

The Namibian

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Namibia to ask Germany for return of skulls

By: BRIGITTE WEIDLICH

GOVERNMENT will request Germany to return the skulls of about 45 Herero and Nama war prisoners who died during the 1904-08 uprising against German colonial rule.

Once the skulls have arrived in Namibia, they are to be given a heroes' burial at Heroes' Acre, Cabinet decided at its recent meeting.

"Cabinet also wants Germany to pay for the repatriation of the remains and all related costs," the Cabinet briefing paper said yesterday.

During the uprising many Namibians were murdered by German colonial troops or died in prison camps on Shark Island at Luederitz, Swakopmund and Windhoek.

German scientist Eugen Fischer asked for several dozen skulls of these prisoners to be sent for him.

Woman war prisoners had to cook the skulls and scrape the flesh off with pieces of glass before they were sent to Berlin.

Fischer wanted to prove the superiority of European brains over those of Africans.

His research strengthened the ideology of Nazism, which eventually led to the holocaust against Jewish people.

It is estimated that more than 40 of the skulls are held in various research laboratories in Germany.

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