ga-Achi" which translates to Operation Peace Shall Prevail. This special intervention, as an emergency action, complements regular policing by upscaling intelligence gathering, reward whistleblowers, enhance rapid response, and urgently root out the criminals from any/every camp in Anambra state. It will also have special task forces on drugs, touting, cultism, and criminal idolatry. We will ramp up our civic and social reformation, and we invite the clergy, communities, teachers, and social crusaders to join in this campaign. They will be active in all nooks and crannies of the state, with patrols and pin-down stop-and-search operations as necessary.

We are investing heavily in logistical support. We are unveiling some 200 vehicles made fit for purpose to aid operations and many more will be procured soon. This special force will have some 2,000 personnel--- police, army, navy, civil defence, DSS, Agunechemba, plus other 'special forces'. We are mainstreaming technology. We have installed best-in class Tracking System; emplacing a Command-and-Control system which enhances the use of voice, video and data in security management; deploying AI-powered surveillance cameras which we intend to cover most communities in Anambra; etc. Our State Call Centre is enabled, with the toll-free lines 5111 and 08002200008. Another platform run by the Nigerian Communication Commission has the call line 112 for emergency communication.

Operation Udo Ga – Achi shall also be supported by the State's recently established independent communication network which enables security personnel to communicate flawlessly using walkie talkies. We need people in the communities to give information to security agencies. Where you feel information given will be used against you, relay such information through our phone lines in Anambra State Call Centre. We will also be reviewing possible assistance to the existing Correctional Centres to expand their facilities and will embark on building the State's Correctional centres. In partnership with the FGN, communities, patriotic Ndi Anambra and corporations, we intend to gradually re-build the 28 divisional police offices that were burnt down by the hoodlums.

Let's begin the implementation of the Homeland Security law immediately. We call on all communities (traditional rulers, president-generals, etc.) to read the law and set up the relevant security governance structures urgently. We plan to start paying monthly security support/grant to communities to augment their investment in security. The Mayors of respective local governments should also act urgently. We will work with the Commissioner of Police and DSS to identify the top 10 LGAs with history of violent crimes. As communicated to the DPOs and Area Commanders, we will pay a monthly bonus of N10 million for every month that any of these LGAs records zero violent crimes. We will map out communities and also design a reward system. In the meantime, we encourage each community to design and execute its own "cleansing or restoration programme". A partnership of the church and traditional institutions/town unions might aid the process. For whistleblowers, anyone that gives us credible information that leads to the arrest of any kidnapper/armed robber or information that leads to rounding up of criminals in a camp will be paid a bounty of any amount up to a maximum of N5 million (depending on the class of criminal).

Before we conclude, let me reiterate our extension of hand of friendship and amnesty to kidnappers, cultists, drug dealers and other categories of criminals to surrender themselves, with their weapons and my government will ensure that they are rehabilitated and empowered to become productive citizens. All persons wishing to take advantage of this window should register at the Office of the Security Adviser to the Governor. This window remains open until February 28, 2025.

Let me now thank all citizens and friends of Anambra State who have contributed to the State Security Trust Fund. I salute the courage of some clergy who have stood up to call out the systemic monster that is upon us. I want to also appreciate all those who devote their time, talent and resources to the security of their various communities. I salute particularly those from Ihiala local government. Currently, we have four FOBs stationed in various locations in Ihiala. There are ongoing clearance operations --- and we are determined that the people of Ebonesie—Orsumoghu, Lilu, Isseke, Mbosi, etc. and indeed the entire Ihiala local government must be totally liberated from these criminals. I must specially thank the FGN and the various security agencies for their commitment and support in this struggle to rid our state of organized armies of criminals.

