

# Another PDP Aspirant Killed

**B**arely two weeks after the gruesome murder of a Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) gubernatorial frontrunner in Lagos Engr. Funsho Williams, another tragedy befell the serene community of Ijan in Ekiti State yesterday as a

## • *Party reads riot act on violence*

*By Our Reporters*

gubernatorial aspirant on the platform of PDP, Dr. Ayodeji Daramola, was slaughtered in his bedroom.

Daramola, a 54-year old

doctor of Food Science was said to have been assassinated at about 1am at his country home by a group of assailants numbering about 12 who invaded his residence and stabbed him to death.

As a result of this, the PDP has threatened to disqualify aspirants who fail to show leadership in curbing the excesses of their followers.

Incidentally, his death occurred barely 24 hours

after the Ekiti State Government raised an alarm over an impending attack on prominent Ekiti indigenes by out-of-state killers.

The gubernatorial aspi-  
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To do list today:

PDP ASPIRANTS *Cont'd from P1*

rant was said to have rushed to Ijan on Sunday morning from Lagos after a telephone call from one of the party's chieftains in the state.

Daramola's murder has also elicited many condemnations from well-wishers including the state governor, Mr. Ayo Fayose, the Inspector General of Police and many political leaders in the state.

Explaining how the dastardly incident occurred, sources at the residence of the deceased disclosed that the assailants who scaled the fence to gain entry into his premises had to force the door leading to his bedroom opened where he was slaughtered.

According to the source, there were clouts of blood all over the place especially in the bedroom where the incident took place.

When THISDAY visited the community yesterday, a usually quiet and calm environment, several bon fires were made on major roads in the town, just as

several houses including that of the state chairman of PDP, Chief Ropo Adesanya were set ablaze by angry youths who were protesting the murder.

Besides, a number of government official vehicles were also burnt while carcasses littered the streets.

Following the incident, a detachment of anti-riot policemen had been dispatched to calm the situation and prevent further damages to lives and properties.

This development also forced Ijan Ekiti residents to flee the town and are currently taking refuge at neighbouring communities.

The incident demoralised citizens of the ancient town in view of his disposition and his willingness to assist the people and to facilitate what they considered as benefit for the generality of his men.

At press time yesterday, the ancient city had almost become a ghost of its usual self, as people were no longer seen on the

streets for fear of possible arrest or molestation by the security operatives

The state governor who briefed newsmen yesterday said the unfortunate incident has put Ekiti in the limelight while he placed a price of N5million on any one who could volunteer information on the murder.

"My government have had causes to express serious worry and concern on the conduct of some characters who do not see anything good in this government and the ruling party; who have adopted a brazen desperation as a tool for capturing power.

"My heart therefore bleeds this day as I receive the shocking news of the gruesome murder of Dr Ayodele Daramola, an emerging light in the present generation of Ekiti indigenes."

Fayose said "It is clear that the intention of these blood-hounds is to cause a spate of general insecurity across the length and breadth of Nigeria. As Chief Security in the state, I shall spare

no effort in ensuring the protection of lives and properties in Ekiti state."

The Inspector-General of Police, Mr Sunday Ehindero also described the gruesome assassination as a rude shock to the force.

Ehindero who spoke when he visited the state governor, over the incident yesterday said he was on his way from Bakkassi when he heard about the incident.

He told the governor that he had been to the Ijan-Ekiti residence of the deceased as well as the state hospital to see things for himself saying it was a clear case of assassination which police would get to the root of how it all happened.

Ehindero, who was accompanied by top police officers, including Ekiti State Commissioner of Police (CP), Mrs. Ivy Okoronkwo, also visited the hospital where the slain politician's friend, who was with him when he was shot, was receiving treatment.

The police boss was said to have interviewed the man and other witnesses in connection with the politician's death.

The police authority has constituted an investigative panel headed by the Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) in charge of 'Operations', Mr. Mike Okiro.

The panel, which was already in the state, is expected to investigate the killings and submit reports back to the Force Headquarters, Abuja.

A gubernatorial aspirant on the platform of the Alliance for Democracy (AD) in Ekiti State, Mr. Ayo Arise lamented the assassination of Daramola, describing it as another setback to the state.

