

One killed in renewed communal clashes in Enugu

From **Lawrence Njoku**, Enugu

THERE was a resurgence of the protracted communal crisis in Oruku in Nkanu East Local Council of Enugu State, yesterday, with the killing of a native.

The Guardian gathered that gunmen reportedly laid ambush in the community in the early hours of yesterday and shot dead a native identified as Dennis Ike.

It was also gathered that a residential building belonging to another indigene of Oruku, Okechukwu Ukeh, was set ablaze by gunmen said to have been sponsored by one of the opposing

camps.

An eyewitness said the incident occurred at about 6:00 am, yesterday, when sporadic gunshots woke residents from their sleep.

The deceased (Ike) was said to be riding on his motorcycle from his residence for the day's business when the assailants, who also burnt his motorcycle and his corpse, gunned him down.

"We were awakened up again this morning by the heavy sound of gunfire, which forced many residents to remain indoors for several hours before security operatives arrived in the community. We came out

only to see the corpse of the young man and his burnt motorcycle. The gunmen fled before the policemen arrived," a source said.

Oruku and Umuode communities had been in crisis for several years, but while the state government has succeeded in settling the dispute by demarcating their boundary, which was in contention, as recommended by a judicial panel of enquiry, some aggrieved members of Oruku, who were opposed to the terms of settlement with Umuode, have allegedly continued to foment trouble in their own community.

Several lives and property had been lost to the conflict as some young men, believed to have been armed by some powerful personalities in Oruku, have continued to attack their kinsmen, who were allegedly marked for elimination for agreeing to settle the dispute with their Umuode neighbours.

The State Police Public Relations Officer, Mr. Daniel Ndukwe, could not be reached for his comments on the incident by press time; but some policemen deployed to the area were seen in a video trying to move the corpse of the deceased to the mortuary.