

NEWS

One killed, 10 houses destroyed in Benin blast



•One of the affected cars



•Another car and part of a building that were destroyed

THERE was fear early yesterday in Benin City, the Edo State capital as a bomb killed a young man and destroyed properties worth millions of naira.

It was at the Government Reserved Area (GRA), First Ughor, Ezena Street.

The blast damaged at least 10 houses and caused panic among residents who were preparing for the day's business.

House No.2, Ezena Street, off Moses Obasuyi, received thousands of sympathisers who clustered, discussing the blast which killed Mr. Godwin Aigbehkai.

Homicide policemen and other security agencies, led by the Area Commander, Mr. Isaac Eke were on ground to ascertain the cause of the blast.

The owner of the house, Mr. Richard Ehimigbai, an accountant and politician was short of words on what could be the cause of the explosion.

The bomb was planted in his car, *The Nation* learnt. But, Ehimigbai, a chairmanship aspirant of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Owan West Local Government Area said the explosion, which left his nephew dead must have started from one of the Mercedes Benz 230 regular, which the late cousin brought into his



•Mangled remains of a car

From John Mayaki, Benin compound the night before for repairs and sale.

Corroborating Ehimigbai's claim, the younger brother of the deceased, Mr. Barnabas Aigbehkai, in tears said his late

brother was trying to start the engine of the car with a battery from another car, when the blast occurred. It blew one side of the storey building and destroyed a Benz car beyond recognition. Houses in about five hundred

meters away were also destroyed.

Mr. Isaac Eke said the preliminary investigation by bomb detectors revealed that it was an explosion, but he was silent on whether it was caused by a bomb.

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Pledging that the police would unravel the cause of the incident, Eke cautioned the people from going nearer the scene of the explosion, which had since been deserted by the residents.

According to the Oredo, Council Chairman, Mr. Edos Ebomoyi, "this is catastrophic. 'It's surprising that what we watch in CNN happening in Baghdad and Afghanistan is happening under our nose,' he said.