Security is our collective responsibility. Government alone cannot do it. Federal security agencies alone cannot do it. Sustainable security in our homeland requires full scale involvement of responsible citizenship. These criminals are our brothers, sisters, husbands, relations, friends, etc. They are not spirits. They live among us, and we know them. The fact is that 99% of these criminals arrested in Anambra since my 34 months in office are Igbos. We are fighting a different kind of organized armies of criminals – a kind that Anambra has never seen before. But we must prevail. We must all collectively confront the warped ideology and agitation that lead many among us to view security personnel as the enemy, and the criminals as the liberators. Those who contribute food and money and send to the criminals in the bushes are part of the problem, and we will begin to treat them as collaborators/criminals. I call on everyone—the town unions, clergy, traditional rulers and all civil society organizations to join in deconstructing the dangerous narratives that legitimize this criminality. For our long-term survival, we must rise up and fight together. If you see or know something, say or do something! Silence means complicity. Complaint is not enough. Every resident or citizen of Anambra must every day ask what he/she has done that day to enhance security and prosperity of the homeland. Only collective action will guarantee sustainable success.

On the part of government, be rest assured that we are determined to take the criminals head-on and quadruple our efforts in security. We are ready to fight. Be vigilant. The next few months will be turbulent. The criminals will seek out and strike at soft targets to test our will. We are in a marathon race, and not a sprint. God Almighty who sees our hearts and works will grant us victory. Anambra will win!

God bless Anambra State and Nigeria!

ANAMBRA STATE HOMELAND SECURITY LAW, 2025

A Law to provide for the maintenance of internal security and order in the State and to establish the Anambra State Agunechemba and for related matters.

The House of Assembly of Anambra State Enacts as follows:

PART I - PRELIMINARY PROVISIONS

Citation and Commencement 1.

This Law may be cited as the Anambra State Homeland Security Law, 2025 and shall come into force on the 17th day of January, 2025

Interpretation (2).

In this Law unless the context to the otherwise requires:

"Agunechemba" means the security outfit of Anambra State established by section 3(1) of this law;

"appropriate authority" means the authority designated by the State or Local Government for a particular purpose under this law;

"area" means area of residence or business;

"central command" or "command" means the Agunechemba existing at and operating from the State level;

"court" means High Court of Anambra State;

"estate" means Housing Estate

"fund" means any money accruing to Agunechemba;

"government" means the Government of Anambra State of Nigeria;

"governor" means the Governor of Anambra State;

"gross misconduct" means any conduct incongruous with the status of the member of the Supervisory Committees and Agunechemba;

"house" means Anambra State House of Assembly;

"ministry" means the ministry in charge of homeland security;

"religious place" means any place used for religious worship or activities

"security council" means the State Security Council;

"state" means Anambra State of Nigeria;

"supervisory committee" means the State Security Supervisory Committee or the Local Government Security Supervisory Committee established under sections 8 and 9 of this law; and

"town union" means the town union recognized by the Anambra State Government

"valid means of identification" means National Identification Number (NIN) or any other Federal Government approved official means of identification

Anambra State (3).

(1) There is established for the State a security outfit to be Agunechemba known as Agunechemba which shall exist and operate:

(a) In at least each town or community in the State;

(b) In each local government of the State;

(c) at the State level as the central command

(2) Agunechemba shall be made up of all the units of Agunechemba in all the towns, communities, local governments, markets or other public places in the State.

(3) The central command of Agunechemba shall be the central outfit for the State and shall be made up of persons employed by the State Government

(4) The operatives from the central command of Agunechemba may be deployed to any part of the State and shall only be answerable to the authorities of State established or constituted pursuant to this law

(5) Every security operative will be thoroughly screened which process will include completion of application form to be designed by the State Security Supervisory Committee.

(6) The application form shall make provision for proper identification of the operatives by:

(a) the Traditional Ruler of his town; and

(b) the President General of the Town Union; or

(c) the Honourable member representing the constituency in the House; or

(d) the Chairman of the Market Association with respect to market only.

(7) On recruitment of any member of Agunechemba under this law, the State Government shall issue or direct the issuance of identity cards in any manner determined by the Governor to the security operatives who shall carry them, at all times while on duty.

(8) Each identity card shall among other particulars contain the name and address, service number, the thumb print of the security operative, his signature, his photograph and a barcode for easy identification.

(9) The identity card shall bear the stamp of the registering office placed in such a way that part of the stamp shall be on the photograph and counter signed by the Divisional Police Officer in the area.

(10) The terms and conditions of service for all members of the Agunechemba in the communities who are recruited by the Town Security Management and Finance Committee pursuant to this law shall be as determined by that Committee.

