

Ebonyi boundary crisis: Four beheaded, others injured, property destroyed in renewed clash



By Jeff Agbodo, Abakaliki

No few than four persons have been killed in Okporojo-Oso Edda in Edda Local Government Area in a renewed boundary crisis between the community and neighboring Amasiri community in Afikpo Local Government Area of Ebonyi State.

It was gathered that two dead bodies recovered while two persons were still missing. Some people were injured while several houses were also razed by the assailants in the attack which took place last night.

The two communities have been at war since decades over farm land with many lives lost and property worth billions destroyed.

Efforts have been made by previous administrations in the State and the present government to end the war to no avail.

But, in the recent attack, sources in the area alleged that the assailants came from the Amasiri axis.

A video recording of the aftermath of the attack showing the bodies of the dead victims without their heads lying in the pool of their blood have since gone viral on social media.

Also many houses set ablaze by the assailants were still burning in the video trending.

Community sources alleged that the heads of the victims were taken away while two persons remain missing.

Ebonyi Commissioner for Internal Security, Etta Uka Ude, confirmed the incident in an interview in Abakaliki, the State capital on Friday.

He said he received reports of the killings by the evening of the incident, describing the act as “barbaric, unlawful and totally unacceptable.”

According to the commissioner, the location where the killings occurred is not even the exact area under land dispute, making the attack more disturbing.

“By 5 p.m. yesterday, I was informed that some hoodlums went into one of the villages and massacred almost four persons to death. I was trying to understand the actual problem because the land dispute area is far away from the town,” he said.

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Ude explained that upon receiving the report, the State Government moved swiftly to prevent escalation.

He said he immediately contacted the chairmen of the affected local government areas, the Commissioner of Police, the Deputy Governor, and the Army, including the Women Battalion Commander, who had just resumed duty.

“Everybody was on hand to make sure the situation did not escalate further. Unfortunately, before the arrival of security agencies, the damage had already been done,” he stated.

The commissioner noted that although calm has been restored with the deployment of tactical police teams and military personnel, the government has ordered for investigation and possible arrest of the perpetrators for prosecution.

“Nobody is greater than the government. Those involved must be fished out and prosecuted so we can know the root cause of this problem. Whoever is involved must be brought to book. We are not encouraging violence in any form,” he stressed.

Ude also condemned the beheading of victims, describing it as alien to the culture of Ebonyi people.

“To behead someone and carry the head away is barbaric. Even our customs do not agree with that. It is very bad and very unlawful,” he said.

While sympathizing with the families of the victims, the commissioner urged residents of both communities to remain calm and allow security agencies to do their work, warning against blocking major roads and disrupting public movement.

The Police Public Relations Officer PPRO SP Joshua Ukandu said he was with a police team heading to the affected area.

“I will issue a statement after we have assessed the situation”, he said.

The Chairman Edda Local Government Area, Chima Ekumamkama also confirmed, describing it as barbaric, act of wickedness and man inhumanity to man

He noted that security personnel has been mobilized to the area following the quick intervention of the Governor.

“This is sad and disheartening. This is barbaric, how can human beings behave like animals. How can people invade a community, behead people and take the heads away” he said.

