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# Bloody Sunday in Edo

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Edo state governor Adams Oshiomhole

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***The Edo State Police Command battles to unravel the motive behind the gun attack on the family of a Benin-based***

***businessman during which four persons  
were killed***

What could be the motive behind last Sunday's brutal gun attack on a Benin-based businessman and engineer, Tes Sorae, whose 60-year-old first wife, Bridget, driver and two police orderlies were killed? This is the riddle detectives in the Edo State Police Command were battling to solve as the whereabouts of the prominent businessman remained unknown as at press time. Sorae, it was gathered, was returning home from

church at around 10.40am when his assailants accosted him at the gate of his Textile Mill Road residence. Sorae, the chief executive officer, CEO of Tomline Engineering Company Limited situated along Uselu-Lagos Road, is a chieftain of the Peoples Democratic Party, PDP in the state.

The magazine gathered that Sorae, who drove in a black Toyota Sequia Jeep with registration number Edo AU 157 USL, was waiting for the gate to be opened when the gunmen launched a surprise attack, opening

fire on the vehicle. His driver and the two mobile policemen attached to him were killed instantly. The PDP stalwart's first wife who clocked 60 this April died last Monday in the hospital while his first daughter, a 400-level undergraduate is in a critical condition. Sources close to the hospital where she was being treated said her legs may be amputated because they were badly shattered by bullets.

The bandits, who reportedly operated in a Toyota car, were said to have released

volleys of bullets into the air to scare away people before taking away the businessman who was deliberately shot in the leg and dumped in the booth of their vehicle. The manner in which the gunmen struck raised suspicion that it could indeed be an assassination attempt and not the usual kidnap that had been rampant in the state particularly when the family had not been contacted for ransom. Sorae, the convener of the annual Christian Festival in the state, was feared dead last Tuesday. Speculation was rife that his corpse had been discovered in a bush in Uwelu village in the outskirts of Benin

City.

One of the abducted businessman's sons, Amua, however, said the family was yet to get such information neither had the family been contacted by Sorae's abductors. When the magazine visited the Sorae's residence last Monday, members of the grieving family, political associates and neighbours were seen in a prayer session, making supplications to God for his release alive. Eyewitnesses said the bodies of the driver and police orderlies were riddled with bullets

while the late wife of the businessman also had her thighs shattered with bullets. The jeep, which had several bullet holes, was full of blood. Apart from sympathisers, security operatives, including the divisional police officer of the nearby Textile Mill Road Police Station, B. Egharevba, a chief superintendent of police, CSP, and his men were on ground to assess the situation.

Though the state police commissioner, David Omojola, said investigation into the case had commenced, the PDP suspected



assassination as the motive for the attack.

The state chairman of the party, Dan Orbih, who led a delegation of party officials on a condolence visit to the Sorae family last Monday, wondered what could be responsible for the abduction of the businessman and the violent killings. Orbih said, “Sorae is not just a prominent party leader in his local government but also in Edo State. He is the sole financier of our candidate for Ovia Federal Constituency seat in the House of Representatives, Charity Amanayaevo.”

The PDP chairman, who also visited the state police commissioner, said, “It is important for the police not to close any lead in this case particularly when Amanayaevbo’s petition is raising serious questions at the Election Petitions Tribunal in the state.” Orbih called on the state governor, Adams Oshiomhole, to support security agencies, noting that this had become necessary in view of the spate of kidnappings and violent crimes in the state. The PDP chairman said, “There can be no meaningful development where there is no security or where there is threat to lives and property.”

While commiserating with the police commissioner over the death of two of his men in the attack, Orbih enjoined him to convey the party's sympathy to the family of the deceased policemen. Omojola promised that he would "leave no stone unturned in our quest to get to the root of the matter."

While the police are busy turning the stones in search of the missing politician, his family and associates are on their knees praying for


his safe return.

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