

Gunmen kill Dora Akunyili's husband, 16 others in Anambra

Okey Maduforo
AWKA

Dr. Chike Akunyili, the husband to the former Director General of the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) and former Minister of Information, late Prof Dora Akunyili and seven other person were, yesterday killed by gunmen at Nkpor in the Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State.

It was learnt that Dr. Akunyili was returning from a trip in Onitsha where he went to collect a posthumous award of excellence for the late NAFDAC boss, Prof Dora Akunyili, when he ran into the gunmen at Nkpor and was shot dead.

According to eyewitness, the gunmen were chanting "No election in Anambra in November".

But an eyewitness had it that the gunmen were trapped at the Nkpor traffic and the policemen attached to him came out to clear the traffic and, at that moment, the gunmen opened fire.

Late Chike Akunyili was said to have run out of his vehicle for safety when he was gunned down.

Similarly, at Madonna Catholic Church, Agulu in Anaocha Local Government Area, three persons were reportedly gunned down at Nwagu Market and three other persons were alleged to have been killed at a political gathering at Ezinifite Agwata before the Agulu incident.

Reacting to the killings, former governor of Anambra State and the presidential running mate of the Peoples Democratic Party Mr. Peter Obi and the traditional ruler of Agulu Community Igwe Innocent Obodoakor, have described the killing of Dr. Chike

Akunyili and other innocent people as a sad situation.

Also, Akunyili's home town, Agulu, has been thrown into a mourning mood following the killing of their son yesterday.

According to Obi, who spoke with reporters at Agulu: "It is a sad situation and nobody can tell the reason how and why our society degenerated to this level."

"The only solution to this problem is a collective attention of all stakeholders, those in government and, in fact, everybody in the society," he said.

Obi recalled how the news came to him through WhatsApp yesterday morning and he had to rush down to Anambra through Owerri.

He noted that he has spoken to Late Dr. Chike Akunyili who is abroad and also met with his other son who identified his father's body at Iyenu Hospital where the bodies of Akunyili and eight others were kept.

Obi thanked the police for taking the bodies to the hospital, but expressed fears that if the situation is not arrested, the society would be doomed.

Igwe Innocent Obodoakor told reporters that the late Dr. Chike Akunyili was a peace loving man who could not hurt anybody and he was a great son of Agulu Community.

"This is very terrible news and I never believed that this type of thing would take place. In fact I am shocked."

"We lost Dora Akunyili and now the husband is dead. These children cannot be without father and without mother and what are they going to do?"

"Agulu has lost a great son and this has thrown us in a mourning mood in our community", the monarch lamented.

To this end, the Anambra

State Police Command has read the riot act to officers and men in the area to stop what he called madness.

According to a release by the Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Tochukwu Ikenga, the command said: "The Commissioner of Police Anambra State Command Tony Olofin has observed with grave concern, the series of security breaches that have taken place within the state and has, therefore, ordered Tactical Commanders of the Command to immediately put an end to the madness."

He gave this order when he led senior police officers from the command for on-the-spot assessment to the crime scenes.

The Commissioner, while regretting the unfortunate loss of lives and valuables due to the

senseless acts, has sued for calm, as the Command collaborates with other security agencies in state to decisively deal with the perpetrators, who seem to have lost every iota of human conscience and sensibility in them.

He implored members of the public, particularly residents of the state, to continue to partner with the police with a view of containing these atrocious acts, stressing that the Command is more than ever determined to flush out these undesirable elements and make the entire state safer for law-abiding citizens to go about their lawful businesses.

It will be recalled that a team of police operatives attached to Agwata Area Command, at about 2 pm on Tuesday, while on routine patrol duty along Ezinifite/Igboukwu road, was attacked

by hoodlums riding in two unmarked Sienna vehicle and a Toyota Hummer bus. The hoodlums set the patrol vehicle ablaze and fled the scene. No life was lost and normalcy has been restored to the area.

Similarly, there was a gun attack on a member of the public at about 5 pm along Oko Road. The criminal elements set the vehicle of the victim ablaze, leaving him with a bullet wound and escaped. The victim was rescued and taken to a hospital where he is responding to treatment.

In a related development, at about 4 pm on Tuesday, the undesirable elements, in an attempt to snatch a Lexus 350 from its driver along Agulu Road, shot him. The attackers abandoned the victim and the car and fled. The victim was immediately rushed to the

hospital, but was confirmed dead by doctors on duty. Meanwhile the body has been deposited at the hospital's mortuary and the said vehicle recovered.

Also, the miscreants, at about 4 pm, along Nkpor roundabout, without any provocation, attacked and shot a Police Inspector attached to a VIP. He was quickly rushed to the hospital, but was confirmed dead by the doctor on duty. The assailants also beheaded a yet-to-be-identified man and fled the scene.

At Afor Nkpor junction, three unidentified lifeless bodies were recovered; a burnt Toyota Hilux and a vandalized Toyota Hummer bus were also seen at the scene. The bodies were taken to the hospital and regrettably one of the bodies was identified as that of Dr. Chike Akunyili.



