

# Chinua Achebe's Kinsman Killed Over Land Dispute In Anambra

By Michael Ovat- Awka On Jun 6, 2019

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THE communal clash involving the people of Okenga-Ogidi, the country-home of Nigeria's acclaimed international novelist, late Chinua Achebe and Umusi Ome, both in Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State has claimed the life of a seventy year old man, Chief Anthony Okongwu whose corpse has been deposited at a hospital (name withheld) for autopsy.

**Tribune Online** gathered that, apart from the deceased who was believed to have died on account of clash over the disputed land, three other compatriots of Achebe sustained severe injuries and are presently receiving treatment in undisclosed hospitals.

Disclosing to newsmen in Awka, the Anambra State capital on Thursday, the National President of Ikenga Ogidi Family Union, Hon. Amechi Akume fingered a clique of land speculators and trespassers in the dastardly act of killing and maiming at Ani-Owelle on 1st June 2019.

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Akume who spoke in company of the union's National Secretary, Chief Chime noted that the protracted land dispute had since been resolved based on the judgment of the Supreme Court delivered in favour of Ogidi community on 21st March 1997 in Suit No. SC/71/1996.

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According to him, the state government which demarcated the boundary of the disputed land through the Boundary Committee headed by the Deputy Governor, Dr Nkem Okeke issued a Gazette No. 7/Vol.7 of the 31st day of July 1997. He stated that the judgment of the highest court followed a Court of Appeal suit No. CA/E//20M/95 which judgment was delivered on the 15th day of April 1996. While accusing the trespassers of forming an association to hide and work under its canopy, he faulted the recourse to another legal option by Nkpor side while the Supreme Court judgment was still subsisting.

Hon Akume called on the government and police authorities to effectively enforce the Supreme Court order instead of directing both contending parties to stay away from the disputed land. To avoid the restive youths of his community from taking laws into their hand by a trying out reprisal attack, he also called for immediate stoppage of construction works at the communal land till further notice.

When contacted the Chairman of Umusiome Village Nkpor, Mr Pius Obiogbolu, said to ***Tribune Online*** that they are not challenging the Supreme Court judgment but the Anambra State government gazette which, he said, was wrongly gazetted. He said that they want it repealed. He also said that they want the state government to implement the recommendations made by those they invited to look into the land dispute. He acknowledged that the two communities have been in land dispute for many years now

For the Chairman of Umusiome Landlords association, Mr Daniel Alaneme, he said the Landlords have no issue with the people of Ikenga Ogidi, saying that they were not there when the land dispute began. He described the issue of encroachment and mobilisation of thugs as untrue and that Ikenga Ogidi people should settle their differences with the people of Umusiome, adding that if at the end Ikenga Ogidi emerged victoriously they (Landlords) will come for settlement. He noted that what they are after is for peace to reign and that they gain nothing by seeing the two communities go into an unnecessary war.

The State Police Public Relations Officer, SP Mohammed Haruna who confirmed the incident via telephone said the investigation is ongoing to ascertain the true cause of the killing of the seventy-year-old man.

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