

Barely 24 hours after Senator Lekan Balogun was attacked by some hoodlums loyal to pro-Lamidi Adedibu lawmakers in the premises of the Oyo State House of Assembly, the local government chairman of Ibadan South in the state, Chief Gbolagade Abiade, yesterday narrowly escaped death when some hoodlums attacked him in his residence.

One of his aides, whose identity could not be ascertained by press time was feared killed.

Numbering about 30, the hoodlums swooped on his Kaole Odo-Ona residence in Ibadan around 10am with dangerous weapons including guns such as AK47, shooting indiscriminately into the house. The suspected thugs stormed the place in some unidentified commercial buses and motorcycles (Okada). They however met stiff resistance from members of the Oodua Peoples Congress (OPC) who provided security in the house.

Residents of the area have fled their homes for fear of fresh violence. Briefing newsmen at the governor's office immediately after the attack, the ruffled Abiade called on Governor Rashidi Ladoja to provide adequate security for him and members of his family to prevent recurrence.

He alleged that the attempt on his life

was traceable to the camp of the controversial politician, Alhaji Lamidi Adedibu because, according to him, he had previously received many threats from the camp of the political chieftain asking him to come and pay homage.

Substantiating the allegation against Adedibu, the council boss said, "immediately after the attack, one Alhaji Adetunji called me and threatened to deal with me for injuring one of their members during the gun duel. The Divisional Police Officer of Apata was with me when the call came in. The policemen were still there when he told me that *Papa* would soon reinforce his men to attack me".

Chief Adedibu who spoke through his close aide, Alhaji Yahaya Adetunji, dismissed the claim of the chairman, saying Abiade's supporters were the first to attack their loyalists who were going for the voters registration.

"It is unfair that he accused us of attacking him when in actual fact, he was the one who led his supporters to attack our men. When he ordered his men to shoot our supporters, then he quickly called the attention of the police."

To prove that we were the ones who

Violence rocks Ibadan, as Ladoja, Adedibu's men clash

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 attacked his men, Adetunji claimed that the incident happened by the road side and not in Abiade's house.

"He is a liar. Chief Adedibu, is a reliable leader, when he was informed about the confusion, he sent men to find out from the chairman so as to solve the issue amicably".

Corroborating his own claim further, Abiade, however, said, "I had already got the hint of the attack since yesterday (Thursday) because someone called me and warned me to go and reconcile with Adedibu immediately, else I would be attacked. But I told the person that there was no way I could go to him. The reason being that I was attacked by his loyalists and detained in 2005, so, I wasn't sure of my safety if I went to his house".

The chairman explained that he was suspended as local govt chairman by Chief Adedibu despite several pleas.

"Chief Adedibu masterminded my suspension accusing me of jubilating over the legal victory of Ladoja. He also

fingered me as the person giving Ladoja information during his 11 month absence from power".

Confirming the attack, the Police Public Relations Officer, Mr. Olu Akinmoladun said the chairman reported the incident to them. He said, "the man spoke to us on phone and we promptly responded by drafting our men to the scene to provide him security."

Abiade's aide, who was feared killed, was said to have received machete cuts on the forehead. He reportedly died in a private hospital to which he was rushed for treatment.

Chief Abiade, a keen supporter of Ladoja was once removed as South West Council Chairman by Adedibu for being Ladoja's loyalist during the period of the Bayo Alao-Akala interregnum but was later reinstated by Ladoja after the Supreme Court pronounced his impeachment null and void on December 11, 2006.

At his office located at the council headquarters, the entire offices were deserted, only few people were seen around the premises, discussing the development in hush tone.

It was gathered that the

convoy of the thugs first had a stop at the office of the chairman before heading for his Odo-Ona residence after ransacking his office.

Some of the staff of the council were allegedly beaten and wounded for failing to disclose the whereabouts of the council boss.

A source said that no fewer than 50 motorcycles were employed by the attackers to invade the house of the council chairman with thugs riding the motor cycles in twos and wielding dangerous weapons.

Some reportedly carried cutlasses, clubs, axes, and knives while others brandished guns.

Security has however been beefed up at the home of the council chairman as mobile police men numbering about 15 have been positioned at the place to prevent insecurity and possible breakdown of law and order.

Damages in the house of the council boss included windows and doors, classes, vehicles and other valuables running into several thousands of naira.

But the State government yesterday warned trouble-makers of

dire consequences.

A statement issued by the Special Adviser to the Governor on Media and Publicity, Prince Ade Adekanmbi, said: "The Government of Oyo State is very worried about the acts of thuggery being carried out by hoodlums in some areas, especially the event of Thursday in the House of Assembly where Dr. Lekan Balogun was attacked.

"It is equally worrisome that again, some thugs, numbering over 30, also went to the home of Ibadan South-west Local Government chairman, to attack him.

"The State government cannot fold its arms and continue to witness the perpetration of arson and chaos.

"The State government calls on the commissioner of Police to live up to his responsibility of ensuring the safety of all citizens in the state.

"Meanwhile, he has appealed for calm, while other security measures are being put in place. Govt will leave no stone unturned in ensuring that the people causing these problems will be severely dealt with and brought to justice."