(11) The terms and conditions of service including remuneration for all members of the Agunechemba in the local governments who are recruited by the Local Government Security Supervisory Committee pursuant to this law shall be as determined by that Committee.

(12) The terms and conditions of service including remuneration for all members of Agunechemba in the central command who are recruited by the State shall be as determined by the Governor.

(13) The State Government shall give such subventions as may be determined by the Governor to the Agunechemba in the communities to support their remuneration.

Functions of Agunechemba (4).

The functions of Agunechemba shall be to assist the Nigeria Police and any other security agency to:

(a) prevent and detect crimes;

(b) make available relevant information on criminals;

(c) take necessary measures to ensure that criminals do not operate in any part of the State;

(d) preserve law and order;

(e) protect lives and properties;

(f)arrest criminals and hand them over to police for investigation; and

(g) give further assistance to the police where required in the production of witnesses.

Powers of Agunechemba (5).

The Agunechemba shall have powers to:

(a) arrest and handover to the police, any person who commits crime;

(b) patrol the streets or villages at any time of the day;

(c) maintain security barricades in appropriate places;

(d) question and handover to the police any person of questionable character or of suspicious movement;

(e) enter and search any compound into which a questionable person runs while being pursued; and

(f) form special forces or squads for the purpose of tackling kidnapping, banditry, consumption of illicit drugs, cultism, robbery and any other violent crimes in the State

(To be continued in the next edition)

ANAMBRA EAST CHAIRMAN REITERATES COMMITMENT TO PROTECTING LIVES AND PROPERTIES ... AS SERVICE CHIEFS VISIT THE LG



By Nwegbo Ifeanyi C/Kelechi Achukwu-Jide/Ogochukwu Mokwugwo

The Chairman of Anambra East Local Government Area, Sir Ifeanyi Chinweze, has reinstated his promise of protecting the lives and properties of Anambra East. He said this during a visit of 2 service chiefs in Anambra State: the brigade commander of Artillery 33 Brigade, Onitsha, Col. A.K. Muhammad, and Commissioner of Police, CP Nnaghe Obono Itam, to address the communal crisis between Umuoba-Anam and Eziagulu-Otu communities at the council secretariat.

The mayor said he is committed to the safety of his people as he put heads together with Ndi Igwe of Anambra East and President Generals as well as the stakeholders to make sure that peace returns to the area. He assured the people of Anambra East safety and also urged them to ignore rumours going around the area and to start going to their normal daily activities.

CP Nnaghe Itam and Col. Muhammad said their mission is to maintain peace and orderliness in the area and reassure the communities and people of Anambra East's safety and security in the area.
They promised to use their wealth of experience to maintain orderliness. Ask people to start going about their daily activities. They called on the two communities to calm down so that they would settle their land disputes peacefully without claiming any lives or properties again.

CULTURE COMMISSIONER VISITS DEMOLISHED UDOKA GOLDEN POINT HOTEL SITE OBA, WARNS AGAINST ILLEGAL OPERATIONS OF UNREGISTERED HOTELS

By Ifeyinwa Ogwo

The Anambra Commissioner for Culture, Entertainment, and Tourism, Mr. Don Onyenji, has said that any hotel or hospitality business not registered with the state government is operating illegally. He emphasised that any establishment associated with kidnapping, cultism, or other criminal activities that threaten public safety will face legal consequences, including demolition, confiscation of property, and prosecution of the owners.

The commissioner made these remarks during his visit to the demolished Udoka Golden Point Hotel, formerly known as 'Cruise,' where evidence of criminal activity was discovered at Ogwugwu, Oba, on the Onitsha/Owerri Road.

Mr. Onyenji commended Governor Chukwuma Soludo for his efforts in combating crime in the state by initiating new laws against kidnapping, cultism, and other illegal activities, noting that these measures are yielding positive results. He urged all hoteliers and owners of leisure establishments to ensure that their facilities are registered with the state government for inspection, enumeration, and certification with an operational permit.

Additionally, Mr. Onyenji warned the public against removing property from demolished government buildings. He noted that those buildings belong to the state, and individuals caught taking items will face severe legal repercussions. He expressed concern over individuals referred to as 'iron-condemn sellers' who were spotted removing property from the demolished Udoka Golden Point Hotel.







