



**Asagba, Chief**  
b. 1834 - d. 1914

Chief Asagba was the son of Chief Ojegba of the royal family of Urhobo Kingdom of Okpe in the Western Delta of Nigeria. He became a chief and a political leader, a very powerful and influential member of the Anovwa State Council of Okpe Kingdom from 1890 through 1897. Asagba was also a businessman who owned hundred of acres of land of Rubber and Oil palm plantations, he traded more in the products with the European merchants that makes him acquire wealth. As a businessman and politician, he maintained power because of his ability to trade with both the Europeans and others in the communities.

### **Political life**

Having grown up in a royal political family and appointed to the highest political status of Olotu in the Anovwa State Council, he was known for his hard work and capable skills as a councilor and representative of his village group of Amukpe. In addition to his political leadership at Anovwa State Council, Asagba had led the foundation for a sound political dynasty for his children and descendants, which remained prominent for almost two centuries.

### **Chief Asagba and the British Colonial Government**

When the British Colonial officers came to Okpe kingdom in 1891, the Okpes criticized the British indirect rule they established. For the British to gain the support of the Okpe leaders, British Officer Gallwey and Vice-Consul Major Copland-Crawford paid a visit to the Okpe leaders to discuss their new government. During their visit on October 28, 1891, one of the Okpe leaders they visited was Chief Asagba. They

discussed with him, among other things, the British judicial and political government. It was Asagba who helped the British to establish their Native Courts and Councils in Okpe Kingdom.

Because of Chief Asagba's involvement with the British and his enlightenment as to what education could bring to a society, he decided to send his eighth son Abasaya Asagba, and his grandson Joseoh Etietsola Asagba, the son of his eldest son Eyeyan Asagba, to attend the British Intermediate school in 1904.

Upon the completion of their education, Abasaya was appointed as the Assistant District Officer under the British Colonial government and Joseph was appointed and served as Senior Court Clerk at the British Native Court in Warri. In fact, those two were considered among the first educated members of the Asagba clan to receive a privileged Colonial education.

### **Career and Service**

Because Chief Asagba was one of those who occupied positions of authority in his town of Amukpe, in 1892, Chief Asagba was appointed to the Native Court as a Warrant Chief under the British Colonial government until his death in 1914.

According to Ikime, in his book *Niger Delta Rivalry: Itsekiri-Urhobo Relations and the European presence 1884-1936*, Asagba of Amukpe was among the most prominent men in their respective communities, Pp. 177-8.

He was considered bright, energetic and a great leader making it possible for him to be appointed to the court.

His appointment as a Warrant Chief was also his work with the British, and the British Colonial officers saw him as a prominent man of his community. As a Warrant Chief, his role to the court was to retain magisterial competence so that he could preside over cases or Judicial matters. He was known as one of Urhobo Okpe's most distinguished political leaders and was highly respected and popular in the whole kingdom.

He was the dominant figure in the community of Amukpe who associated with powerful Okpe figures.

### **Death and Burial**

In 1914, Chief Asagba died at his home of natural causes. He was given a traditional burial and is buried in his bedroom in his house at Amukpe.



Chief Asagba's House

### **Personal life**

Before his death, Chief Asagba had the following children: [1] Eyeyan, [2] Eshegbeke, [3] Dieseru, [4] Amojaine, [5] Ikwiwu, [6] Obire, [7] Gbabune,[8] Abasaya,[9] Ikogho, [10] Egware, [11] Oghogho [f], [12] Ejetavwo[f], [13] Ireden[f], [14] Okperogho[f], [15] Omosohwofa[f], [16] Oghenejakpo[f] and [17] Oghonogho[f]

Members of the royal family of Asagba had been known to be the brightest and most capable political leaders in Okpe history, and they are some of the most admired members of the Okpe royal family, which had achieved a prominence in Okpe political life. They remain influential figures in Okpe Kingdom.

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