



# OGBENI LANRE BANJO GOVERNORSHIP CAMPAIGN

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## For Immediate Release

Contact: Ogbeni Lanre Banjo

[campaign@lanrebanjo.com](mailto:campaign@lanrebanjo.com)

<http://lanrebanjo.com/>

## Adieu, my brother, Otunba Dipo Dina

Monday, January 25, 2010 will remain ineffaceable in my memory. Starting from around 5 P.M Washington, D.C. U.S. time, my cell phone kept ringing, and I could not pick up because I was in a meeting. When it continued to ring, I decided to answer it; the caller was a supporter from Nigeria who told me in a sad mood that Dipo Dina is dead! I excused myself from the meeting and logged onto the Internet, my E-mail was full of messages titled – “Dipo Dina assassinated in Ota, details are still sketchy!” No, not Dipo, my friend, I reassured myself and I alerted my wife. I started calling Dipo’s line, the telephone was just ringing and no one picked up. I refused to believe someone had gunned down Dipo until I was faced with reality. I called my sister, Alhaja, K.T. Jagun whom Dina was fond of calling, “Alhaja”, she broke down crying. I refrained from speaking with my mother, because as a mother, I know the abrupt demise of Dina will result into a deep concern about me.

The murder of Dipo certainly flattened out my family members as would a stream-roller. The reaction of the Gbenga Daniel administration is most disgusting. It is unbefitting of an elected governor, if truly elected by the people, to react to the death of one of the prominent sons the way Gbenga Daniel reacted to the death of our brother. His dirty handy work, conscience, and ineptitude in governance would not allow him to call a press conference addressing the state with clear order to the police to fish out the true killers and their sponsors. If Daniel has a clue about governance, he should have given an order that should have required the police to submit a weekly report on the assassination and plans of action to save another soul in Ogun State. Instead, Daniel elected to speak through a spokesperson. Gbenga Daniel so much harassed Dipo Dina to the extent that he wanted him imprisoned for having access to public documents that exposed the looting of Ogun State treasury. He made it his business to frustrate Dipo Dina from the coronation of a chieftaincy title by the Olularo of Ilaro. Daniel really felt that heartlessly ordering the cancellation of the conferment of a chieftaincy title on Dipo Dina 24 hrs to the day of the event was part of governance. Dina took the cancellation without a fight. With these incidents, how could a governor with conscience and a governor who is worth his salt, genuinely commiserate with the family members of Dina or even attend the funeral? Dina had filed a petition with corroborating evidence against Daniel with the EFCC, and here is a so called governor about to loose his immunity.

Dina is a man of resilience. The day he and I, in company of his entourage, my wife, my sister and in the company of my entourage ate in an Adigbe restaurant will remain indelible in my mind. Nigerians who witnessed us eating together could not help but wondered aloud that they had thought they would never live to see two gubernatorial candidates from different political parties sitting down to eat together in Nigeria. Dina fought for the people, not for himself. His

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struggle and his politics were about the people. Those are some of the things we shared and he knew it.

