

# Gunmen kill Agagu's security aide, PDP chief

“ALL of you, lie down,” a gun-toting man bellowed, while his partner-in-crime stood at the entrance of the supermarket.

It was not an order to be taken lightly. In a flash, everybody – both customers and employees – lay, face down. They prayed silently that the robbers would make their mission quick and bloodless. But they were wrong.

*From Niyi Bello  
and Julius Alabi,  
Akure*

The gunmen had other plans. The one in the supermarket moved straight to where one of the customers lay, pulled him up and poured invectives on him. The other gunman then took a slow, measured walk towards the victim, and shot him in the head.

The assailants thereafter jumped unto a motorbike that they had come with, and sped off. They did not lift a single item from the shop and did not as much as harass any other person.

Their victim, Mr. Tunde Awanebi, a retired Assistant Commissioner of Police, was relieved of his job as Chief Security Officer (CSO) to the Ondo State Governor,

Dr. Olusegun Agagu, only a few hours before the attack.

He died shortly after at the state hospital.

The crime scene, on Wednesday night, was a popular supermarket at the Jide Marc junction, along Ijoka Road in Akure, the Ondo State capital.

The curious murder

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## Report blames Security

# Gunmen kill governor's aide, PDP chief

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was, however, not isolated. About 24 hours earlier, on May 29, a chieftain of the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Bode Alonge, was killed at a drinking joint in Oke-Ijebu area of the state capital, where he was said to be celebrating Agagu's inauguration.

Alonge, according to sources, had just returned from Germany to attend the inauguration. He was said to be wearing a specially sown ankara that bore PDP inscriptions. He was shot dead at a close range by a two-man gang. The killers also escaped on a motorcycle.

The state government has announced a N10 million reward for anybody that can give useful information on the perpetrators of both crimes, which, curiously, were identical.

The late Awanebi was

said to have stopped for shopping at the supermarket at around 9.00 p.m. when the assailants came to the scene, again on a motorcycle.

Eyewitnesses said that Awanebi, who hailed from Okitipupa, an Ikale nationality like Governor, Agagu, was apparently trailled by the killers.

The CSO, who was among the crowd of customers, was said to have, like all the others, obeyed the instruction lie down, thinking they were armed robbers in search of loot.

He was however said to have been pulled up by the killers who, while pouring invectives on him, calling him "this useless man", pumped bullets into his head at close range. He was left in a pool of his blood while the hoodlums escaped through their get-away bike.

*The Guardian* learnt that sympathisers at the

scene rushed him to the State Specialist Hospital where doctors battled to save his life, to no avail. He died two hours later.

A pointer that the CSO was their only target, was the fact that the assailants did not take anything from the store. They also did not harm or rob the others.

It bears striking semblance to the Alonge killing.

Awanebi was appointed as the CSO to the governor at the inception of his administration in 2003.

Speaking at a press briefing on the matter, the Chairman of the Agagu Campaign Organisation, Prof. Olu Agbi, said the government and the PDP were "indeed very worried by the spate of unchecked violence which has unfortunately stalked our hitherto peaceful state in the last five months."

According to him, "the murder of the CSO has once again brought to the fore the new wave of violence being foisted on our dear state by hoodlums

and merchants of deaths on the prowl."

The State Commissioner of Police, Innocent Ilozuoke pledged that his men would do everything possible to unravel the killings.

The killings have reopened the bitter rivalry between the PDP and the Labour Party (LP) in the state.

Agbi, who refrained from identifying the LP as the mastermind of the killings, argued that the opposition party in the state had a history of violent attacks on PDP chieftains and sympathisers.

He added: "We are indeed very worried by the spate of unchecked violence which have unfortunately stalked our hitherto peaceful state in the last five months. While we are not preempting Police investigations into these heinous crimes, we believe that they were politically motivated."

Agbi expressed sadness at the murder of Alonge, who was said to have got married only about two months ago.

But the LP's Director of Press, Mr. Kolawole Olabisi, put the blame at the doorstep of the PDP. He said that the LP had in the past four months used the media to alert the public of alleged plans by the ruling party to unleash terror on the people of the state.

Olabisi said that the death of Awanebi could only have been done by the PDP to cover "some of their nefarious activities at the last polls."

Awanebi had been fingered as one of the arrowheads of the alleged fraud at the April 14 governorship election in the state, which the LP believes that it won, but which was declared in favour of the PDP by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

Olabisi queried: "How come that the very day in which the CSO was dropped, he was shot dead? Who wants him dead but those who felt that he might spill the beans now that he had been unceremoniously eased out after being used for their dirty job?"

## Our error

**T**HE United States Secretary of State for Africa is Jendayi Frazer and not Jenday Frusor, as contained in yesterday's Page Three Photo caption. The error is regretted.