

METRO

Prince assassinated, Ewu Town deserted

A DECADE-old struggle to succeed the late Onogie of Ewu, Isesele II turned bloody in the sleepy town of Ewu, Esan Central Local Council of Edo State when on Thursday, April 26, Prince Niniwani Ojeifo was assassinated the day before his eldest sister, Princess Asumahu Ajise (nee Ojeifo), who died on April 5, was slated for burial.

The assassination which occurred about 8.00 p.m. has caused panic in the town as police from the State Criminal Investigation Department (SCID) swooped on Ewu to unravel the identities of those behind the killing.

The town has been deserted as the young and elderly fled into the bush, while a grandson to the late Onogie, a claimant to the throne, was invited last week Friday night to assist in solving the riddle behind the assassination of the uncle.

Eye witnesses say the assassins, that night,

used a brown Pick-up van to intercept the black Mercedes Benz 230 salon car in which Niniwani and one other, said to be his in-law, were driving.

The assailants ordered them to lie face down and after establishing that Niniwani was a prince because of the visible marks which every prince in Ewu carries, was shot at the back of the head.

The young prince who worked at the Bendel Feed Mills factory at Ewu, died almost immediately as he was pronounced dead by medical officers at Irrua Specialist Hospital at about 9.00 p.m. where he was rushed to.

The killers thereafter drove the Mercedes towards Irrua on the Auchi-Benin Road and set the car ablaze.

A sequence of events led to the assassination. Certain persons in Ewu town had decided that Princess Asumahu, would not be buried at Ewu but should instead be taken to Uzogolo, a

neighbouring village where Prince Ja'afaru Ojeifo, pronounced the rightful successor to the throne by two separate high court judgments, is taking temporary refuge.

His Royal Highness, Prince Ja'afaru Ojeifo is the eldest surviving son of the late Onogie, Issessele II.

His rival and contender for the throne, Prince Rasak Ojeifo, is one of the sons of the heir-apparent and successor who died eight months before the Onogie himself died.

For the past 10 years, Ewu has been under siege with Prince Ja'afaru and his brothers taking refuge in neighbouring villages following several attempts on their lives.

Prince Rasak had in two separate court judgments been restrained from parading himself or allowing himself to be paraded as the Onogie of Ewu.

**GCU old boys
meet May 20**