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Orji's Son Escapes Assassination

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Chinedu Orji

By Emmanuel Ugwu

Chinedu, son of Abia State Governor, Chief Theodore Orji, at the weekend escaped a gun attack that claimed the life of one of his aides, John Ndubuka.

However, the state government has attributed the attack, which happened in Umuahia as Chinedu was said to be on his way out of the venue of a grand civic reception held for his father by the people of Ikwuano/Umuahia federal constituency, to an assassination attempt on the governor's son.

It was learnt that as Chinedu was leaving the reception venue, there was a gunshot from a yet-to-be identified source which hit Ndubuka, who was said to be beside him, below his neck.

He later died at the Federal Medical Centre (FMC) after a team of medical personnel had tried in vain to save him.

The Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) in the state, Mr. Geoffrey Ogbonna, a Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP), confirmed the incident, saying three suspects had been taken into custody while investigation had commenced to establish the source and motive behind the shooting.

He told THISDAY during a telephone interview yesterday that a full report on the incident would be made after investigations.

But the state Commissioner for Information, Mr. Eze Chikamnayo, told journalists at a press conference yesterday that given the circumstances of the shooting, nothing could be ruled out, including assassination.

According to him, two shots were initially fired in the air by a policeman to disperse the surging crowd blocking the flow of vehicles but the third and fatal shot could not be traced.

"There is nothing to rule out at this time. It could have been an assassination attempt," he said, adding that the victim was shot from the back while he was

about entering the vehicle.

Chikamnayo stated that the governor's son could have been the target of the gunshot considering the trajectory and the crowd of youths surging towards their idol, fondly known as Ikuku oma (Sweet breeze).

Chikamnayo regretted that in spite of successful efforts made by Orji to bring peace and security to the state, there were still elements bent on rubbishing all his achievements and such persons would stop at nothing to distract the government.

"What happened yesterday (Saturday) was an isolated incident but because life was involved, we have to investigate it," he said.

The commissioner stated that the governor was still on top of the security situation in the state but warned that government would not hesitate to deal with anyone who attempts to disrupt the peace in the state.

Orji had already left the venue at the end of the civic reception beamed live by African Independent Television (AIT). It was while the other dignitaries, including Chinedu, were trying to leave that the incident occurred.

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