

# Bayelsa reads riot act as communal crisis claims 1

13th March 2024



From **Femi Folaranmi**, Yenagoa

**An intra communal crisis in Egbemo- Angalabiri, Ekeremor Local Government Area of Bayelsa State has claimed the life of one Funkeye Lucky.**

Investigations revealed that the crisis in the oil-bearing community is linked to two people from the community running a private oil security firm.

One of the factions in the bid to lay claim to the authority of the area was said to have engaged in a bloody clash over allegations of oil bunkering resulting in the death of Lucky.

Sources said tension had gripped the community with the other faction planning reprisal, prompting the Bayelsa State government to intervene. It

took the efforts of conventional security agencies to douse the tension, while urging the factions to embrace the peace efforts of the state government.

In a meeting held at the instance of the deputy-governor, Senator Lawrence Ewhrudjakpo, which had in attendance the leadership of Tarakiri Kingdom, representatives of Egbemo- Angalabiri and heads of security agencies in the state, the state government restated its commitment to peace and security as a first order priority.

Ewhrudjakpo, who regretted the crisis which has claimed one life, assured that the security architecture will be further strengthened to make it impossible for non-state actors to overrun and supplant duly constituted authority in any Bayelsa community.

He noted that Egbemo-Angalabiri is not the only oil-bearing community in the state and, therefore, wondered why its indigenous people were

always embroiled in crises leading to the loss of lives and valuable property.

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While promising that the government would wade into the current crisis that led to the killing of one Mr Funkeye Lucky, Senator Ewhrudjakpo conveyed the condolences of the state government to the bereaved family.

He equally charged the Chairman of Ekeremor Local Government Council, Barrister Belemu Nemine, the Tarakiri Council of Chiefs and prominent people of the community, including the Deputy Speaker of the state assembly, Michael Ogbere, to also make efforts towards resolving the problem.

He said: “The security agencies will compare notes and ascertain what is on ground at Egbemo-Angalabiri.

We have our own means of getting justice across to those who deserve justice.

“I like to, once again, appeal to every aggrieved person, particularly the bereaved family, not to take the laws into your hands because no two wrongs can ever make a right. We have always emphasised that whenever such things happen, there is law enforcement.

“We will not allow any community to be overrun by non-state actors to become an ungoverned space. We are going to push far in this regard because our leniency is being wrongly interpreted as incapacity and weakness.”

In his contribution, the Pere of Tarakiri, His Majesty King (Dr) Seiyifa Koroye, condemned the gun-toting allegedly going on in Egbemo-Angalabiri and called on the government and security agencies to act fast to forestall escalation of the crisis.

Also speaking, representatives of the bereaved family, Chief Dickson Okpokunou and Mr Dennis Wilson, said their son, Mr Funkeye Lucky, allegedly killed by operatives of a private security company on March 1

this year, had never engaged in any oil bunkering activities in his lifetime.