ANAMBRA POLICE COMMISSIONER VOWS TO COMBAT CRIME WITH ENHANCED STRATEGY

By Uche Kalu and Chizoba Njaka

Anambra State Commissioner of Police, Nnaghe Obono Itam, has reassured citizens that the police command will continue to adapt its strategy and enhance its operational presence to combat criminal activity. This commitment comes after the successful arrest of two suspected criminals at a security checkpoint on the Umudioka-Awkuzu Road in Igbariam, Anambra East LGA, by the operatives of the Special Anti-Cult Squad from Enugwu Ukwu.

The arrest was confirmed in a statement by the Police Public Relations Officer, SP Tochukwu Ikenga. According to the statement, "Operatives of the Special Anti-Cult Squad Enugwu Ukwu, at a security checkpoint on Umudioka-Awkuzu Road by Igbariam on 25th January 2025, by 5.38 pm, arrested two out of the four occupants of a white Toyota Corolla vehicle with registration number YAB 26 CB. The team also recovered one Beretta pistol, two live rounds of ammunition, and the Toyota Corolla vehicle.

"The two suspects are Raphael Peverga and Saakura Teryima, both aged 22 years old and from Benue State. Meanwhile, efforts are ongoing to arrest the other two suspects that are currently on the run." It was further revealed that the suspects alighted from the vehicle while still in motion when the operatives ordered them to park the vehicle for a security search.

Moreover, the Commissioner of Police, CP Nnaghe Obono Itam, assures that the Command shall continue to evolve strategy and improve operational positioning in the state to nip in the bud such criminal elements.





ANAMBRA DEMOLISHES NOTORIOUS CRIME HIDEOUT, UNCOVERS GRAVES AND SHRINE



By Chisom Okpala

A two-storey building housing Udoka Golden Point Hotel and Suite in Oba, Idemili South Local Government Area of Anambra State, has been demolished. The structure, which served as a hideout for criminals, was brought down by the state's security outfit, 'Agunechemba.'. The demolition uncovered a shocking array of illicit items, including over 30 graves, a shrine, bullets, drugs, and other shanty materials.

Anambra State Deputy Governor, Dr. Onyekachukwu Ibezim, oversaw the demolition of a hotel notorious for harbouring criminals. He emphasised the state's zero-tolerance policy for criminality, ensuring citizens can conduct businesses without harassment.

According to him, "The homeland security law was carefully drafted and passed into law and will serve as the beginning of a secure Anambra." He further revealed that there is still room for amnesty and also the need for self-development through various skill acquisition training and youth employment made available by the state government.

He also reminded the public that the government would not hesitate to take ownership of the land where structures were demolished as a result of ill-gotten wealth.



ANAMBRA POLICE ARREST FOUR OVER BURNING OF 74-YEAR-OLD WOMAN

By Uche Kalu

Anambra State Police Command has arrested four individuals in connection with the gruesome burning of a 74-year-old wheelchair-bound woman in Abagana, Njikoka Local Government Area. The Police Public Relations Officer of the Command, SP Tochukwu Ikenga, in a statement noted that the suspects include 21-year-old Chinenye Ekwenugo from Ifitedunu and three men from Abagana: Uzochukwu Okeke, 47; Fidel Anayo, 60; and Ikenna Anene, 54, all from Abagana.

He explained that during interrogation, Ekwenugo revealed that her boyfriend, Ifeanyi Igwe, who is currently at large, orchestrated the heinous crime. The police are working to apprehend Igwe, while the victim's body has been deposited at the mortuary for autopsy. According to the statement, “The Anambra State Police operatives serving at Abagana Divisional



Cont. from pg 7

ONITSHA MAIN MARKET CHAIRMAN LAUDS GOVERNOR SOLUDO ON ESTABLISHMENT OF SECURITY OUTFIT



By Juliana Nwachukwu

The Chairman of Onitsha Main Market, Onitsha North Local Government Area, Anambra State, Chief Innocent Ezeoba, has lauded Governor Charles Soludo on the establishment of the security outfit, Operation Udo Ga Achi, 'Agunechemba' security outfit to ward off crime and criminalities in the state.

Making the commendation in his office, Chief Ezeoba stated that with this security outfit, Anambra State is going to be restored as the safest state in the country and the light of the nation it is.

