

•Lanre Oni inside a truck, with the three who are dead, insisting on his innocence ... yesterday. PHOTO: WALE FOLARIN

Police shoot Governor Oni's brother

•Chief Detail's driver, two others killed

GOVERNOR Segun Oni of Ekiti State's younger brother Lanre was yesterday shot by policemen at a check-point on Esa-Oke/Ilesa Road, Osun State. He was lucky, three others were not. They were

From Wale Folarin, Osogbo

of the Ekiti State Government House Kia Picardo car with registration number EKSG 75 and two passengers. Lanre and another passen-

ger Alao Olatunji, survived with bullet wounds. Lanre - an Ado-Ekiti panel beater, was shot on the chest and right leg.

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Three killed as police shoot Governor Oni's brother

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Olatunji, an HND 1 Estate Management student of the Osun State College of Technology, Esa-Oke, was shot in the left rib.

Police Commissioner Mr John Moronike had earlier paraded them as robbery suspects.

Moronike who spoke with reporters in Osogbo alleged that the five-man gang "had been attacking banks in the state in recent time, and was trailing a bullion van before nemesis caught up with them."

He said two sub-machine guns (SMGs) already loaded with 33 rounds of live ammunitions were recovered from the booth of the car.

The police boss said his officers repelled the attack from the suspects, adding that the police would investigate whether the car in which the suspects rode was a government car and how they came about the guns.

But the story changed when Lanre spoke with journalists, saying the policemen panicked when they saw the SMGs in the booth of the car "and they started shooting".

His statement was corroborated by the Chief Detail to the governor, Sunday Tokunbo, who spoke to *The Nation* last night.

"They were not armed robbers. I sent them to

Here is the interview with Lanre and Olatunji

Who are you?

Lanre: I am Lanre Oni from Ifaki-Ekiti. I am a younger brother to Governor Segun Oni of Ekiti State. I am a panel beater, my workshop is at Ado garage.

How are you related to him, I mean the governor?

We are of the same biological father?

How come you were arrested for armed robbery?

I am not an armed robber. Please help me to call Tokunbo, his number is on my mobile phone. He is an SSS man working with my brother. Please, tell him they've killed his driver. He was the one who sent us on errand to Ibadan.

How come you are in this mess?

It was Tokunbo the SSS man that sent me to Ibadan to go and buy tyres for his 304 car. I went to him this morning at the Governor's office and he gave me money for the tyres and for feeding. He told his driver to drive me to Ibadan and we were in his official car.

So what happened?

Please tell them to give me water, I want to drink water. Please call Tokunbo, tell him to come quickly; they've killed his driver.

It's good for you to do without water now, just tell me your story

When we left Ado-Ekiti, the driver told me that he couldn't go to Ibadan with empty vehicle and that he would carry some passengers so as to raise some money. I told him that Tokunbo had given me enough money to take care of us, but he insisted on picking passengers. So, he picked that yellow man who is dead and later picked another man who is also dead now. When we got to Esa-Oke-Ilesa road, he picked the third person who is still alive. While we are going, we met the bullion van going in front. We were in the official car with government number, so we tried to overtake the bullion van, but they prevented us and

Ibadan to get spare parts of our cars," he said, weeping.

Lanre denied the allegation that they were armed robbers. He said that he is a panel beater at Ado-Ekiti garage and that he is of the same biological father with Governor Oni.

According to him, Tokunbo, a member of the State Security Service (SSS) attached to the governor, sent him and his driver to Ibadan, the Oyo State capital, with his official car, to go and buy tyres.

He said the driver picked

sped off. They got to the police check point before us and we did not know that they had told the policemen to stop our car. When we got to the check point, we were ordered to park and we did. We were asked to get out of the car and the police asked for the vehicle particulars and ordered us to sit on the ground. They then called the driver to open the booth and they found the guns inside. They then told the driver to go and bring his driver's licence. The moment he turned his back at them, one of them shot him in the back and he died immediately. They then opened fire at us where we sat and killed two other persons immediately. Thereafter, they moved us down here. Please, call Tokunbo on my handset, his number is there. We are not armed robbers, we don't even know the other passengers.

Who owns the guns?

The guns belong to Tokunbo, the SSS man attached to Governor Oni. We didn't even know that the guns were inside the car booth.

Where were you shot?

I was shot several times in the chest and in my right leg.

Interview with Olatunji

What's your name?

I'm Alao Olatunji. I'm an HNDI Estate Management student of the Osun State College of Technology, Esa-Oke.

What happened?

I was going to Ilesa from Esa-Oke and I stood by the road side to get a vehicle that would convey me to Ilesa. I saw the car and I waved it down and I boarded the car. When we got to the police check point, they stopped us and ordered us to get down. They said we should sit on the ground. The next thing I saw was that they opened fire at us. Please tell them to take us to the hospital or give us first aid. We are dying. I am not an armed robber. I'm a student. Look at my credentials, my certificate. I met the other people in the car. I don't know any of them.

up the three other passengers along the road against his advice and that when they got to Esa-Oke-Ilesa road, they attempted to overtake a bullion van, but the bullion van escorted pre-

vented mobile policemen at a check point to stop them.

Lanre said they were flagged down and the mobile policeman asked for the particulars of the vehicle which he said was produced by the driver. He said that the driver

was asked to open the booth of the car and a search revealed the two guns.

According to him, the guns belong to the SSS man and they were not aware that the weapons were inside the booth of the car. He said the driver was killed on the spot. The policemen sprayed him and the other passengers with bullets, killing two others.

Lanre said that the three other occupants were picked by the road side, a position which was corroborated by Olatunji.

Olatunji, who said that he did not know any of the passengers, also explained that he was going to Ilesa and he boarded the vehicle along the road. Olatunji showed *The Nation* his credentials to prove his claim that he is a student.

The Police Commissioner later directed that Lanre and Olatunji be taken to the hospital immediately.

Tokunbo was inconsolable when he spoke with *The Nation*. After stage, he could no longer continue and another officer had to take the phone from him.

"The two SMGs were inside a black bag in the booth of the car. These guys don't even know how to shoot guns. I sent them to Ibadan to get spare parts for some of our cars. I don't know why this should happen to them," he said.