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Veterinary Dr. Victor Abunwa, of the Delta state's Ministry of Agriculture had left the festivities of 2nd January 2023 behind, at Ubulu-Uku, Delta state, to answer the call of duty...from a farm in another town. Then, right there at Ubulu-Uku, a Siena van collided with his Toyota Corolla right in front of the Ubulu-Uku General Hospital, by 2 PM. So, Victor was rushed there...and the waiting game

began. Nothing but nothing was done to save Victor. The more his immediate

younger brother, Chris, complained about the waiting game, the more he was told that his brother was "stable".

An hour later, Victor was still sitting on a wheelchair and was pleading: "open up my stomach, open up my stomach". As practically nothing was being done to save Victor's life, he asked Chris to take

him to another hospital. Victor was moved in an ordinary sedan, over 30 kilometres, to St. Luke's Hospital, Asaba.

At St Luke's another waiting game began. From at least 4pm till 9.30pm when Victor breathed his last, nothing serious was done to save his life. His unending pleas of "open up my stomach, open my stomach" went unanswered. He was being wheeled into the theater when Victor's sun set. It was a devastating sunset at noon.

Did a driver leave his lane and rammed into Victor's car? What went wrong in the two hospitals? What kept them from saving Victor's life?

Well, Christopher, acting for the family wants answers to all the questions. Wednesday, March 29, the driver of the car which collided with Victor's, was arraigned in Ogwashi-Uku Magistrate Court One. The case, Charge No. MO/33MT2023; Samuel Nnamdi Orie Vrs Commissioner of Police, was adjourned to April 26. Mr. Orie never visited Victor's family and didn't send his family members to make contact. An angry Christopher has had an autopsy done on Victor and already lawyers are involved now...so that Orie, Ubulu-Uku General Hospital and St. Luke's Asaba would be able to state their own sides of this sorry story.

My first cousin, the late Dr. Victor



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## How Nigeria Killed Dr. Victor Abunwa



•Dr. Victor Abunwa

Okeibunor Abunwa spent his short but eventful life in the service of life and the living. He was an enabler, a builder up of persons, making them better than they were

before they met him. Even as a teenager, he was the boy other boys and girls looked up to, for Victor came fully prepared and was always wiser than his age.

Victor helped many people through the university, he helped many more to pass WASC or JAMB examinations. He spent his life committing random acts of kindness.

Then as a thorough-going professional, a Veterinary Doctor, Victor's job was his life, so he was on call every hour of the day or night.

His record as a Veterinary Doctor in the Delta state Civil Service will be difficult to beat. It was the call of duty that took Vic out on that fateful day of January 2nd, 2023.

All that Victor prepared for through Anglican Grammar School, Ubulu-Uku and University of Nigeria, Nsukka to University of Maiduguri, had been forced into a premature end. He will be buried on April 11th.

Since I received the autopsy report, the wounds in my soul have opened afresh. How should one stomach this? "He died at 9.32 pm after spending about four hours and thirty minutes on presentation at 5.05 pm". In all of four hours and thirty minutes Victor was not placed on a bed with a group of surgeons struggling to save his life. Yet, according to the coroner's report, "he is

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hospitals

severely pale, with abrasion and bruises involving arm, elbow, medial part of the forearm" etc, etc. Leaving off the other parts of Victor's body mentioned as damaged by the accident, this remains etched on my memory; "There is bleeding into the left chest wall and surrounding right clavicular soft tissue.

There is fracture of the left clavicle, 2nd, 6th 8th and 11th and the right 5th rib. There is ruptured spleen with associated blood clots and massive haemoperitoneum. There is ruptured spleen. The lungs show

evidence of aspiration pneumonitis and bleeding into the left lung tissue". No, I may be a journalist but I'm also a human being; my heart is bursting with grief. Victor's mother, my aunt, is alive for

goodness's sake. With all this damage to his body, with the internal bleeding and everything else, Victor was rushed to two hospitals and the staff, in the main, simply watched him die gradually but steadily. There was no concerted effort to save him. Ah, dear Lord, Victor showed more compassion and professional diligence to the animals under his care than he ever received in the two hospitals. He slipped into that midnight as he was being wheeled into the theater.

Really, who killed my "Captain Victor"? A reckless driver or lackadaisical hospital staff? Or, a combination of both? And that was how Nigeria failed Dr. Victor Okeibunor Abunwa.