

# How I escaped attack that claimed 2 policemen —LP's Val Ozigbo

By Vincent Ujumadu

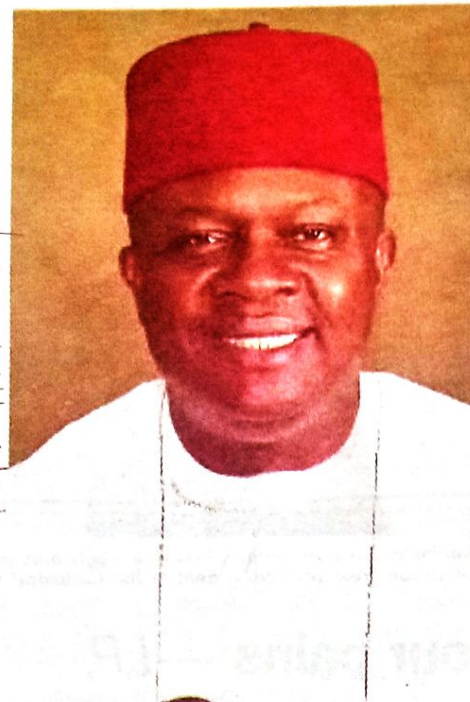
A chieftain of the Labour Party, LP, and governorship candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party, PDP, in the 2021 Anambra State election, Mr. Val Ozigbo, has narrated how he escaped gunmen's attack that claimed the lives of two policemen in the state, last week.

The convoy of the acclaimed godfather of Anambra politics, Chris Uba, on the fateful day, ran into the gunmen at Uga Junction in Aguata Local government area and the two policemen in the convoy, who had gone to clear the gridlock, became victims, as the gunmen killed them instantly.

While recounting the experience, Ozigbo, in his New Year message to Nigerians, expressed gratitude to God for saving him and members of his family, who were in the journey with him.

Ozigbo said: "On December 28, a day etched in my memory, a rather extraordinary event unfolded before me and my family. The journey that day took us from the bustling city of Owerri, Imo State, where we had joyfully participated in a wedding celebration, en route back to my hometown. We paused for a chieftaincy coronation ceremony in Nnewi. As we neared Uga Junction, a significant landmark on our route, an unexpected encounter awaited us.

"A convoy of vehicles, seemingly in a hurry, was quickly gaining on us. Their security detail signalled to mine, requesting the right of way. Such moments often escalate into tense standoffs, with neither convoy willing to yield.



• Val Ozigbo

"However, in that instant, my core philosophy of non-confrontation and mutual respect – the ethos of 'live and let live' – guided my actions. I instructed my security detail to pull our convoy to the side of the road, making way for the rushing convoy to pass.

"Though taken in the spirit of peace and accommodation, this decision to allow them to overtake us was met with a mix of anger and reluctance from some of my team. I insisted we allow them because I believe our journey is not a race, but a path to reach home safely and peacefully. Moreover, aggressive driving by us or anyone poses a risk not just to us, but to all sharing this road.

"With this in mind, we courteously stepped

aside, letting the hurried convoy pass. As the convoy swiftly moved ahead, we consciously decided to avoid following too closely but to maintain a considerable distance, ensuring a safe space between our convoy and theirs.

"This wasn't just a strategic move for safety, but also a choice reflecting patience and prudence – virtues that often lead us through life's unpredictable journeys.

"Resuming our journey, the atmosphere within our convoy was one of calm and tranquillity. Accompanying me were my beloved family – my wife, son, and daughter – along with my two brothers, some of their spouses, their children, and a few other friends.

"However, as we neared Uga Junction in Aguata, my local government area, the unexpected happened. A sudden barrage of gunshots rang out from ahead, piercing the calm like a bolt from the blue. Instinctively, we pulled over, our hearts heavy with concern. In these tense moments, we immediately alerted the police authorities, detailing our location and the situation, and then we waited, our thoughts a whirlwind of apprehension and hope.

"When the echoes of gunshots finally ceased and a blanket of silence fell over the area, we carefully resumed our journey. Our progress was cautious, every

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sense heightened, as we navigated the uncertainty ahead.

"It was later revealed that the convoy, which had hurriedly overtaken us, had encountered a dire situation at the junction. They had stumbled upon a kidnapping operation, a confrontation that tragically resulted in the loss of two police officers assigned to protect the principal of the convoy."

Continuing, Ozigbo added: "Reflecting on this, one can't help but ponder the implications, had we not chosen to pause and let them pass, thus inadvertently delaying our journey. The gravity of what might have been is a thought too harrowing to dwell on.

"The tragedy didn't end at Uga Junction, as the gunmen made their escape, they fled through my hometown, gunning down a community vigilante, Chigbo Onuegbu (Akawo), on their way.

"In the wake of this incident, our hearts go out in prayer for the souls of the brave officers, who perished in that horrific encounter. We pray for solace and strength for their grieving families and loved ones in this time of unimaginable loss.

"At the same time, we are enveloped in a profound sense of gratitude for the divine providence that shielded me, my family, and our friends and colleagues from being caught amid such peril. This incident serves as a poignant reminder of the delicate dance of fate and grace in our lives."

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