

Residents flee community as hoodlums kill one, injure others over selection of traditional ruler

Residents of Ayila community in Ogun Waterside Local Government, Ogun State, are allegedly fleeing the town after a man identified as Bayo Oluseyi was killed and several others injured during a fracas over selection of new Baale (traditional ruler) of the town.

It was learnt that the nomination of an unnamed man for the traditional stool by a powerful politician in the community triggered the fight.

The controversial nominee was said to have been rejected by a section of the community.

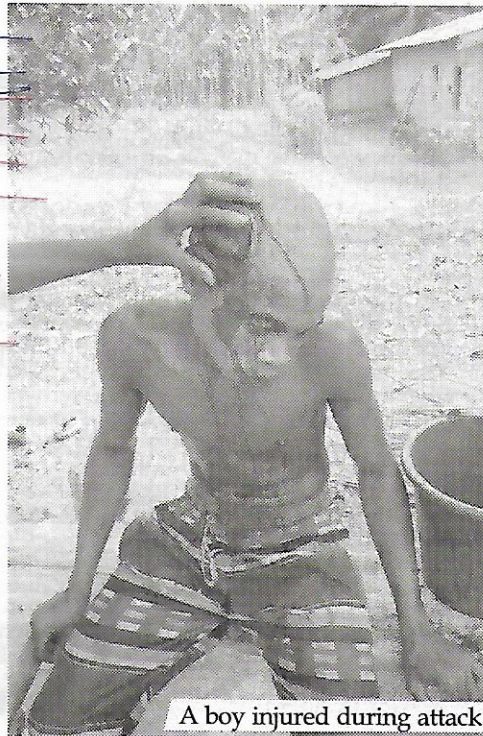
The Nation learnt that a lingering tussle for the stool which started in 1957 had polarised the ruling houses, despite various mediation by community leaders and government.

One of the ruling houses was said to have declined the offer to present candidate for the stool when it was its turn to ascend the throne a few years ago.

It was learnt that a candidate from the next ruling house was selected as Baale, following the rejection by the rightful ruling house.

Trouble however started after the death of the Baale, when the ruling house which initially rejected the offer insisted the vacant stool must be filled by one of its members.

A source said: "There is tension in the



A boy injured during attack

▪ Kunle AKINRINADE ▪

community as we speak because of the recent killing and violence following the insistence of a ruling house that its candidate should be the next Baale.

"A top politician in this area is the one who is backing an unpopular candidate

from a rejected ruling house and it has caused serious problem and palpable fear in this community.

"Many residents are leaving for neighbouring communities for fear of being hit during reprisal attacks by those contending for the vacant stool. This is the reason why we are calling on government and law enforcement agencies to step into the matter in order to avoid a complete breakdown of law and order."

Contacted, the spokesman of Ogun State Police Command, Abimbola Oyeyemi said the suspects had been arrested in connection with the incident.

He said the case has been transferred to the State Criminal Investigation Department (SCID) for further investigation.

He said: "There was a tussle for the position of Baale of the community involving two factions. One of those contending for the stool was cautioned by the police against imposing himself as the Baale but he ignored the warning. It was while he attempted to install himself as Baale that violence broke out during which one person was killed and others injured.

"However, some suspects including the man that was carrying out the unlawful coronation have been arrested and they are now in police custody, while the matter has been transferred to SCID."

Three cousins die after attending birthday party