Arise said the development was very shameful to the entire state, arguing that the ploys of charlatans to intimidate credible Nigerians from participating in politics through this type of dastardly act will not work.

He urged the police to commence investigations into the

murder and ensure that the perpetrators are brought to book.

Others who have condemned the murder include the National Association of Nigeria Students (NANS), Ekiti state AD Chairman,

Chief George Akosile, Chief Idowu Odeyemi, co-ordinator of the Ekiti Agenda, and the Ekiti state chapter of the Advanced Congress of Democrats (ACD).

Meanwhile, following report of Daramola's assassination, the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), has threatened to disqualify aspirants who fail to show leadership in curbing the excesses of their followers.

Rising from its National Working Committee (NWC) meeting yesterday in Abuja, the party said that it would insist on zero-tolerance policy on violence and acts and statements that were inciting and were likely to provoke violence.

A statement signed on behalf of the NWC by National Secretary of the party, Chief Ojo Maduekwe

entitled: "Confronting The Beast: PDP Says 'No to Violence'", urged authorities investigating the spate of killings not to rule out the possibility of "fifth columnist and agents-provocateurs syndicated for the purpose of casting the PDP in bad light".

The party said, that being the largest stakeholder in the nation's democratic politics, it had a lot more at stake in a peaceful transition than any other group, adding, "We cannot keep quiet in the face of this disturbing trend".

"Our concern is heightened by the arson in Ekiti State, following the killing of a PDP governorship aspirant and destruction of PDP Secretariat, PDP State Chairman's house, and properties belonging to other PDP members", it stated.

The party urged the Federal Government to mobilise all resources to apprehend those behind the disturbing pattern of killings "no matter how highly placed and no matter how many they are".

"Police must be seen to deploy all their investigative arsenal to unravel these killers if the confidence of decent people in the vocation of politics is to be sustained.

"We urge our members not only to remain law-abiding, but to refrain from language and conduct that facilitate a culture of violence.

"All party leaders are hereby directed to adhere strictly to the provisions of the Party Constitution, the Nigerian Constitution, and the soon-to-be-released Electoral Guidelines in the process of candidate emergence from the wide pool of aspirants at all levels", the statement reads.

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Adviser, Lt. Gen. Aliyu Gusau, to weave a political machine that will throw up the next president of the country in 2007.

Evidence of powerful opposition to his ambition became stronger in the run up to his birthday, Thursday, as some of the military as well as political decisions taken by his regime were exhumed for administrative review.

Only a few weeks ago Sefiya, the widow of his bosom friend and former minister of Federal Capital Territory, Maj. Gen. Mamman Vatsa, petitioned the President and asked for the review of the 1985 execution of her husband.

His friend's widow had hardly dropped the petition at the Aso Rock Villa when Mohammed, the former military president's first son, became a guest of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) to explain an alleged ownership of 24% of the shares of telecommunications giant, Globacom.

Although Mohammed eventually walked into freedom on Sunday morning, many Babangida loyalists believed that the recent events were meant to roughen him and discourage him from pursuing his presidential ambition.

But the toothy five-star general indicated clearly yesterday that his ambition remained alive and he would not be intimidated into walking away from the presidential contest that, from all accounts, had promised to throw up high-wired political manoeuvres.

Speaking with the conviction of man ready to fight, he said: "The challenge, which the vibrancy of democracy throws up is essentially that of national leadership (and) because democracy remains essentially a process, it challenges the political leadership to be dynamic

Bolaji Akinyemi, the former president said that the lecture formed part of a global manifestation the free expression of ideas, which he said was a critical element of the democratic process.

He, however, noted that while the major democracies were engaged with how to project democracy as an instrument of international power and global economic advantage, the "new" democracies of Africa were faced with a multiple challenge.

According to him, "First, we are challenged to select and distil from the various models of democracy the form that is most appropriate to our various peculiar national circumstances.

"Second, we have to agree on the minimum expectations of the governed from those whom they empower to rule over them; third, those who assume the mandate of the people have to grapple with the imperatives of ensuring the stability and sometimes the survival of the very nation states they are elected to rule.

