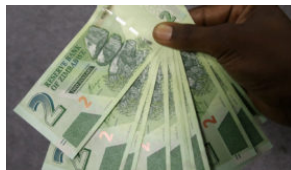

Cross River communal clash claims two, gunmen kill Rivers CDC chairman, resident

By Tina Todo (Calabar) and
Ann Godwin (Port
Harcourt)

15 July 2019 | 3:47 am



File Photo Gunmen Photo:AFP



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A fresh clash between Ebom and Usumutung communities in Cross River State has claimed a father and a son, who was beheaded on their farm.

The lingering crisis was awakening at the weekend when Usumutung people allegedly ambushed the people of Ebom in their farms, killing one Mr. Oti Ato and his son, but Ato's grandson, Michael, narrowly escaped with bullet wounds.

The village head of Ebon, Chief Sunday Obite, told journalists that three persons were still missing, as the headless bodies of the victims have been recovered with the help of soldiers, who were deployed to the communities since the crisis started last year.

Narrating the incident, he said: "The man and his family were harvesting cassava when they were attacked by Usumutung people. "Michael who is receiving treatment in a hospital at Itigidi due to bullet wounds he got while hiding in the bush, said he saw them cutting off his grandfather and father's heads from his hiding place in the bush.

"They also made the wife, Eliza Oti, watch them, while they beheaded her husband and her son and asked her to take the message to her people. "We were believing that since soldiers were present, peace had returned, but we have been proven wrong once again,



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even as they steal our farm produce, we kept quiet but now they have started again by killing a father and his son in the presence of the wife.”

Another indigene of Ebom, Oban Bassey said, “As we speak, we have retrieved the corpses of Oti and his son with the help of soldiers at Usumutong. We have also reported the matter to the Divisional Police Officer (DPO) and he has seen the bodies.”

The Police Command in Calabar confirmed the incident, noting that the state Commissioner of Police (CP), Austin Agbonlahor has deployed officers to maintain law and order. Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), DSP Irene Ugbo, confirmed this yesterday in Calabar, saying: “We are aware of the killing and the CP has deployed officers there and the community leaders have been invited to meet with CP for further deliberation. For now, the area is calm.”

Meanwhile, unknown gunmen yesterday killed Chairman of the Community Development Committee (CDC) in Choba, Obio-Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State, Lawrence Igwe and one Orji Azuh.

It was learned that another member of the community, Iyke Wordu, sustained a serious gun injury during the attack on the victim’s homes at the weekend.

The Guardian also learned that Choba, the host community of the University of Port Harcourt has been facing series of attacks in the last four months by armed men and cultists, which has led to beheading and fierce gang clashes. A source within the community who confirmed the killings said they woke up to see the dead bodies of the victims after sporadic gunshots that lasted for about three hours, just as spokesman of the state Police Command, Nnamdi Omoni, confirmed the incident.



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gunmen

Oti Ato

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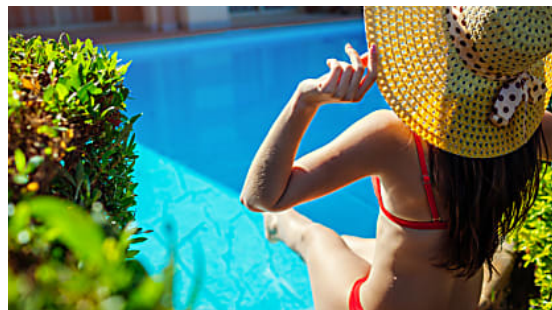


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