

Ebonyi: Four feared dead, houses destroyed in renewed clash over land dispute

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About four persons have reportedly been killed in a renewed land crisis between the people of Ndukwe community, Amasiri, in the Afikpo local government area and their neighbouring Okporojo in the Osso Edda local government area of Ebonyi State.

Also, houses and properties worth millions were destroyed in the renewed hostilities in the decades-long crisis between the two communities.

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A source in Okporojo said those killed were from the community.

The source's claims on the identity of the attackers could not be independently verified at press time.

The situation has led to people from the Edda local government taking flight through Afikpo town for fear of being attacked on the Amasiri road.

The land dispute, it was gathered has lasted for decades, with the past administration succeeding in obtaining a white paper from a committee it set up to look into the crisis.

Hostilities have, however, continued to erupt, with several people killed and properties destroyed following the alleged failure by previous administrations in the state to implement the recommendations contained in the white paper.

The Chairman, Edda Local Government Area, Chima Ekumankama, confirmed the killing of four persons at Okporojo Idima in Osso Edda during the attack.

He noted that security operatives have been deployed to restore normalcy and pointed out that he has visited the area to reassure the people of the government's commitment towards ending the lingering dispute.

Ekumankama commended the state governor, Francis Nwifuru, for taking proactive steps by moving security agents to the area.

He said, "I can assure you that normalcy and peace have returned to the area. I personally visited the area and witnessed the level of destruction done, and as we speak, there are enough security personnel in the area to forestall a reoccurrence."

Also, Chairman of Afikpo LGA, Timothy Nwachi also explained that the state government had deployed security operatives to the buffer zone to de-escalate tension and restore normalcy in the two communities.

He described the renewed hostility as unfortunate and appealed to the people of Amasiri to remain calm pending the government's decision on the matter.

Police spokesperson in the state, Joshua Ukandu said he has not been briefed about any attack that occurred in the area.