

# Suspected gunmen kill Benue deputy gov's brother

**B**ENUE State Deputy Governor's younger brother, Obaike Ajene, was a police officer. But his training and calling could not help him that Saturday morning when he was gunned down in cold blood by unknown assailants.

Ajene was returning from a funeral at his maternal village, Adoka, but unknown to him death was waiting for him at another village, Oketa.

That was where his assailants were said to have ambushed him, dragged him out of the vehicle and shot him severally until he died.

They reportedly drove off in his car which they later abandoned. But the police officer's body was left lying on the ground in a pool of his own blood, his few possession left with him.

Confirming the killing of the police officer, Benue State Police Commissioner, Mr Ibe Aghanya, said the incident occurred in a rural area where robbery was unlikely.

The police chief, who refused to be drawn into the conclusion that the officer was assassinated, noted that the police have never recorded a robbery at the village, which is usually quiet.

He said: "It is true that a police officer was killed at Oketa village near Otukpo. The killers who ambushed him ran away with his car, which they abandoned a few kilometres away from the scene of the crime. The curious thing about this situation is that nothing was taken from his car and it happened by 4 a.m. at a lonely route."

In the last two weeks, tension has been rising between the police and Otukpo youths after a police officer allegedly shot and killed one Simon

*From Simeon Nwakaudu, Makurdi*

Edache during a protest occasioned by power outage.

Also, two students of the Benue State University, Makurdi, a male and a female, were knocked down by a hit-and-run driver at the weekend.

The female student, said to be in her final year, died instantly while the male is still lying critically ill at an undisclosed hospital.

The Makurdi-Gboko Federal Highway has been closed to traffic as students of the Benue State University, numbering over 2,000, protesting the death of their colleague made bonfires on the road.

When *The Guardian* visited the scene of the protest, the students were seen building speed breakers on the highway.

A student who pleaded anonymity disclosed that they got cement for the project from a truck which ran into them during the protest.

Already, the students have completed the speed breakers close to the two gates of the university.

The Benue State government, a year ago, started the construction of a pedestrian bridge in front of the school after a final year student was killed by a hit-and-run driver in similar circumstances. The final year student was a nursing mother.

The pedestrian bridge project was, however, abandoned midway after frayed nerves had calmed down.

The killing of the Benue State University student, *The Guardian*, learnt was the 15th in the 13-year history of the institution.