

Gunmen kill Rivers official's mother, Imo Reps aspirant

From Kelvin Ebiri (Port Harcourt) and Charles Ogugbua (Owerri)

UKNOWN gunmen yesterday invaded the country home of the Rivers State Commissioner of Power and murdered his mother, Mrs. Lucy Wokocha.

The state government has condemned the act and charged the police to bring the perpetrators to book.

Also, for the second time in two weeks, daredevil gunmen yesterday killed a House of Representatives aspirant on the political platform of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Nze Sonny Orji Ogbu.

This came on the heels of last week's assassination of the proprietor of a supermarket in Owerri, Imo State, Mrs. Rose Amaka Onyeagwa, at Works Layout in the state capital.

Ogbu was assassinated when his entourage stopped to acknowledge cheers from his admirers. Nothing was taken from his vehicle.

Mrs. Wokocha, who is the mother of Rivers State Commissioner of Power, Augustine Wokocha, was murdered at her home in Okposi,

Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Council of Rivers State.

A family source disclosed to *The Guardian* that some unidentified gunmen broke into Wokocha's residence at about 2.30 a.m. and climbed through the ceiling from where they accessed the aged woman's room and murdered her.

Since the gunmen did not steal any valuable from the woman or from the house, there were speculations yesterday that the homicide was a clear case of assassination.

Efforts to reach the commissioner yesterday proved abortive. He was reportedly at a critical family meeting held to discuss the circumstances surrounding the dastardly act.

The state Police Public Relations Officer, Rita Inoma-Abbey, confirmed the tragic incident, adding that it was being investigated.

"It was gathered that the gunmen forcefully gained entrance through the ceiling into the late Mrs. Lucy Wokocha's residence at Okposi Village in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Council of the state," Inoma-Abbey said.

Commissioner of Information,

Ibim Semenitari, told *The Guardian* that the government would not treat the murder of any resident with kid gloves.

"The act is gruesome and upsetting for an old woman be to killed in this dastardly manner. My colleague, Hon. Wokocha, is a very peaceful man and his late mother was well known to me. She was not a troublesome person. This is unacceptable and government will not treat this with kid gloves," she said.

However, the Imo State Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Linus Nwaiwu, told *The Guardian* that he would get back to the paper in about two hours' time to provide more information on the aspirant's murder.

He said: "If you exercise patience and call me in about two hours' time, I will be able to tell you whether there is any arrest or not."

Ogbu, who had aspired to occupy Ideato North/South Federal Constituency seat at the House of Representatives, has had a successful career in banking, commerce and small-scale industry before venturing into politics.