"Fourth, because the needs of our peoples remain basic and mostly existential, our new democracies are challenged to pursue strategies of economic development that sometimes violate some of the fundamental principles of democracy in a bid to deliver dividends quickly and to the greatest majority".

He said that Nigeria was today an embodiment of "these contradictory demands and mutually reinforcing imperatives in a very stark form", stressing "I believe the Nigerian experience with democracy in the last seven years especially has thrown up the major issues and problems of democratic transformation in present day Africa"

Babangida reviewed the state of

the nation over the years and concluded that issues that had long been presumed resolved have once again come to the fore "with greater clarity and compelling stringency".

According to him, "Minority rights are being expressed and pressed with increased militancy. Primordial cleavages have resurfaced and sometimes threaten the foundations of national cohesion."

In his lecture on the occasion, Akinyemi x-rayed the essence of democracy and posited that broad agreement and consensus on the great issues of today was sine qua non factor of democracy.

He said that that some issues had been settled while some had not yet been settled, pointing out that the issue of population remains controversial, adding, "the issue of revenue allocation, to a large extent, bears a relationship to the census issue and as long as the census figures remain controversial, the issue of revenue allocation will also remain controversial".

Akinyemi spoke on the elections that had held in the nation since independence warning that the issue of power shift now threatening to tear the country apart was

Forwarding Company with an offer of N3.599 billion in respect of Federal Government's 100 per cent equity in the firm.

Other companies that took part in the bid process include TSM Global Logistics, a consortium floated by Transcorp, NACFA Management Limited and Port Operations Limited.

The list also includes Kungo Rock Investments which had

a direct consequence of the loss of faith in free and fair elections.

He said as a way forward, "we must find a way to insulate census and state creation from revenue allocation and electoral representation", stating that the role of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) should be revisited to deal with the provision in the constitution where the president is responsible for the nomination of the commission's chairman and members subject to the confirmation by the senate.

On revenue allocation, he said "we should go back to the revenue philosophy of the First Republic, which is that of revenue derivation", adding "it is the figures and percentages that should be negotiated".

According to him, "My own proposals are as follows: Since the representatives of the oil producing states at the last political conference had agreed to an immediate 25 per cent formula, that should be the point of departure.

"We should also accept a 5 per cent increase to the maximum figure of 50 per cent. The remaining 50 per cent should be distributed on the basis of zonal equality (and) an

LE MERIDIEN *Cont'd from P1*

offered N1.3 billion and Jaelith Holdings Nigeria Limited with an offer of N1.1 billion.

TSM Global logistics was however named as the reserved bidder with a bid price of N3.575 billion second to that of Jorotom International Agency.

Steyr Nigeria Limited was also privatised during the occasion with Scintilla Prime Investments Limited emerging as the sole and preferred bidder.

Equalisation Fund to handle national, zonal, state or local disaster should be included; the disaster can be defined to include per capita income falling below an acceptable level".

Among dignitaries present at the event were Niger State Governor, Alhaji Abdulkadir Kure, former Chief of Army Staff, Lt. General Inuwa Wushishi, former Minister of the Federal Capital Territory, Air Vice Marshal Hamza Abdullahi, former President of the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria, Alhaji Umaru Ndanusa, former Chief Judge of Abuja, Justice Dahiru Saleh, former Governor of old Northwest, Alhaji Usman Farouk, former Internal Affairs Minister, Brigadier-General John Shagaya.

A member of the Board of Trustees of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Alhaji Isyaku Ibrahim, former Information Minister, Professor Sam Oyovbaire, former Ambassador to South Africa, Dr. Tunji Olagunju, National Chairman of the National Democratic Party (NDP), Alhaji Aliyu Habu-Fari and former Governor of Anambra State, Dr. Chinwoke Mbadinuju.

The company offered N720 million to clinch the 75 per cent Federal Government equity in the auto-manufacturing company based in Bauchi.

Another company sold with just a sole bidder was Ihechiowa Oil Palm Company. Omen Nigeria Limited was the sole and preferred bidder with a bid offer of N26 million for 85 per cent federal government equity in the firm.

BAKASSI *Cont'd from P1*