

Metro

Two feared dead as Bayelsa communities feud over land

By **Julius Osahon, Yenagoa**
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CP Alonyenu Francis Idu

.Govt orders security agencies to fish out perpetrators

Two people were feared dead yesterday, while others sustained injuries, following a bloody clash over a land dispute between two neighbouring communities in Bayelsa State.

The clash left many people stranded as vehicular and commercial activities were halted for hours, following the fight between Opolo and Okutukutu communities, both in Yenagoa metropolis, the state capital.

The Guardian learnt that properties belonging to non-indigenes of the area were destroyed during the fight between youths from the two communities.

Some indigenes of Opolo, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the fight by the two brotherly communities was unnecessary, as they had been living together in peace for several years, even before the creation of Bayelsa State and the emergence of Yenagoa as capital.

Confirming the incident, spokesperson for Bayelsa State Police Command, ASP Musa Muhammed, said the tactical team of the command was dispatched to the area to restore peace and calm.

Meanwhile, the Bayelsa State government condemned the incident and directed relevant security agencies to fish out the perpetrators for prosecution.

The Deputy Governor, Lawrence Ewhrudjakpo, in a statement issued by his media aide, Doubara Atasi, warned that the administration would not condone a situation where individuals or communities resort to violence and physical attacks over boundary disputes, more so, when such matters are pending in a court of competent jurisdiction.

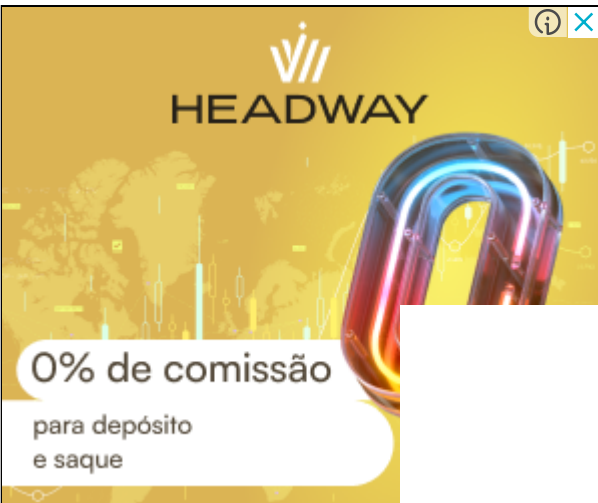
He called on Opolo and its neighbouring communities, particularly Okutukutu, to refrain from taking any further action liable to bring about breakdown of law and order in the area.

Ewhrudjakpo expressed regret over the loss of life and property and assured bereaved families that the government would do everything within its powers to ensure justice is served.

The deputy governor urged the feuding communities to sheathe their swords as the state government is taking necessary steps to resolve the issue, including holding an emergency meeting, today, with the leadership of the affected communities.

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