

Tension over killing of 80-year-old man

OFONIME UMANAH

THERE is fresh tension in Biase Local Government between Biakpan and Etono 2 communities in Cross River State, over the killing of an 80-year-old man.

The new hostility is over boundary issues which led to the kidnap and killing of an 80-year-old man identified as Chief Kalu Etekpi.

Besides, a private property and a filling station belonging to the Brotherhood of the Cross and Stars have been destroyed.

A native of Akwa Ibom State, identified as Mr Paul Etim, who was also kidnapped on his way to Biakpan has, however, been released by his captors, according to a spokesman of the Biakpan community, Chief Kanu Ugo, on Friday.

But the Etono 2 natives have insisted that they have never launched any attack on the Biakpan people and have also accused the Biakpans of being responsible for the burning of their property and the killing of their sons.

Our correspondent further learnt that the source of the problem was the urge by the Etono 2 people to communally own a land with their Biakpan neighbours, an issue that had long been settled by the Supreme Court in favour of the Biakpans.

It was based on the court judgement, which gave the area in question to Biakpan that the state government early this year, came up with a white paper, urging the Etono 2 people to "locate a virgin territory" and move to occupy, rather than drag the area with Biakpan.

Meanwhile, the state security council has raised the alarm over the rampant criminal cases in the state.

The Chief Press Secretary to the governor, Mr Patrick Ugbe, said in a statement on Thursday that the rising crime wave in the state, including the

activities of robbers who use motorcycles at night and the restiveness in some of the communities, were not promoting the tourism drive of the state.

Ali, others may

MUSIKILU MOJEED

BARRING any change in plans, the National Chairman of the Peoples Democratic Party, Dr. Ahmadu Ali, and other members of the party's National Working Committee might quit office in October, two months to the December 8 national convention.

Also to quit about the same period are officials of the party at state and local government levels.

A source in the party who informed our correspondent of the development on Saturday said an agreement had been reached that party leaders at all levels should resign their positions two months to the forthcoming congresses and convention.

He said before the resignation of Ali and other officials, caretaker committees would be constituted to run the affairs of the party pending the election of new leaders at state and national levels in November and December respectively.

Our source disclosed that the new arrangement was to satisfy some aggrieved party members who are insisting that the Ali team could not be trusted to conduct rancour-free congresses and convention.

Some of the aggrieved members have reportedly told the Dr. Alex Ekwueme-led National Reconciliation Committee that they would only return to the PDP if Ali and his team resigned enmasse.

The source said the group insisted that the resignation of the officials at state and national levels would signal a clear break from the past and put the ruling party on the path of genuine reconciliation.

Ali had last week given indication that his team might leave office before December.

Receiving the leadership of the Kogi State House of Assembly in Abuja, the PDP chairman told his visitors that they should not be taken unawares should members of the party's NWC decide to quit office two months to the December 8 national convention.

He did not give further details.

The Acting National Publicity Secretary of the party, Mr Bayo Alao, however said on Saturday that no decision had been reached

Osun

DAYO THOMAS

THE Commissioner for Justice and Attorney General of Osun State, Mr. Niyi Owolade, on Friday warned the Action Congress against misleading the public concerning the state's election petition tribunal.

Owolade gave the warning in a statement issued on Saturday in Osogbo, the state capital.

He was reacting to the issues raised by the AC on the activities of the tribunal and the visit of a police team to his office recently.

Ijaw communi

EMMANUEL OBE

THE Itsekiri and Ijaw communities in Edo State have set up an agency that will work towards checking the activities of the Niger Delta militants in the area.

The communities, which produce oil and gas have, in this respect, established the Amalgamated Itsekiri and Ijaw Oil Producing Communities in Ikpoba/Okha Local Government Area.

A delegation of the communities were at the Government House, Benin City on Friday to inform the state Governor, Prof.