

# Ogbe-Ijoh/Aladja crisis:Tension as unknown persons behead fish farmer

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THE fragile peace in Ogbe-Ijoh/Aladja part of Delta State snapped yesterday as unknown persons beheaded a 40-year- old Ogbe-Ijoh fish farmer.

The development has started heating up the area with the warring tribes throwing accusations and counter accusations. The victim, Samson Bebebo, was a 40-year old fish farmer and father of two.

He was reportedly shot and later beheaded by unknown persons behind the Warri South-West council Secretariat, which is in Ogbe-Ijoh.

Although there was no concrete pointer as to who killed him as at the time of filing this report, it was gathered indigenes of Ogbe-Ijoh were pointing accusing fingers at their Aladja neighbours.

But indigenes of Aladja refuted the allegation, saying it was another attempt at escalating the crisis, which the state government was already doing everything necessary to quell.

A chief from Ogbe-Ijoh, Chief Monday Keme, decried how the lifeless body of Bebebo was found.

According to him: "We were at the burial at Ogbe Ijoh this morning when we got information that Samson, who normally goes to work on his fish farm had not returned home.

"So we sent a search party after him at about two hours after 10:30a.m and somebody said he heard gunshots.

"The search party found his body lifeless and head removed. He was brutally murdered and beheaded."

He described the current tension at Ogbe Ijoh as palpable, warning youths may spoil for a showdown if the state government does not act fast in resolving the land dispute among communities in that area.

Another reliable source in Ogbe-Ijoh, who did not to be named, accused indigenes Aladja of masterminding the killing, pointing the neighbouring community had accused Ogbe-Ijoh recently of also kidnapping its indigenes.

Contacted President Aladja Community Council, Prince Dogene Elias, said: "We don't know what they are talking about and it is very unfounded and inciting.

"The Prof. Abnenego Ekoko Panel has moved round and a report is being awaited and we have confidence in what they are doing over the Aladja/Ogbe-Ijoh lingering crisis.

"While we wait, no party between us and Ogbe-Ijoh is allowed to go to the other's territory or even go to the bush.

"It is only the military guards that have the liberty to cross over or enter the government determined buffer zone."

He went on: "So how would anyone in its senses stage manage a bogus murder and point unsubstantiated fingers at Aladja?

"It is just the figment of someone's imagination and we believe it will not be without a purpose.

"When we claimed Sunday Obruche was killed in Isaba invasion of Ayama, we had a corpse in mortuary and police report to prove it.

"When we said the Oduara couple were abducted and their children helpless, we had proof.

"Ogbe-Ijoh must show proof of this claim of someone beheaded at their secretariat.

"Aladja know nothing about it and we think it is just being fabricated to divert attentive from our missing persons.

"Or if they fought and killed themselves they should own up and stop inciting further conflict with unfounded accusations," he said.

Though Delta state Commissioner of Police, Ibrahim Zannah and his spokesman, DSP Andrew Aniamaka, could not be reached last night, it was gathered policemen had recovered the corpse of the victim.