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6 Killed As Ijoko Land War Escalates

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By Abiodun Onafuye

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At least six people have been killed following the escalation of the obaship crisis in Ijoko, Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Council area of Ogun State.

Supporters of two contestants to the throne of the king of Ijoko, Chief Fatai Matanmi Alani and Chief Lasisi Ogunseye yesterday clashed in a bloody battle using dangerous weapons. Dispute over land has been causing bloody clashes in Ijoko for several months now.

P.M.NEWS gathered that the warring parties clashed on the way to the High Court I, Otta, where the matter was to be presided upon.

A witness told *P.M.NEWS* that trouble started when supporters of Chief Ogunseye spotted a car belonging to an ally of Chief Matanmi, on their way to the court.

"When they spotted the car, they started throwing stones and other objects items at the vehicle. This prompted some guys in the area to intervene and it resulted in a free-for all," the witness said.

"The crisis occurred at Oju Ore area of Otta and spread to Sango and Ijoko town. The cause of the fight has to do with the Egba/Awori factions both of whom are laying claim to the ownership of the town and are in support of Chief Lasisi Ogunseye, an Egba man. But the Awori refuted the claim, saying they are the rightful owners of the land and they will never allow an Egba man to rule them," he further explained

Speaking with our correspondent on phone, counsel to Chief Matanmi, Barr. Hibatulah Salako, stated that when the fight broke out, they were already in the court, so he could not say anything about it.

Yesterday in court, both parties wanted the adoption of written address on the admissibility of a particular document which the counsel to Ogunseye based on point of law.

After the adoption, the presiding judge, M. A. Ojo, adjourned the case till 11 May, 2010 and warned the warring parties to eschew violence and call their supporters to order.

When *P.M.NEWS* contacted the police spokesman in the state, Muyiwa Adejobi on phone, he confirmed the incident and stated that some people have been arrested in connection with the crisis.

"The C.P. was at the spot yesterday with some officers and I was with them. When we got there, the C.P ordered for the deployment of more police officers to the area to forestall further breakdown of law. I can confirm to you that one person was dead but I can not say emphatically how he was killed. Also, some boys were arrested when we got there and the case has been transferred to the state CID for further investigation." Adejobi said.



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