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Edo communal clash: Community alleges threat of invasion ([/edo-communal-clash-community-alleges-threat-of-invasion](#))

March 4, 2016

Written by: Clement Idoko - Abuja



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THE Uneme-Ehrurhu community in Akoko-Edo Local Government Area of Edo State has disclosed that some of its people were still missing as a result of the alleged invasion of the community by the Okpella-Ogute community of Etsako East Local Government Area of the state.

One of the leaders of the Uneme community, Mr Aigbokhaleode Asimiafele, who spoke with the Nigerian Tribune, in Abuja, said contrary to media report that only one person was killed during the clash, many Uneme people were killed with destruction of property in the area.

Asimiafele, a retired deputy director of the Federal Ministry of Culture and National Orientation, further disclosed that there were rumour of plots by the Okpella people to launch another attack on Uneme in the next few weeks, and called on the relevant authorities to secure the area.

He noted that the land in question belonged to the Uneme-Ehrurhu community and wondered why those that Uneme people had helped, had to turn around against them by killing them.

He added that the alleged newspaper report suggesting that the Unemes were tenants on their ancestral land was wrong.

“The Unemes, who are known to be great hunters and talented in metal works and iron making, were the original owners of the land. Even, the Government White Paper set up by the then Bendel State government headed by Justice S. A. Ajuyah, never reported that the Uneme-Erhuruns are tenants,” he said.

“We have been there before them and they have been terrorising us because our people will always tell us to leave them that we have been living together. This is why they took it as legitimate right to intimidate us.”

“When Josiah was coming for the Second World War, they even came with yams and strong men, some of our people wanted them to sign or thumb-print that 20 people will be bringing yams yearly from their harvest for the land we gave them. But our elders said no, let them be bringing it; they don’t need to thumb-print,” he said.

He noted that the recent attack was on Sunday when they knew that we are in the church.

“On Sunday, they came to attack our people supported by the police, who were protecting them under the guise that they were coming for peace only to be burning houses and killing people.

He noted that before the creation of Akoko-Edo, one of the oldest local government areas in the in Nigeria, which was created in 1964, the Federal Government had all the demarcations, wondering why they should leave their place and came back to Uneme land.

He recalled that the recent crisis erupted when somebody wanted to build a house and went to the forest in Uneme’s land to cut a tree, only for the Okpella people to bring a truck carrying the woods that the tree was in their land.

He added that argument ensued and that with the connivance of the police they invaded Uneme community.

“If you are a minority, are we saying you cannot live in Nigeria? I’m bitter by this. Anybody that is publishing anything either in the newspaper or electronic media without being objective would be regarded as malicious and taking sides with the Okpellas to destroy Uneme and we will not tolerate that from anybody.

“Some people are still missing till today. They are telling us that only one person died. Rumour has it that their invasion in the next three weeks would be disastrous,” he said.

He, however, said the Inspector-General of Police, Mr Solomon Arase, had intervened and asked the warring groups to send 10 representations each for discussion adding that they agreed on the need to maintain peace.

He disclosed that the Commissioner of Police in the state, had also promised that the matter would be forwarded to the Federal Executive Council (FEC) for lasting resolution.

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