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Two die in Itsekiri community over leadership tussle

By Hendrix Oliomogbe and Michael Egbejule, Asaba | 06 April 2017 | 5:59 am

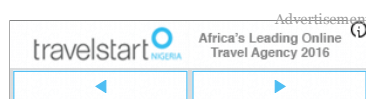


Mini in hospital bed

A violent leadership tussle between the outgoing executive of Koko Community Management Authority (KCMA) and a contesting group has led to the death of two persons. Though the exact casualty figure could not be ascertained as at press time but sources confirmed that several persons were injured while scores were missing.

Koko, headquarters of Warri North Local Council, was recently in the news over the dumping of suspected toxic waste. It was gathered that one of the feuding factions, led by Mr. David Oniyeburutan and Mr. Yinka Atie, reportedly attacked some members of the executive, who had gone to the police divisional headquarters, Koko to effect the bail of one of the elders of the community, Pa Richmond Atsenuwa, 94, who was arrested over an undisclosed issue.

Secretary of the outgoing executive of KCMA, Mr. Solomon Mini, and other executive members, Oludewa Galasi, Ireabor Lucky and Orih Eweyeju, reportedly sustained different degrees of injuries.



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According to a source, who would not want his name in print, the genesis of the problem dates back to October 2016, during the expiration of the tenure of the former executive, led by Mr. Jeremiah Atigan.

Only recently, the multi-million naira secretariat belonging to the management authority was vandalised by some unidentified persons. Money kept for disbursement to loan seekers and vital documents were tempered with during the assault on the secretariat.

The Delta State police spokesperson, Mr. Andrew Aniamaka, said in Asaba yesterday that no arrest had been made so far. “We wanted to go into investigation when the Divisional Police Officer (DPO) in charge of the area alerted us but we later found out that the matter was already before the office of the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Abuja. We could not go into a matter that was already being handled by our superior body unless there is a directive to do so,” he said.

The face-off was reportedly prompted by the inability of both groups to agree on a properly constituted new executive. Leadership of the KCMA is a composition of notable families in the community.

The out-going executive reportedly kicked against what it described as one-sided composition of new members presently for inauguration. In spite of this development, the group went ahead to inaugurate the members that were earlier turned down for being one-sided.

In his response, the contesting group, led by David Oniyeburutan, described the protest by the community as highly provocative. He said they took possession of the secretariat to avoid a vacuum since the tenure of the last executive had expired.

But Solomon Mimi, dismissed the claim, saying it was illegal for the group to have forcibly taken possession of the secretariat when there was a court order restraining them. Brandishing a copy of the order, Mimi said their action could ignite crisis in the community known for its peaceful nature.

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