

## One dead as Osun youths torch palace over kingship tussle

From Adesoji Adeniyi, Osogbo

ONE person was feared killed as irate youths of Edunabon in Ife North Local Government Area of Osun State yesterday set ablaze the palace over kingship tussle.

The youths were protesting the selection of a prince to become the Salu Edunabon after the demise of Oba Elijah Omoloye Oyelade, the Agunbiade on August 4, last year.

The youths allegedly rejected Prince Nasiru Adebayo as their new king, faulting the process that chose him.

The youths went on rampage when it dawned on them that Prince Adebayo was set to occupy the palace after his seclusion rites.

The identity of the deceased could not be ascertained last night.

Prince Adebayo was said to have been hospitalised, following the alleged beating he received from the angry youths.

For two weeks, there had been tension in the town because two princes - Kehinde Oladepo and Nasiru Adebayo, from the same ruling house - were laying claim to the vacant stool of the Salu of Edunabon.

The two princes were said to have undergone seclusion rites on separate recommendations of the Ooni of Ife, Oba Adeyeye Enitan Ogunwusi, and the Osun State government.

While the community and the kingmakers reportedly favoured Oladepo, after series of spiritual consultations, the Ooni allegedly preferred Adebayo.

A community leader, Chief Morakinyo Oyebayo, told reporters that the Ooni faulted the selection process the kingmakers adopted in a letter dated November 22 on the ground that they failed to carry him along in the selection of Prince Oladepo in accordance with Customary Law.

He said before Ooni's preference, Prince Oladepo had spent up to a week in seclusion and the kingmakers had announced his name as the new Salu of Edunabon before Prince Adebayo was given consenting authority to proceed on his own seclusion last Friday by the Ooni.

Oyebayo added that Oladepo's selection was announced after rigorous meetings that involved the warrant chiefs and executives of the Ife North West Local Council Development Area (LCDA).

One of the warrant chiefs, Seye Oyelade, from Ile Akunran in Edunabon, said the process that led to the selection of the oba-elect was transparent and fair.

He urged the people to join hands with the new monarch.

Also, the Chairman of Ife North West LCDA Ademola Olabisi Olabamigbe said the process witnessed a lot of challenges but ended peacefully.

It was learnt that Oladepo, who hails from Amoloye Compound in Isiboni ruling house, was the second beaded-crown Salu of Edunabon after the two warrant chiefs assigned by the state government unanimously voted for him.

He was said to have defeated six other contestants: Prince Oluwafemi Akinropo, Olawale Adeboye Isaac, Odunlade Samson, Adeyeye Samuel Oluwaseye, Adebayo Nasiru and Onifade Rapheal.

When Prince Adebayo allegedly felt unsatisfied, he reportedly mobilised his supporters to force himself into the palace but was resisted by the youths, who allegedly chased him away and set the palace ablaze.

The state police command, through its spokesperson Folasade Odoro, said normalcy had returned to the community after its intervention.