Now the abridged untold story about Dina! In April of 2007, an aborted gubernatorial debate was to hold at the premises of Ogun State Television in Abeokuta. The debate was scheduled for 12.30pm. At exactly 2.15pm, the organizers advised all the gubernatorial candidates present to move to the conference room. At exactly 2.30p.m., Gbenga Daniel arrived with buses load of armed supporters in spite of the rule to only bring 10 supporters. I was fumed thinking in my head how can Gbenga Daniel be so disrespectful to the people of this state, the people he swore to serve by walking in at 2.30pm for a debate scheduled to begin at 12.30 pm. Why did we have to wait until he came in since he was a candidate just like us? As soon as protocols were observed, the spokesperson for the organizers changed the rules. He was bold enough to read a riot act to all the candidates that there would be no debate; **there would be an interaction**, he averred. He further said no one shall make other candidate uncomfortable. I grabbed the microphone, and bluntly told the gentleman, “look at 50, I do not want my generation to be wasted. If under a governor, I was attacked three times with the aim to assassinate me, I will opportunity firmly to show that we have a murderous governor in Ogun State, and I shall ask the Ogun State voters if this is their desire. If I have no pipe borne water at home, no electricity, good roads except expensive and senseless billboards everywhere in Ogun State, I shall seize this opportunity to showcase to the electorates that we have an irresponsible, prodigal, and kleptomania administration in Ogun State. So there would be a debate,” I retorted. As soon as I concluded, Dipo Dina grabbed the microphone and spoke like the King of Lion. “No one born and unborn can change the rules. You people set the rules. We are here for a debate and there will be one,” he said. As he was speaking, the kleptomania Lion winked to Tunji Sharafa, the then Secretary to the State government. Sharafa went out. Few minutes later, Senator Ibikunle Amosun who sat to my left beckoned to me saying “Ogbeni! Ogbeni! Look outside!” There was shooting, maiming, and destruction of vehicles. Ozogula, Daniel’s Commissioner for strategy and “thugs” was inside the hall breaking the video cameras that were recording the occurrence. I looked to my right where Daniel was seating. Guess what, he was smiling – mission accomplished! I went to where he was seating to tell him, he was an irresponsible governor. “Your state was on fire, we cannot do a simple debate, and you are laughing.” One of his thugs, Yemi Shodimu approached me and was shouting at the organizer, “we have told you not to invite him (referring to me), why didn’t you listen to us?” Alhaji Gbenga Kaka, Senator Ibikunle Amosun, the Late Otunba Dipo Dina and I quickly decided that there was no way our supporters could be under attack outside and we would be participating in any debate. We walked out. Dina as well as others in our group boldly addressed a press conference both in Abeokuta and Lagos.

In this regard, Dina did his part to sustain democracy in Nigeria. He was a liberator and a fighter par excellence. He was a philanthropist. He was a patriotic citizen of the world, championing with uncommon zeal, the values that bind humanity together, and behold, Dina genuinely loved Nigeria. He was a known thorn in the flesh of Gbenga Daniel because he hated corruption with passion. It was on record that, his advertisements in the newspapers shook Daniel to his foundation. Oko (the husband of) Yeye Olufunke lost weight and ran to the Royal fathers, some of whom publicly rained curses on Dina for fighting for them and their children. Dina fought



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relentlessly for the maintenance of our democracy at the expense of his personal liberty and safety. In my humble view, there can be no better way to immortalize this great Nigerian than making life more meaningful for Nigerians. After all, that is what he lived and was assassinated for! He was a dogged fighter, whose political footprints are indelible in the state. He fought along with us to do his best as a tireless defender of the poor and tormentor of those who imposed themselves on and enslave the hapless people of Ogun State.

To Madam Adenike Dina, children and family, the good Lord shall comfort you. He will be your refuge and fortress. He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover you with His feathers and under His shield and buckler shall you constantly live. Thousands shall fall by your left side and millions at your right side, and they shall not come near you. No evil shall befall you and neither shall any plague come near your dwelling. To the followers of Dina, I urge all of you to remain focus on the ideals of Dipo Dina; the ideals to liberate the State vis-à-vis Nigeria. Just like Dina, you must always stand up for the truth, fairness and accountability. To the people who unleashed this heinous act on the people of Ogun State, to the murderers and their handlers, to those that saw this coming and failed to stop it God in His mercy will appropriately reward them and their children, both born and unborn.

Dipo, remember what Paul told the Corinthians in 1Cor.3: 13-15: ***“Every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is. If any man work abides which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man’s work shall be burned he shall suffer loss!”***

Dipo Dina Sunre o! Omo alagemo meridinlogun. Omo Afidi potemole ni Ijebu-Ode. Gbori l’aiya Olorun re!

Ogbeni Lanre Banjo

NCP Gubernatorial Candidate in Ogun State, 2003 & 2007

Monday, February 1, 2010