

News

Gunmen kill APC Ward Chairman, wife, son in Rivers

....I saw them beheading my father —Daughter
●Stop senseless killings, Sen. Abe begs



Miss Victory Obi, daughter of the deceased (middle) and Rivers State Police Commissioner, Mr Musa Kimo.

By Jimitota Onoyume & Davies Iheamnachor

GUNMEN, Saturday night, beheaded the Chairman, Ward 4, of All Progressives Congress, APC, in Omoku, headquarters of Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area, Rivers State, Mr Franklin Obi, his first son, 18 years old Bestman and the wife, Ihuoma.

This is coming just as the senatorial candidate of APC, in Rivers South-East senatorial district for the legislative re-run election, Sen. Magnus Abe, alleged that hoodlums loyal to the embattled ex-militant leader, Mr. Solomon Ndigbara, had kidnapped and buried alive Mr Paby Koryene, from Yeghe community.

Speaking, yesterday, in Port Harcourt, while addressing newsmen on the recent killings in Ogoniland, after the military invasion that allegedly ruptured the fragile peace in the area, Abe said: "Solomon Ndigbara, alias Osama Bin Laden and his boys abducted and have buried alive Mr. Paby Koryene. They went to his house the same day they burnt down my campaign office and dragged him away, even in the presence of witnesses."

He appealed to the Federal Government and the Inspector General of Police to wade into the incessant killings of members of his party in the state.

Meanwhile, the state Police Commissioner, Mr Musa Kimo, who visited Mr Franklin Obi's ancestral home and the house where he was murdered along with his wife and son, lamented the killings, saying that the Police was not contacted while the operation lasted.

According to the Police chief, if neighbours had contacted the Police while the gunmen were around, probably they could have been arrested.

He appealed for collaboration between the Police and the community to put an end to mindless killings

in the area, just as he condoled with the family.

He said: "Probably, if they had called the Police, the killers would have been arrested. At least, they were there for about 20 minutes before they left.

"If a call had been made to the police, we would have responded immediately. The killers must have been at the crime scene for about 20 minutes. Why didn't you help us to help you? It is painful, it is sad. If we choose to work together, who knows, we would have arrested them. If you continue to be docile, then certainly, we will continue to have problem."

The Police chief said that preliminary investigation showed that people on the street where the deceased lived saw two masked men but they did not alert security men.

Kimo, who was deeply saddened by the ugly incident, also visited the traditional ruler of the kingdom, His Eminence, Dr Chukumela Obi II, Oba, Eze Oba of Ogbaland where he also appealed for community support to end the carnage in the area.

APC reacts

The state chapter of the APC has accused an opposition party of allegedly being behind the murder of Franklin Obi, Chairman of Ward 4 of the party in Omoku.

Publicity Secretary of the party in the state, Mr Chris Finebone, alleged that the deceased presided over a meeting of the party in his ward on Thursday and was murdered on Saturday.

"Franklin Obi's killing is shocking. It goes to support what we knew all along, that they have been responsible for all the killings in ONELGA. Now, make your deductions. Late Obi was the APC Ward 4 Chairman. He managed and moderated the ONELGA APC meeting last Thursday and by Saturday he was killed and beheaded while the wife and son were also killed. Intelligent Nigerians, kindly make your deductions."

The statement alleged that a chieftain of an opposition party was from the same ward.

Monarch weeps over killings in Omoku

The monarch expressed worry over the killings in his kingdom, stressing that it was strange.

He said: "This is sad to hear, very sad. It has never been so in this community since I was born. By November, I will be 76 and I am now 46 years on the throne. It is strange. It is painful and sad. I wonder what the problem is. But it should not degenerate to this level. It is really sad."

I saw them beheading my father—Daughter

On Rotachi Street, off Krigana Road, Omoku, where the late Franklin Obi lived with his family, one of his daughters, Victory, said she witnessed when the assailants slit her father's throat in the bedroom.

She narrated to the Commissioner of Police, Mr Kimo, that the assailants first killed her father in the bedroom, chopped off his head and then went to the sitting room to shoot her mother.

She said the killers stormed their residence at 9p.m., adding that they first went for her father and later her mother before opening fire on her elder brother.

She said she ran outside, banging on doors of neighbours for help but nobody came out.

"I banged on several doors on our street but they were all locked, nobody came out until the killers left," she said.

Continuing, Victory who is about 16 years old, said it was the Police that rushed her brother to the General hospital. "My elder brother, Bestman, was still breathing when the Police came and rushed him to the hospital. It was at the hospital he died," she said, in tears.

Mr Obi's younger brother, Mr Sonny Obi, said his elder brother, the late Franklin, who was about 50 years old, was not a cultist.