

Man Beheaded As Towns Clash

EMMA UNA/ Calabar

Two communities in Cross River State may soon clash as a man, Raymond Egbara, was kidnapped and later beheaded recently over a disputed farmland on the border of the two communities.

The renewed communal conflict between the warring communities of Nko in Yakkur Local Government Area and Onyadama in Obubra Local Government Area, both in the Central Senatorial District of Cross River State, was over farmland.

The two communities located along the Calabar – Ikom highway in Southsouth Nigeria, in 2010 were engulfed in a communal warfare that claimed many lives when an Onyadama man was kidnapped and killed in the farm by Nko people following a dispute over a parcel of farmland that borders the two communities.

In another incident akin to that of 2010, an Nko man was allegedly kidnapped by Onyadama people in the farm recently, and in retaliation, the people of Nko also kidnapped an Onyadama man called Raymond Egbara and his son.

“The kidnap of the Nko man was apparently not done by the entire village but the Nko people acted after a meeting when they discovered that Onyadama has kidnapped their tribesman,” a source in the area told *P.M.NEWS*.

His son was released that same day but the man was held back, prompting the people of Onyadama to send an eleven-man emissary to Nko to find out why their man was not set free. “The 11-man emissary was also detained, bringing the number of Onyadama people held by Nko people to 12,” our source said.

When the police were finally involved on Thursday, the 11-man emissary was released but Egbara was not among those released, prompting fears that he man may have been killed.

“His mutilated body with his head hacked off was found on Friday and it is believed that the Onyadama people would retaliate, which may lead to full blown communal conflict,” the source said.

When *P.M-NEWS* visited Onyadama about 200 kilometres away from Calabar, the place was calm but two anti-riot police vehicles were stationed at the Onyadama Community Secondary School.

“The mobile policemen sent here are on surveillance and routine security checks. We don’t know what you are talking about,” a Mobile Police inspector, who is obviously the head of the team, said.

The Police Public Relations Officer for the Cross River Police Command, ASP Hogan Bassey, said the matter was being handled by stakeholders from both communities, adding, “I can assure you that peace has returned to the area.” He said investigations are still going on but would not confirm if there has been any arrest in connection with the killing.

“I told you that the chairmen of Yakkur and Obubra councils have met and we strongly believe the matter is under control,” he said.

Vulcanizer

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