
Achebe's kinsman killed over disputed communal land in Anambra

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Achebe

The protracted communal clash between Ikenga-Ogidi village, the country-home of Nigeria's celebrated novelist, Prof. Chinua Achebe and Umusiome village, both in Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State, has claimed the life of 70-year-old Chief Anthony Okongwu.

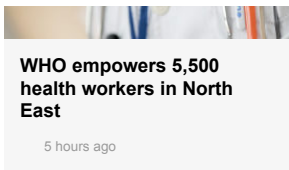
The body of Okongwu, Achebe's kinsman, has been deposited at a hospital (name withheld) while three other compatriots who sustained vary degrees of injuries, are receiving treatment at the hospital.

Making this known in a press conference in Awka, the state capital yesterday, the National President of Ikenga Ogidi Family Union, Amechi Akume, fingered a group of land speculators and trespassers in the dastardly act of killing and maiming at Ani-Owelle.

Akume, who spoke in company of the union's national secretary, one Chime, said the protracted land dispute had since been resolved in favour of Ikenga-Ogidi on March 21, 1997 when the judgment of the Supreme Court was delivered in Suit No. SC/71/1996. He stated that the judgment of the highest court followed a Court of Appeal suit No. CA/E//20M/95 delivered on April 15, 1996.



According to him, the State Boundary Committee set up by the state government and headed by the Deputy Governor, Dr. Nkem Okeke, had waded into the dispute and later



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resolved the dispute in favour of Ikenga-Ogidi, leading to issuance of the Gazette No. 7/Vol.7 of 31st day of July 1997.

The Ikenga–Ogidi Family Union accused the trespassers of hiding under the canopy of Umusiome-Nkpor Landlords Association to cause trouble, wondering why the disputing party went to another court after the final judgment of the Supreme Court, which is still subsisting.

Akume called on the government and police authorities to effectively enforce the Supreme Court order instead of directing both contending parties to sheathe their swords and stay away from the disputed land.

But in a swift reaction, the chairman of Umusiome Village Nkpor, Pius Obiogbolu, denied that his community was challenging the Supreme Court judgment, arguing that it was the Anambra State Government Gazette, which was wrongly gazette that informed the fresh suit.

Obiogbolu also said that his village had wanted the state government to implement the recommendations made by those they invited to look into and settle the prolonged dispute land.

On his part, the Chairman of Umusiome Landlords Association, Daniel Alaneme, revealed that the landlords have no issue with the people of Ikenga-Ogidi, as according to him, the disputed land was not known to them initially.



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