

# Puzzle over politician's fate

- He was gunned down by robbers in ambush –Police
- Family: tell us another story

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THE story of the circumstances surrounding the death of Chief Beedoff Odumosor and events that unfolded afterwards makes a perfect plot for a bestseller mystery novel. The tale is intricate, marked by twists and turns and theories of conspiracy.

His first son, Azuka, and other family members are asking the police, under whose custody he died, to provide cogent answers or provide him alive. And his alleged spat with a prominent politician and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) stalwart in his community adds further complexity to the plot.

Beedoff, a businessman, member of the PDP and an indigene of Umu-Udem Quarters in Beneku community, Ndokwa East Local Government Area of Delta State was arrested by the police on December 30, 2012. He was picked up on allegations of conspiracy, kidnapping, armed robbery and murder.

The police claimed that he was arrested after three suspects arrested in connection with the

murder of Beedoff's kinsman and fellow indigene of Beneku, Chief Emmanuel Chukwulolu who was murdered a week earlier, on December 23, 2012 allegedly implicated him in the crime. They (Police) said he was fingered as the man who sponsored the kidnappers/robbers and furnished them with arms and ammunition to kill the deceased.

According to the accounts of his son, the police swooped on the residents of Beedoff in the wee hours of that fateful day and took him, along his fairly new 'tokunbo' Toyota 4Runner SUV, to the State Police Headquarters, Asaba.

Before his travail, he was the Ward Chairman of the ruling PDP in his area and had reportedly fallen out with a very prominent member of the party in the area over the party's primary in 2011. His son alleged that the politician threatened to deal with his father, hinting that it was possible that the threat had materialised in his father's arrest.

The Police Public Relations Officer in the state command, Celestina Kalu, a Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP), who was

contacted, said she was very busy at the time of filing this report. She promised to get details of the case and get in touch with our reporter afterwards.

However, Sgt Adama Emmanuel, the litigation officer in the legal/prosecution section, State Criminal Investigation Department, Asaba told a Federal High Court in Asaba that before his death, that Beedoff made a confessional statement, in which he allegedly stated that he only recruited and sponsored the killers to kidnap his late kinsman.

According to the police, the suspect said he took the action because his counterpart was more popular in the community and enjoyed more patronage and contracts from oil companies operating in the area.

Sgt Emmanuel added: "Upon a confession that the arms (guns) and ammunition they used to commit the heinous crime was hidden at the applicant's (Beedoff's) backyard at Beneku community, the operative team in company of the six suspects arrested, swung into action with a view to

recovering the arms and ammunition..."

They never got to their destination.

The police said the team "ran into an ambushment of armed robbers" who rained bullets on the police vehicle taking the suspects to Beneku. The ambush took place on their way, around Ogwashi-Uku/Kwale Road.

According to the police, the robbers rained bullets on the police squad car, hitting Chief Beedoff Odumosor, the prime suspect and policemen. The two suspects were confirmed dead at the Federal Medical Centre, Asaba, later on that very eventful December 30, 2012 morning.

A coroner report indicated that the supposed cause of death was gunshot wound sustained in an armed robbery attack.

Five days later, on 4 January, 2013, the police obtained a Warrant to Bury from an Asaba Magistrate's Court for Chief Beedoff Odumosor and Ikwueke Ernest (aka Ola). The police say the suspects were later buried.

Nevertheless, the family of the late Beedoff are distinctly unimpressed. In a series of petitions to the police high commands, the Police

Headquarters, Abuja and the Zone 5 Headquarters in Benin City, the family raised posers about the police claims on their member's alleged death. In one of the petitions to the AIG Zone, they demanded that the case be moved from the state, ostensibly because they feared conspiracy in the command.

A petition by C.U. Umode & Co. particularly faulted the manner the family was informed of the death. In the petition to the Assistant Inspector General of Police, Zone 5, he said the family were tersely informed in court through a police affidavit in response to the family motion seeking the production of the suspect

in court.

C.U. Umode Esq., author of the petition, said the police only made the revelation upon the receipt of a court order directing them to producing Beedoff in court.

"A counter-affidavit deposed to by one Sgt Adama Emmanuel reveals that he was informed by one Sgt Julius Robinson that the said Chief Beedoff Odumosor was shot dead by armed robbers who attacked them."

Nevertheless, the legal practitioner said his investigation revealed that the suspects were never taken to the police headquarters as claimed, but were kept in a building under construction for about 16 days.

He debunked the police claim that Beedoff died in a shoot out, hinting that the truth about what happened to the politician was yet to be made known, particularly as the family members were not allowed to identify his remains before he was buried.

Besides, Azuka, the suspect's son, said the day after his father's arrest, he went with a legal practitioner to the police headquarters to inquire about the grounds for the arrest.

He said the policeman, who led the arrest, Sgt Julius Robinson allegedly told them that he was acting on strict orders of the Commissioner of Police, Mr Ikechukwu Aduba, "Not to grant any person access to meet" with Beedoff.

Other family sources hinted that his fate was not unconnected with internal squabble within the ruling PDP in the area. Several sources traced the face-off to the outcome of one of the party's primaries in the run-up to the 2011 election. Umode, in a petition, alleged that somebody had vowed to deal with Beedoff.

Meanwhile, 16 months after, the air is yet to clear on what happened to Beedoff; if he is dead or alive. His son and other members of the family are hoping that he is alive somewhere.

Part of the puzzle being raised by the family is, if indeed the suspects were killed in an ambush, how come none of the policemen died?



CP Aduba

## h of 26-yr-old expectant mother

on duty to the development. The swollen lips later subsided after she was treated, but she died shortly after on March 16. A doctor at LASUTH, who did not want her name mentioned, told me that my sister must have reacted to a particular drug called ROCEPHINE that was administered on her. She said the drug was mostly used on patients who suffer from cancer, or people suffering from excessive pains.

comments on the grounds that she was not competent to speak on the matter. "I cannot say anything on the matter because I am not officially competent to speak on this incident. The Ministry of Health is the only place you can get comments on this issue, please go there."

Fruitless efforts were also made by our correspondent to seek the comment of the spokesman of the Lagos State Ministry of Health, Mr. Tunbosun, as he did not pick his calls or reply a text message sent to his phone line.

## Death of a tricyclist sparks outrage in Delta