

Four killed in Edo communal clash

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By Osagie Otabor, Benin

No fewer than four persons have been killed in a clash between Amagba and Oke-Oroma communities in Oredo and Ikpoba-Okha local government areas respectively.

The clash was caused by struggle over ownership of a land, as those killed include a woman, two youths and 95-year old Monday Okhuelegbe.

Sources said armed youths besieged Oke-Oroma community at about 10pm on Friday and started shooting sporadically.

It was gathered that trouble started within both communities when elders of Oke-Oroma insisted that they are not under the authority of Amagba.

Some members of the community took to street protest to the palace of the Oba of Benin, Oba Ewuare II and the Edo NUJ centre, carrying placards with various inscriptions such as "Oba of Benin come to our rescue", "Joshua leave us alone", "We are under mass killings."

The spokesman for Oke-Oroma community, Mr. Nicholas Aguebor, said they thought threats of the latest attack were rumour until armed youths stormed the community destroying their properties and sacking them from their homes.

Aguebor said their great grandfathers lived in that community for centuries without trouble.

He noted that they were surprised with the sudden invasion of the community by Amagba and other neighbouring communities.

Aguebor called on the state governor and the Oba of Benin to come to their rescue to put an end to the communal crisis so that normalcy could return to their community.

“We have been having cases and our case is still at the palace but yesterday, they just came with arms. They have killed our people, burnt houses and even now we are still looking for our brothers and sisters and we can’t find them.

“Some of them are even in the river now; we can’t find them and none of us can even go there now. We have all fled our homes,” he said.

Odionwere (Village head) of Amagba, Mr. Joseph Iduoriyekemwen, however, denied any attack on Oke-Oruma.

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He said Amagba had no boundary with Oke-Oroma community but with Obagie Nevbosa.

The village head said Oke-Oroma has always been a part of Amagba.

The Edo State Commissioner of Police, Mr. Lawa Jimeta, who confirmed the attack, said some arrests have been made while arms were recovered.

Jimeta maintained that the police was already on top of the situation, but, however, said that no corpses of those allegedly killed have been found.

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