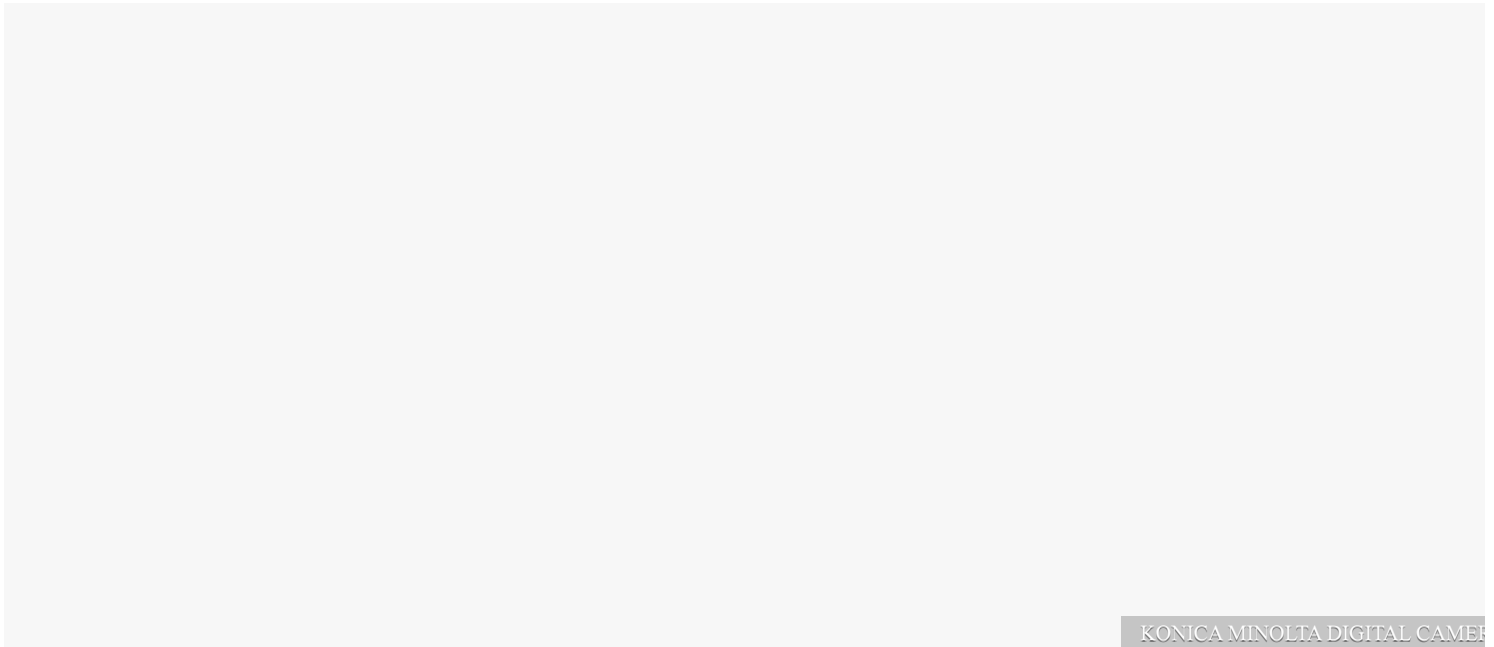


Gunmen abduct Edo Assembly candidate, kill police orderly

• Gov urges calm, orders probe

25th January 2019



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From **Tony Osauzo**, Benin

Suspected kidnappers, in the early hours of yesterday, abducted former deputy speaker of Edo House of Assembly, who is also the All Progressives Congress Assembly candidate, Michael Ohio-Ezomo, at his residence in Owan West Local Government Area.

They killed his police orderly in the process.

Three of the assailants reportedly entered his compound while others stood guard outside the fence.

The incident provoked outrage from youths of the community, who barricaded roads leading into the area with heavy logs of wood; in protest.

It took the personal intervention of the Commissioner of Police, Hakeem Odumosu, who engaged saw millers, who deployed motor saws to cut the logs, which eventually paved the way and allowed entry into and exit from the community.

Chairman of the council, Frank Ilaboya, spoke on the incident.

“It happened around 1:00am, yesterday, in his house, at Owan West here. We got the information early yesterday morning that Ohio-Ezomo’s police orderly has been killed.

“They shot him and they were able to get Mike out of his room. From what we heard from the driver, they shattered the window with bullets and entered the room and took him away. So, we don’t know his whereabouts; no contact yet.

“He went on campaign on Wednesday; he went to some camps with Professor Julius Ihonvbere, who is the House of Representatives candidate and, we even spoke after the campaign. They were supposed to even continue the campaign today (yesterday) but for this unfortunate incident.”

On his part, Governor Godwin Obaseki has called for calm and has also directed the Police Command in the state to immediately launch rescue operation.

In a statement by his Special Adviser on Media and Communication Strategy, Crusoe Osagie, the governor said rescue operation commenced immediately the incident was brought to the attention of security agencies in the state and the police commissioner.

“Governor Godwin Obaseki is on top of the incident and calls on the people to remain calm. He has ordered the Police Command to ensure that the kidnap victim is rescued. The commissioner of police has arrived Owan West. He is championing the investigation,” said Osagie.

Odumosu reiterated that he has mobilised his men to apprehend the kidnappers.

He said: “It is a case of kidnap and then murder. They broke into the compound and first went to the Boys Quarters where the police orderly was sleeping and killed him, which was to first put in check any resistance and then, went into the four-bedroom bungalow where the victim was and broke the window to gain entrance into the building.

“Three of them went inside the house while the others guarded the building outside. One of the three that went inside was wearing a hood and hand gloves which means there is an insider who is likely to know the terrain and didn’t want to be identified.

“We have started investigation, they went away with the phones of the victim. We have ordered for the embalmment of the corpse of our fallen man, so that we will do the necessary processes before we inform the family.”

“Investigation commenced immediately from that midnight and we have appealed to the youths not to take laws into their hands because when we were going there, they fell trees to block the road in about three places, it took us almost two hours to clear the road, showing their displeasure about what happened, so, I have gone round the nook

and cranny of the community appealing to everybody, I have deployed more policemen there and I have also gotten the assistance of all sister security agencies there, including the vigilante to give us any information.

“As at now, they have not made any contact, but we are not waiting for that, we are deploying our strategy, our technology is already in place and by the grace of God, we are assuring the people that we will do our job, if there is anybody they suspect, they should give us information and whatever they are doing must be within the ambits of the law.

“They are not assassins, if they wanted to kill him, they had the opportunity, but they just took him out. He was the one that even opened the door for them to move out, but they went through the window after damaging the glasses.

“They first killed the orderly, who they believe will constitute resistance and then made the others to lie down and somebody was watching over them, while the others went inside the house,” Odumosu narrated.