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Death toll rises to 7 in Edo clashes

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The death toll in the communal clash between the Enwan and Akuku communities in Akoko Edo Local Government Area of Edo State which began on New Year eve, reached seven as fighting continued on Wednesday.



Photo file
Delta State Governor, Dr. Emmanuel Uduaghan

The police, which withdrew their men on Tuesday when the clashes became very heated, were yet to send reinforcements to check the clashes on Tuesday afternoon.

Two persons were killed on Tuesday when the hostilities which began on Monday, reached a climax the next day. Five more persons died later.

The policemen guarding the common borders of the communities were withdrawn as they could not contain the clashes.

Medical facilities at Igarra, the local government headquarters, has also not been adequate to cope with the casualties as the wounded had been sent to hospitals in Auchi.

The police authorities could not be reached for comments on the clashes, whose history dates back to several decades.

More than 20 people had been killed and many houses and property destroyed since the two communities began their fight over claims to a land returned to the communities by the state government that wanted to use the land for a ranch.

The state government had intervened several times by setting up inquiries and issuing a White Paper.

But the development had not solved the war between the two neighbours.

But only on December 5, the Chairman of the Local Government, Chief Johnson Emesealu, and other people passing the road linking the two communities were waylaid and beaten up by armed youths from the communities.

The cause of the latest clashes is yet to be established, though there were reports that it could be traced to an attempt by Enwan youths to carry out reprisal attacks on Akuku community after the last clashes in August.

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