

2021 NLNG prize winner, Onyemelukwe, confirms father's killing

GODFREY GEORGE

THE father of the winner of the 2021 NLNG Prize for Nigerian Literature, Professor Isaiah Onyemelukwe, has been killed by gunmen

His daughter, Prof Cheluchi, who confirmed the incident to *Sunday PUNCH* on Saturday, said, "My heart is heavy. It is the hardest thing that Nigeria happened to my father. We don't even know where we are headed in this country, but I'm glad he lived an exemplary and lesson-filled life will try to put up something tomorrow."

It was learnt that Onyemelukwe, an 88-year-old retired professor of Economics at Nnamdi Azikiwe University, on Friday in Oko, in the Orumba South Local Government Area of Anambra State.

Multiple sources said the gunmen blocked vehicles coming from Umunze, Ufunma into Oko, and murdered the professor in cold blood.

It was gathered that the operation lasted for more than

an hour unhindered.

The assailants were also said to have abducted two other individuals whose whereabouts have remained unknown.

A Facebook user with the name, moniker Onyi, who shared the news in a post on Nairaland, wrote, "South-East is absolutely going down. My godfather was recently murdered by the marauding killers wreaking havoc on the South-East's ecosystem.

"He was returning to Nanka with his wife from Enugu and decided to follow the Oji-Ufuma-Amaokpala-Okoko axis instead of traveling through Awka when he was attacked by the hoodlums.

"The previous Bishop of Niger, Bishop J. A. Onyemelukwe, is his cousin. May his soul rest in peace. Amen!"

The late professor was a permanent secretary in the old Anambra.

The Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Ikenga Tochukwu, promised to get back to our correspondent but had yet to do so as of press time.

5,862 kilograms of assorted illicit drugs, including "Loud and

Seven killed, SS3 pupil shot, 57 abducted in Kaduna attacks

GODWIN ISENYO

SUSPECTED terrorists in separate attacks killed seven persons at Kuriga, along the Birnin Gwari-Kaduna highway, in Kaduna State.

A pupil of Government Science Secondary School, Birnin-Gwari, was reported to have escaped with a bullet wound on his way to register for Joint Admission Matriculations Board's Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination in the state capital.

This was contained in a statement issued by the Birnin Gwari Vanguard for Security and Good Governance and signed by its Chairman, Ibrahim Nagwari, in Kaduna on Saturday.

The statement added that three other people escaped with mild wounds, while 57 persons were abducted by the bandits.

The statement titled, 'One student of Science School, Birnin-Gwari travelling for JAMB registration attacked, seven others killed on separate attacks,' read, "The nightmare of armed banditry along Birnin-Gwari-Kaduna highway has further deteriorated in the last 24 hours. Today(Saturday) around

engaged them, maybe it would have been a different thing."

10am, a final-year pupil of Science Secondary School Birnin-Gwari escaped with bullet wounds on his shoulder while on his way for the JAMB -UTME registration in Kaduna.

"The dreadful armed bandits sprayed bullets on the vehicle conveying the pupil and others at Manini village after Kuriga along Birnin-Gwari Kaduna Highway. The student is awaiting surgery for the removal of the bullet in his shoulder at Jibrin Maigwari General Hospital in Birnin-Gwari.

"Similarly, armed bandits killed seven people at Unguwar Bula, Unguwar Dafillo and Ijinga in Randagi district, Birnin-Gwari on Saturday. The bandits on motor circles numbering fifty attacked the communities around eleven O'clock in the morning on Friday and lasted for four hours, preventing people from conducting Juma'at prayers."

As of the time of filing this report, neither the state nor the state police command had confirmed the attacks.

When contacted, the spokesman of the command, ASP Mohammad Jalige, neither returned our correspondent's call nor responded to the text message.