L-R: Governor Seyi Makinde of Oyo State; Alaafin of Oyo, Oba Lamidi Adeyemi, and representative of the Olubadan, High Chief Lekan Balogun, when the Governor presented the 2022 budget of the state to Oyo State House of Assembly in Ibadan... yesterday

Akunyili's killers'll face judgement of men and God, says Buhari

Lawrence Olaye
ABUJA

President Muhammadu Buhari has said that the killers of Dr. Chike Akunyili, husband to the late former Minister of Information, Dora Akunyili, would face judgement from both men and God.

The President said this yesterday in a condolence statement to the family and friends of the deceased released by his spokesman, Femi Adesina.

The President, who expressed deep sadness at Akunyili's gruesome killing by unknown gunmen on Tuesday, shared in the pains of the offspring, families and friends whose lives, he noted, would never remain the same after the inhuman and reprehensible act that happened in Onitsha, Anambra State.

He recalled fond memories of working with the late Dora Akunyili at the Petroleum Trust Fund (PTF), adding that Nigerians would never forget the amazon, who distinguished herself as a courageous, dependable and patriotic citizen.

While enjoining security agencies and leaders of thought to work harder to bring an end to the violence being unleashed on innocent Nigerians, the President assured the grieving families who lost their loved ones in the incident that the perpetrators of the heinous act would face both the judgement of men and that of God.

Tunde Oyesina
ABUJA

The withdrawal of the counsel to the former Registrar of the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB), Professor Adedibu Ojerinde yesterday stalled the commencement of his criminal trial before a Federal High Court sitting in Abuja.

At the resumed trial yesterday, Ojerinde's counsel, Peter Olorunishola (SAN) informed the court of his withdrawal from the case.

Ojerinde, who was arraigned on July 6, 2021, on an 18-count charge, was accused of complicity in the diversion of over N5.2 billion of public funds.

The Independent Corrupt Practices and other related offences Commission ICPC, prosecuting Ojerinde on behalf of the Federal Government, claimed the former JAMB Registrar committed the alleged offences contained in the charge from when he served as the Registrar of the National Examination Council (NECO), through his days in JAMB till 2021.

The prosecuting counsel, Ebenezer Shogunle, at the resumed proceedings yesterday, informed the court that the case was set down for commencement of trial, for which he was prepared and has three witnesses in court.

Defence counsel, Itieubong Usoroh, who said he held the brief of Olorunishola, said his principal has written the court about his decision to withdraw from the case and that he also needed time to address some issues surrounding the payment of his professional fees.

Usoroh said Olorunishola has, therefore, applied for a short adjournment to enable them to

resolve all pending issues to allow for his formal withdrawal.

Shogunle, in his response, agreed that the defendant was entitled to a lawyer of his choice, but argued that such entitlement should not be exploited to delay the trial and urged the court to be guided by the provision of Section 33(3) of the Administration of Criminal Justice Act (ACJA) in granting a short adjournment.

In his ruling, the trial Judge, Justice Obiora Ekwuatu granted the defence counsel's request for adjournment and adjourned till October 8, 2021, for commencement of trial.

We'll use legislative tools for Nigeria's perfect union - Gbajabiamila

Philip Nyam
ABUJA

The speaker of the House of Representatives, Rep. Femi Gbajabiamila, has said that the 9th House was committed to using the tools of legislative authority to advance solutions and implement policies that will help achieve the promise of a more perfect union in the country.

He said everything that needed to be done should be carried out by all the stakeholders to achieve the best visions for Nigeria and the welfare of the citizens.

Gbajabiamila spoke when he declared open the 2021 Roundtable on Social Protection Cover organised by the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) in Abuja yesterday with the theme 'Expanding Social Protection Cover and Ensuring Effective Implementation in Nigeria'.

The Speaker, who said he has the "greatest respect and love" for the Nigerian workers, called on well-meaning Nigerians, including politicians, to always have the interest of the workers at heart.

He noted that social protection is one of the most important responsibilities of gov-

ernment, saying it "legitimises the state in the eyes of citizens and bestows on government the moral authority to demand fidelity to the laws of the land and to take punitive action against those who choose to act in ways inimical to the collective good."

"So, when we gather as we have done this morning to think together about the ways to improve social protection cover in our country, we are engaged in a fundamental act of nation-building."

"We are making sure that there is a collective agreement on what it will take to achieve our best visions for Nigeria and

the welfare of all our nation's people. I expect that having secured agreement on what needs to be done, we will do what is required."

"I want to assure you that in the 9th House of Representatives, we are committed to using the tools of legislative authority to advance solutions and implement policies that will help achieve the promise of a more perfect union."

He said though these are challenging times for Nigeria, "an abundance of historical evidence leads me to believe that in this moment of crisis, there is an opportunity for us to make choices and take actions

that can open up new vistas and measurably improve the lives of Nigerians."

"These choices will not come easy, and the actions we have to take will require sacrifice. We have it in our power to build a country where every citizen has the opportunity to rise to the height of their abilities. And we will, through our joint effort, and by the grace of God."

Earlier in an address, the NLC president, Comrade Ayuba Wabba, said the Speaker has earned the trust of the Nigerian workers by not only attending the event, but also ensuring that issues affecting them were always at the forefront.