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Gunmen kill Gov Ortom's SSA, soldier shoots undergraduate in Benue

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By Peter Duru, Makurdi

Gunmen at the early hours of Friday, stormed the home of Mr. Denen Igbana, the Senior Special Assistant, SSA, to Benue State Governor on Security, and shot him dead in the presence of his family.

This was just as an Army Corporal attached to the Benue State Joint Security Patrol team code named 'Operation Zenda', allegedly shot a year two female student of Primary Education Studies at the College of Education in Oju local government area of the state.



•The murdered
Denen Igbana

Saturday Vanguard learned that Igbana, a retired Police officer, was killed by a gang who waylaid him in front of his house along Naka road, in the outskirts of Makurdi town.

Narrating the incident to Governor Samuel Ortom who paid a sympathy visit to the family of the deceased, an eyewitness and Tax Collector in the area, Thomas Ayakpam said the assailants struck at about 1:32am

He explained that the SSA had come home only to run into the assailants who were armed with sophisticated weapons.

“They opened fire on his vehicle (a Toyota Hilux) perforating the car on all sides.

“ Igbana ran out of the car, shouting and heading towards my own house but they shot him on his leg. He fell. At that point one of the gunmen came closer to him and he started shouting, ‘Gana so you can kill me, you want to kill me, what did I do to you?’. He was then shot severally and the people fled.”

In his response, Governor Ortom who could not hold back tears said the deceased was one of his trusted aides who played a vital role in ensuring the success of the administration's amnesty programme. The Governor who charged security operatives to apprehend the masterminds of the killing said, “they have killed part of me but I'm still alive and I will ensure that anyone responsible for this dastardly killing would be made to face justice.”

Meantime, Saturday Vanguard gathered from an eyewitness that the female student of College of Education in Oju was shot while sitting in front of her residence at Lawani hostels, situated outside the school campus.

According to the source, “the problem started when one student of the institution was alleged to have a long standing problem with a female student and supposed girl friend of a soldier.

“For that reason, the soldier, Thursday afternoon stormed the institution to whisk Anthony to the ‘Operation Zenda’ base in Oju, but fellow students resisted the move. He was asked to get an approval from the institution’s management before taking the student away.

“At that point the angry soldier went away, promising to come back. That evening the soldier went back to the institution with some of his colleagues to abduct the said Anthony but were resisted by students in the institution who also aided Anthony to escape.

“Vexed by the action of the students the soldier opened fire with his riffle and the innocent girl who was sitting by the door of her room got hit at the side of her chest.

“She was rushed to Adoga hospital in Oju where she was given two pints of blood because she had lost so much blood and thereafter rushed to the Benue State University Teaching Hospital, BSUTH, for further treatment because the bullet could not be extracted and her condition was deteriorating.

“As I speak with you we cannot ascertain the condition of the student but the Army Corporal has been arrested by the Police in Oju and transferred to

the Command Headquarters in Makurdi.”

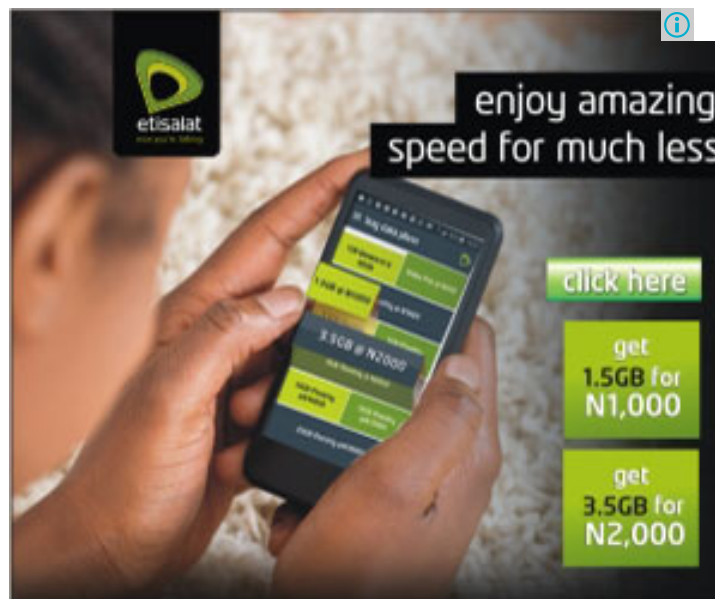
Meanwhile, attempts to reach the Police Public Relations Officer, PPRO, Assistant Superintendent, ASP, Moses Yamu failed but a top Police source who craved anonymity confirmed that the matter was being investigated while the Army Corporal was being interrogated.

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