According to Ezeoba, "With the way these security men are going about discovering the kidnappers' dens, arresting the criminals, and all that, I am sure that the governor is prepared; he went underground for this, seeking opinions, advice, and other necessities to come up with this. I pray God gives him more wisdom and knowledge to achieve his aim.

On the security of the market, he said, "We guarded our market during those times of insecurity in the state by summoning my security men for a series of meetings. After everything, our market is highly secure. Last December season was one of the best since the existence of the main market.

"Each pole has 2 solar lights mounted on it from Marine-First Bank-Bright Street-Johnson-Our White House. We stayed up to 9 pm transacting for the first time. We opened the market on 27th December. I did it the last two years too. This is the dream of our governor Ndi Anambra. The dreams of our governor to the Anambrarians are the same as mine to the traders of the main market.

DRINK 2 LITRES OF WATER DAILY, EAT NATURAL FOODS --NONYE SOLUDO URGES ANAMBRA RESIDENTS



By Kelechi Achukwu-jide/ Ifeanyi Nwegbo/Ogochukwu Mokwugwo

The wife of Anambra State Governor, Dr. Mrs. Nonye Soludo, has stressed the importance of healthy living, advising residents to drink at least two litres of water daily and eat natural foods. Dr. Soludo, who spoke during the Nonye Soludo Healthy Living Programme event in Onitsha North, emphasised that natural foods are essential for overall well-being and can help prevent diseases. She encouraged residents to cultivate backyard gardens, known as "Ugboazu Uno," to access fresh and nutritious food.

In addition to healthy eating, she emphasised the importance of regular exercise, saying that it boosts energy levels and helps eliminate toxins. She also advised residents to practice good hygiene and take care of their mental health, emphasising the need for adequate sleep and collective responsibility among parents to protect the youth from negative influences. "Let's continue communal parenting and be our brother's keeper," she urged.

Mayor Nweze Tony Nwora, who hosted the event, warmly welcomed participants and expressed his delight at seeing young people and mothers eager to learn about healthy living. He stressed the importance of continuous education among health workers, urging them to train the community on healthy practices. The mayor also announced the launch of the "Nonye Soludo Fitness Camp in Onitsha North," which will feature weekly exercise sessions every Saturday from 7 am to 9 am.

ANAMBRA POLICE ARREST FOUR OVER BURNING OF 74-YEAR-OLD WOMAN *Cont. from pg 6*

Police Headquarters today, 26/1/2024, by 9 am, arrested four suspects, including a 21-year-old lady, Chinenye Ekwenugo, from Ifitedunu, over the burning of a 74-year-old woman in a wheelchair at Abagana.

“The three other suspects include Uzochukwu Okeke 'M' aged 47, Fidel Anayo 'M' aged 60 and Ikenna Anene 'M' aged 54 years respectively, all from Abagana. The operatives also recovered the burnt remains of the deceased, the wheelchair, and a casket. “ During interrogation by the police operatives, the suspect, Chinenye, confessed that her boyfriend, Ifeanyi Igwe, who is currently at large, and three others set the victim ablaze and got a casket to bury her before the intervention of the security operatives.

"Meanwhile, the operatives have also initiated moves to arrest the main suspect, Ifeanyi Igwe, who is currently on the run. The body of the deceased has been deposited in the mortuary for autopsy and further probe of the cause of the death."

Ogbomna also urged the mayor to support efforts to make Anambra East a drug-free local government area.

SOLUDO'S STRATEGIC RESPONSE CHANGES SECURITY NARRATIVE IN ANAMBRA



By Christian Aburime

Nigerians' penchant for knee-jerk reactions is a well-worn trope. We are a society often driven by immediate outrage, demanding instant solutions to complex problems. Like firefighters rushing from blaze to blaze, we react to crises with a flurry of activity, often without truly addressing the underlying issues. This "fire brigade" approach, while offering a temporary sense of accomplishment, rarely yields lasting solutions. Instead, it often creates a cycle of reactive governance, where problems resurface, demanding yet another round of frantic, short-sighted interventions.

