

Families petition police over head's alleged murder

From **Joseph Wantu, Makurdi**

TO avoid further break-down of law and order in Mbaanyam District of Ushongo Council, Benue State, the state Police Commissioner



and the AIG Zone '4' police headquarters, Makurdi have been petitioned to act speedily and bring to book those involved in the assassination of one Mr. Luka Ayabam in his residence in Gboko on October 30, 2011.

This call was made in a petition addressed to the Police Commissioner, Mr. Emmanuel Obiakor, copied to the Assistant Inspector General of Police Zone '4' Police Command by the lawyers of Nduul, Om and Akinde families of Mbaikpagher, Mbashawa in Ushongo local council area of the state where the deceased hailed from.

Confirming the killing of Ayabam, Police Public Relations Officer, Benue State Command, Ejike Alaribe, told *The Guardian* that six persons have already been arrested in connection with the inci-

dence.

Alaribe added that a thorough investigation was ongoing to unravel the real cause of the heinous crime.

The petition entitled, "Brutal assassination of Mr. Luka Ayabam and consequential threat to peace and lives in the community: Request for thorough investigation," by Managing Counsel, Elohim Chambers, T. Oscar Aorabee, disclosed that on October 30, 2011 at about 2.00a.m. some armed persons broke into Ayabam's house behind Federal Government Girls' College, Gboko and shot him in the head, neck and stomach, leading to his instant death after explaining to him and the family that they did not come for his money.

Aorabee, who is the family counsel, in the statement disclosed that prior to Ayabam's

death, the deceased had in 2009 sited a community clinic, a nursery and primary school on their land and placed a beacon to demarcate the school land from the one given to the father of one Salem Atsehe, the current Director, General Services and Administration (DGSA) of Gwer Local Council, Benue.

The family counsel added that Atsehe did not feel well with the development and took a legal action disputing the ancestral ownership of the land, but sensing that he might lose the case, quickly withdrew it and paid the Ayabam family N100,000 as refund for their legal expenses.

All efforts by *The Guardian* to get Atsehe's reaction failed, as he declined to comment, stating that he is a civil servant and cannot speak to the media on such issues.