

# Vietnam returnee stabbed to death in Abia

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| By Dayo Oyewo

A Vietnam-based Nigerian, Samson Nwaubani, has been killed in a communal clash between the Okwu and Umuajata communities in Umuahia, Abia State.

*PUNCH Metro* learnt that the incident occurred on Tuesday, August 27, during the annual New Yam festival held in Olokoro, where both communities are located.

It was gathered that tension had built up before the festival after a confrontation between a resident of Umuajata and another from Okwu degenerated into a fight.

The crisis reportedly escalated when youths from Okwu allegedly stormed the Umuajata community and destroyed some properties.

On the day of the New Yam festival, Samson and some Okwu youths were said to have passed through Umuajata while en route to the celebration grounds.

A source privy to the incident told our correspondent on Sunday that they were ambushed by suspected Umuajata youths, thereby resulting in a violent clash.

The source said Samson was stabbed in the process, after which he slumped and died on the spot.

“The New Yam festival holds in phases, and the one held last Tuesday was ongoing when a fight broke out between youths around the Umuajata area. We were later told that Samson and some men from Okwu were heading to the festival when some members of Umuajata attacked them. It was during the fight that he was stabbed in the neck and also macheted in his arm before he bled to death.”

Another source privy to the incident told our correspondent on Sunday that some elders had intervened earlier when the crisis began.

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“What happened was as a result of a lingering dispute between the Okwu Olokoros and Umuajata Olokoros communities. When the problem started, the elders reached out to them to settle their differences. They also warned

them against engaging in an act that could escalate the matter. Aside from the person who was killed, some people were also injured during the ambush,” the source narrated.

Meanwhile, the Umuahia South Local Government Area of the state has suspended the celebration of a masquerader activity associated with the annual festival, citing rising cases of violence in the area.

According to a statement seen by our correspondent on Sunday, the suspension followed an emergency peace and security meeting convened on Thursday by the Executive Mayor of the Umuahia South Local Government Area, Chinedu Enwereuzo, alongside traditional rulers of the Olokoru Clan, security chiefs, and other stakeholders.

The statement signed by Enwereuzor partly read, “The Igba Ekpe associated with Iriji (New Yam) festivals is suspended across Umuahia South LGA until further notice. This decision stems from intelligence linking certain festivities to insecurity and criminal activities.

“Ndi Eze, community leaders, and youth groups are directed to enforce full compliance, as communities or groups of persons who violate this directive will face the full force of the law. This suspension will be reviewed once risks are addressed, while cultural identity will continue to be promoted through safe and lawful activities.”

The council boss urged residents to prioritise peace and unity, especially in the Okwu and Umuajata communities of the Olokoru Clan, where the incident happened.

He added that the safety of lives and property remained the paramount concern of his administration.

When contacted on Monday, the state Police Public Relations Officer of the Abia State command, Maureen Chinaka, did not respond to calls made to her telephone line.

A text message sent to her had yet to be responded to as of the time this report was filed.