Since last year, Anambra State, like any other state in the country, has been battling a surge in insecurity, particularly kidnappings, leading to fierce, relentless, and even exaggerated criticisms of Governor Chukwuma Soludo's handling of the crisis. Opposition politicians had a field day hypocritically lampooning the state government. Even critics in cassocks turned their hallowed pulpits into vilification platforms against the person of the governor.

However, Governor Soludo has demonstrated a strategic leadership approach, refusing to be stampeded into rash actions. His calculated strategy, focusing on long-term solutions and empowering security forces, is now yielding undeniable results, proving his critics wrong and restoring hope to the state.

The recent launch of "Operation Udo Ga-Achi" (Peace Must Reign) and the bolstering of the "Agunechemba" vigilante force was not a knee-jerk reaction. It was all a carefully planned initiative designed to dismantle criminal networks at their roots. The dramatic discovery and demolition of the Udoka Golden Point Hotel and Suites, also known as 'La Cruise Hotel,' in the Oba area of the state is a tribute to this strategy. The hotel, masquerading as a legitimate business, was discovered to have housed a horrifying secret: over 30 partitioned graves and a shrine, revealing the gruesome extent of the criminal activities taking place within its walls.

This shocking revelation underscores the insidious nature of the security challenges that have been facing Anambra since last year. Vicious idolatry mixed with ritual bestiality and bloody cultism has become a staple of desperate felons who converged on Anambra like ravenous vultures. Criminals often operate under the guise of normalcy, making detection difficult. But now, Governor Soludo's approach, targeting such clandestine machinations and establishments directly, is sending a potent message: there will be no haven for criminals in Anambra State.

The government's commitment to public safety, reinforced by the new homeland security law, is finding expression in these decisive tactics.

Indeed, the discovery of the graves and shrines points to a complex web of criminality, potentially involving ritualistic practices and organised crime. While understandably causing fear and concern among residents, it also highlights the importance of the government's focused efforts. The community's reaction, a mix of relief and horror, points at the challenge ahead, but also their growing confidence in the government's resolve. The demolition of the hotel, while a significant victory, is just one step in a larger battle. The Soludo government's commitment to uncovering and dismantling these networks is clear.

Beyond the immediate operation, Governor Soludo has invested in equipping security operatives with the resources they need to succeed. The provision of a fleet of vehicles and AI-aided security gadgets demonstrates a commitment to modernising law enforcement and improving surveillance capabilities. These tools, praised by security personnel, are already proving crucial in tracking and apprehending criminals. This is just the beginning.

Thus, the alleged security crisis in Anambra State and Governor Chukwuma Soludo's response to it, offers a compelling case study in the stark contrast between this reactive tendency and the power of a well-thought-out, strategic approach. While critics clamoured for immediate, visible action, Governor Soludo chose instead to build a foundation for long-term security. Now, as the results of his calculated strategy become increasingly evident, it is time to ask ourselves: isn't it time us, as a society, learnt to value strategic thinking over the fleeting satisfaction of quick fixes?

In the long term, the success of 'Operation Udo Ga-Achi' and the 'Agunechemba' initiative will not just be about reacting to individual incidents. It is about proactively disrupting criminal operations, dismantling their infrastructure, and restoring a sense of security and hope to the state. As Governor Soludo's strategic thinking and refusal to be swayed by short-term criticisms are now bearing fruit, Anambra is witnessing a turning of the tide, with hope replacing despair. Yes, the original solution is still working. Peace will indeed reign in Anambra.

NDLEA ANAMBRA STATE COMMAND VISITS ANAMBRA EAST MAYOR

By Nwegbolfeanyi/Kelechi Achukwu-Jide/Ogochukwu Mokwugwo

The Chairman, Anambra East LGA, Sir Ifeanyi Chinweze, has emphasised the need to eradicate hard drug abuse in the region during a courtesy visit from the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) Anambra State Command. He urged the NDLEA team to regularly visit the area to combat drug abuse and suggested organising seminars to educate residents about the dangers of hard drugs.

The Anambra State NDLEA Commander, Mr. Daniel Ogbomna, highlighted the agency's efforts to combat drug abuse in collaboration with local governments. He noted that they are working tirelessly to reduce drug trafficking and abuse and have established drug-free clubs in schools, organised quiz competitions, and collaborated with community leaders and parents to achieve their goals.

