

National

One reportedly killed, several injured in fresh Okuama violence

By Chido Okafor, Warri

10 May 2024 | 3:47 am

One person has reportedly been killed and several others injured at Okuama community, in Ughelli South Local Council of Delta State, two days after soldiers were withdrawn from the settlement.

The Guardian learnt that yesterday's fresh violence ensued when residents, upon returning to their ruined ancestral homes, found that most of their belongings had been looted.

The returnees allegedly attacked those who were said to have strayed into the community and looted it.



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The military withdrew its men on Tuesday after Governor Sheriff Oborevwori promised displaced Okuama indigenes a safe return to their homes.

A local said: “We were surprised to see the soldiers pull out on Tuesday. Some indigenes of Okuama immediately went back to the community.

“But, as I’m talking to you, there is a problem. Three indigenes of our community have already been ambushed and attacked with machetes by Okuama returnees.

“They (the victims) were on their way to the Ezebiri community along a bush path linking various communities when they were attacked.

“One of them, who escaped with machete cuts, narrated that they were attacked by the Okuama returnees at gunpoint while on their way to Ezebiri. Others were led towards the jetty at the community waterfront. A victim is in a critical condition at a hospital.”

A native of another neighbouring community who confirmed the attack said: “Yes, they (soldiers) pulled out of Okuama Tuesday around 5 to 6 pm. A soldier said that they received a signal from above to leave the community, immediately.

“On the crisis between Akugbene and Okuama returnees, those youths went to Okuama to loot upon hearing that soldiers had left the community.

“Armed youths of Okuama accosted and shot at them and some were said to have



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continue to maintain the peace and pray to God for protection.

“It is true that the soldiers have left Okuama. On our part as a community, we will continue to maintain the peace, and pray to God for His protection and support,” he said.

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