

Oruku town union boss killed, 70 houses burnt in fresh crisis

By Lawrence Njoku, Enugu
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Renewed crisis in Oruku, Nkanu East Council of Enugu State, yesterday claimed the life of the town union's vice chairman, Chief Samuel Ani.

Ani was reportedly shot dead in the early hours of yesterday, and the ensuing crisis led to the razing of over 70 buildings in the community by invaders.

The incident was the third since December 2020. In the first encounter on December 26, gunmen in police uniform, reportedly from Abuja, had invaded the town union meeting and killed the traditional ruler, Emmanuel Mba, leaving scores with injuries.

The monarch, whose body is still at the morgue, was murdered while he was addressing the annual general meeting of the community. His murder, in which some members of the community were fingered, sparked off a chain of crises leading to the burning of several houses and the only market in the community.

A few weeks after, in January this year, another set of gunmen invaded the community at a weekend, shooting sporadically and razing some targets. This led to exodus in the community.

Although a detachment of security personnel was stationed in the community after the second attack to stop further killings and destruction, shootings did not abate.

A community leader, Mr. Agozie Anih, told reporters yesterday that the vice chairman was killed in his home yesterday. He said: "There was heavy shooting throughout the night. Police deployed to maintain peace were nowhere to be found. This morning, Chief Samuel Ani of Oruku Caretaker Committee, was shot dead in his home."



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The Chairman, Neighbourhood Watch Group, Emmanuel Ani, also confirmed the killing of the town union leader. Said he: "The same people who conspired with policemen from Abuja and killed our monarch and burnt our houses have also killed the Vice Chairman, Oruku Caretaker Committee, set up by Governor Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi.

"As I am speaking with you, we are taking his body to the mortuary in the state capital." The Commissioner of Police, Mohammed Aliyu, has confirmed the incident.

"I have received the report and I have dispatched my men to the area to ensure that there are no further casualties," he said. Aliyu stated that details of the incident were still sketchy, assuring that he would brief reporters as soon as he received full information on the matter.



The Guardian gathered that the killing of Ani might not be unconnected with the judicial panel of inquiry set up by the government to probe the killing of the monarch,

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among other uprisings in the community.

A source revealed that the town union was billed to make its presentation at the panel on today, alleging that the killing was part of efforts to instil fear in the town union leadership and probably stop them from appearing before the panel.

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