

# THE ODI MASSACRE

On November 4th, 1999, an armed gang killed 7 policemen in the community of Odi, Bayelsa State. Few days later they killed 5 more policemen. President Obasanjo immediately wrote the excerpt below to the Governor of Bayelsa state Diepreye Alamieyeseigha giving him 2 weeks to fish out the members of the gang and arraign them in a criminal court. Many may not know but the gang that killed those policemen was used by the Governor and his party (PDP) during democratic elections in February 1999 to commit illegalities and Obasanjo already knew this.

The Problem was that Alamieyeseigha and the powers that be left them to run riot in various villages, towns and communities in Bayelsa. After the two week ultimatum, the Governor couldn't seem to arrest a known criminal and political thug who he used during his elections in February 1999.

So Obasanjo sent the Minister of Police Affairs, Major-General David Jemibewon (rtd.) and Senate President, Dr. Chuba Okadigbo to speak to Gov Alamieyeseigha. He kept telling the same story but as they pressed the Governor harder, he gave up one name - Ken Niweigha aka Daddy Ken. Ken Niweigha was said to be many things -a gang leader - a career militant - a highway robber - a renowned cultist - a kidnapper - a sea pirate on Nigerian waters. Some say Ken was part of The supreme egbesu aka egbesu boys and The asawana boys both affiliated with the IYC - The Ijaw Youth Council. Ken was also said to be the son of a Police Officer who chased away his father's wives and used their house as a Command Center for his criminal

activities. For his role in the election rigging, Ken Niweigha was to be compensated but he got used and dumped. With the guns and reputation he had, he began his reign of terror on Yenagoa and other communities. Obasanjo knew all of these. Ken's reign lasted from the elections in February 1999 until September 1999 when a Police Area Commander in Yenagoa, Mr. Thomas Jokotola, CSP, led an operation to dislodge Ken and his gang from their 'Command Center' and put an end to his reign of terror.

Jokotola succeeded killing and arresting many of Ken's associates especially in the 'Black Market' area of Yenagoa but as Ken's gang escaped they met soldiers at Harbour Road, Yenagoa and killed all the soldiers.

Two months after that, on November 4th 1999, CSP Thomas Jokotola entered Odi with 6 other policemen on a special operation. Ken and his Gang ambushed CSP Jokotola and his men. In the end, all 7 policemen were MURDERED in Odi by Ken and his Asawana boys. Their names are; CSP Thomas Jokotola from Osun, DSP George Nwine from Rivers, Sgt. Emmanuel Bako from Bauchi, CPL Ayuba Silas from Kaduna, PC Shaibu Zamani from Kaduna, CPL Elias Bitrus from Borno, CPL Robinson Obazee from Edo

And as earlier stated Obasanjo stepped in and gave the Governor two weeks to get things under control

Four days later in Kaiama, Bayelsa on Monday November 8, 1999 to be exact, 3 more Policemen were killed by some people in Odi, their name are; Sgt. Alhaji Atabor from



Kogi, PC Stephen Abu from Cross-Rivers and PC Umoh Ukbo from Cross-Rivers. After the 2 weeks given to the Governor expired on 18th, Obasanjo swung into action. First He declared a state of emergency in Bayelsa.

Then drafted his Minister of Defence General TY Danjuma to send in Lieutenant Colonel Agbabiaka and 300 soldiers to Odi under the command of ECOMOG War Hero and hyper-efficient killing machine - General Victor Malu. The instruction was simple - dislodge perpetrators of violence, restore law and order and apprehend the suspected murderers. The mission was code named Operation Hakuri II, the Navy was also instructed to ensure no one escaped via the waterways, while the Police had the task of containing the civilians. In less than 48 hours the most of Odi was leveled to the ground. Only a church, schools, hospitals and a bank building survived the operation. Nothing which had life - man or animal - was breathing or moving. Everything else was rubble or dead flesh. What many will NEVER reveal when they recount the Odi Massacre is that Lt. Col. Agbabiaka and his men were ambushed between Kaiama and Odi before getting to their destination and four soldiers died.

Lt. Col. Agbabiaka called General Victor Malu to update him about the ambush and asked if he should call off the Operation. Malu asked him if he had completed his objective. Agbabiaka answered "No, Sir". Malu told him to proceed until the objective of the mission was achieved and then went to brief President Obasanjo. Agbabiaka got to Odi and came under what he reported as "Heavy and Sustained fire". The Militants were shooting at the soldiers from built up areas, inside houses and buildings. The Militants were using civilians as human shields. Agbabiaka came up with a tactical assault plan to destroy every building the Militants fired from. Many RPGs, Three

81mm Mortars, Two 105mm Howitzers and other high caliber explosives were used to blow up every building. The Militants retreated to the creeks. Unfortunately, the Navy did not perform as well as expected and the Police Mobile forces were MIA. Again Ken ESCAPED!

Over ~375 people were reportedly killed in the most widely condemned military action since the General Sani Abacha pacifist troops overran Ogoniland.

Senate President Chuba Okadigbo & Wole Soyinka called it "high handedness" and "a callous overkill". The force commander, Lt.-Col. Agbabiaka, explained away the massacre to Chuba Okadigbo & his team of senators as a 'defensive action.' Obasanjo called it "the animalism of the military". 10 years later, Ken Niweigha was finally arrested in 2009 when he allegedly attempted to kill the Bayelsa State Commissioner of Police, Onouha Uka Udeka in a shoot out at a check point on a Tuesday Night. Despite being LG Coordinator of the Bayelsa Volunteers (a state security outfit) under Gov. Timipre Sylvia and his subsequent suspension, The SSS had slated Ken down for arrest and prosecution for illegal possession of arms and gun running. The next day, Ken was led to his arms dump in Odi for evidence collection where the Police were ambushed by members of Ken's gang and Ken was killed in the shoot out! In 2013, Justice Lambo Akanbi of the Federal High Court ordered the FG to pay the victims of the Odi Massacre 37.6 Billion Naira as compensation. He gave a 3 week ultimatum. On May 26, 2014, President Goodluck Jonathan and the FG negotiated an out of court settlement of N15billion and paid the compensation. If you know Nigerian History, you can literally predict the future. RIP to the murdered officers of 181 Amphibious Battalion and the 63 Brigade of the Nigerian Army.

*Above is an excerpt about the Odi massacre read from Gen Victor Malu's Book - In The Name Of Victor.*

