

Stray bullets kill two as land grabbers, police clash

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Pandemonium broke out on Wednesday in Ikogbo community, in the Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area of Ogun State after stray bullets killed two persons and injured several others, including schoolchildren.

An eyewitness told *PUNCH Metro* that there had been a land dispute between two communities in the areas: Ikogbo and Imose.

Our correspondent gathered that attempts to enforce a court judgement on the disputed land between the two communities in favour of Ikogbo led to the crisis.

According to the source, the Onikogbo of Ikogbo, Oba Nurudeen Osoja, had invited some policemen to enforce the judgement and seal houses on the disputed land.

The source said, “But the resistance of the residents forced the policemen to start shooting continuously. A bullet hit one Mathew, an innocent okada rider that just came back from Lusada market, while several bullets injured schoolchildren and passersby. One of them later died.”

But reacting to the incident, the state Police Public Relations Officer, Abimbola Oyeyemi, said the police were invited to rescue the situation.

Oyeyemi confirmed that two persons died from stray bullets, but claimed that the suspected land grabbers struggling for the gun of a police inspector triggered the shots.

According to the PPRO, the command received a petition from Oba Nurudeen Osoja, the Onikogbo of Ikogbo, Ado Odo Ota, on September 20, alleging threat to his life, malicious damage, armed robbery and cultism against certain individuals in the community.

“The petition was referred to the State CID for handling. A team of detectives dispatched to the community yesterday (Wednesday) on investigation arrested four of the suspects identified by the Oba himself.

“Following the arrest, some youths, suspected to be cultists led by one Fiasco, mobilised and attacked the policemen and the police station around 3.30pm, shooting indiscriminately as witnessed by the Oba himself and corroborated by the police team.

“They vandalised the station and Fiasco himself snatched and took away one AK-47 rifle without magazine from one inspector at the station after much struggle.

“A patrol van donated by the Oba who built and donated the station to the community, was also vandalised.

“Four members of the community received gunshot wounds. Two later died in the hospital, while the remaining two are in stable condition receiving treatment.”

The PPRO, however, said normalcy had been restored, adding that more police patrol teams had been deployed to beef up security.

He said four suspects had been arrested in connection with the violence.

The monarch told *PUNCH Metro* that the state High Court had given a judgement in his favour and after it was appealed, the Court of Appeal upheld the same judgement.

“Everything we did, we followed the laws. We did not take the law into our hands,” he added.