

# 4 killed, 3 missing in Enugu communal clash

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From Jude Chinedu, Enugu

**Tensions are running high in Igbo-Etiti Local Government Area of Enugu State following the alleged killing of four Aku youths by members of the neighbouring Ikolo community.**

The victims were reportedly part of a search party looking for three missing youths, who were suspected to have been kidnapped by Ikolo residents.

According to a source from the community, the tragic development began on August 1, 2024, when three young men from Aku who were identified as Frank Didigwu, Chibuike Nnadi, and Obiora Dugwu, went to Ikolo to seek traditional medicine for the critically ill mother of one of them.

He said that "on getting to the premises of the herbalist, one of the victims put a phone call to his sister, confirming that they have got to the residence of the herbalist and awaited their turn to receive attention.

"Since that call, the three young men have not been seen or heard from, and their phones have remained switched off.

Shockingly, the three Aku boys are yet to be seen; their whereabouts remain known," he said.

He added that family members, friends, and the leadership of the Aku Youths General Assembly organised a search party to locate the missing youths.

On Thursday, August 8, the search party was allegedly ambushed by suspected armed Ikolo residents, leading to the killing of four of them, while others sustained gunshot injuries.

In an emergency press conference held by the Aku General Assembly (AGA), in conjunction with the Aku Welfare Association (AWAF) Federated, Aku-Diewa Lawyers Forum (ADLAF) National, and the Aku Youths General Assembly, late on Friday, the community condemned the incident as a dastardly act of criminality, terrorism, and murder.

“The Aku community feels burdened to inform the world of a dastardly act of criminality, terrorism, and murder being unleashed on its citizens by the Ikolo community of Igbo-Etiti Local Government Area of Enugu State without cause or provocation,” the AGA said in its statement.

They also highlighted a history of tension between the two communities, recalling an incident in 2016 when the Ikolo community allegedly attacked the properties and persons of Aku residents.

“Four Ikolo people were arrested by a team of police from the Force Criminal Investigation Department (FCID), Abuja, prosecuted, and subsequently convicted by the court,” they recounted.

The Aku General Assembly emphasised that it had earlier raised an alarm on May 23, 2024, through a press conference, warning of the “body language of Ikolo people to unleash unprovoked mayhem on Aku people.”

The community called for an urgent intervention from law-enforcement agencies and government authorities to stop further attacks on the community.

“We are calling on the law enforcement agents and the state to take note of this and come to the aid of the Aku community to protect lives and properties, arrest further degeneration of peace, and ensure the rescue of the three missing Aku youths.

When contacted, the President General of Ikolo community, Chief Jude Odo, said he was at a meeting and could not react to the allegation. Although he promised to get back to Sunday Sun, he was yet to do so several hours after he was contacted.

However, the Police Public Relations Officer in Enugu, Daniel Ndukwe, confirmed the incident.

He revealed that operatives of the Nigeria Police and other security forces had been deployed to Aku and Ikolo communities, adding that normalcy had been restored to the area.

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