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One feared dead, five injured as communities clash over land

By Alemma-Ozioruva Aliu, Benin City) on February 24, 2016 6:05 am

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NO fewer than one person was feared dead from a land dispute involving two communities namely Uneme-Erhurhu in Akoko-Edo Local Council and Okpella Ogute in Etsako East Local Council both in Edo State.

The Guardian learnt that the clash may not be unconnected with the discovery of precious stones in parts of the area where a popular company had commenced operations.

The crisis reportedly broke up when some youths from Erhurhu allegedly barricaded a major road to prevent some Okpella residents from conveying logs of wood

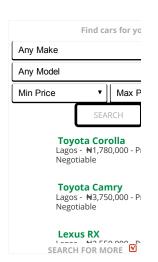
from the forest.

It was further gathered that the fracas led to destruction of several houses, vehicles and motorcycles in Erhurhu community.

Reacting to the development, the clan head of Uner_Erhurhu community.

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to Top $\;$ ay Braimoh, said the disputed land belonged to







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Braimoh added that the people of Okpella had been laying claim and coming to fetch wood from the land.

In a swift reaction, the Personal Assistant (PA) to the palace of Okupelagbe of Okpella, Abdulyekini Ahmed, said a white paper on the disputed land showed that the property belonged to Okpella community.

"The Erhurhu community is tenant in the land," he countered.

The Guardian check revealed that the injured were receiving medical attention at the community hospital while security agents had been deployed in the area to forestall further breakdown of law and order.

Meanwhile, the member representing Akoko-Edo Constituency II in the state House of Assembly, Emmanuel Agbaje, has condemned the imbroglio.

In a statement yesterday in Benin City, the lawmaker lamented the destruction of lives as well as properties and called on the "warring communities to sheath their sword and embrace peace in the spirit of Afemai."

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