

One killed, three injured, one missing in Abia-Akwa Ibom boundary clash

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By Isaac Job, *Uyo*

One person has reportedly been killed, three others sustained varying degrees of injuries, and one person is missing in an ongoing boundary dispute between Ariam in Ikwuano Local Government Area of Abia State and their Ikot Okum neighbours in Obot Akara Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State.

Our correspondent gathered that the boundary dispute involves six villages in Akwa Ibom State fighting over a parcel of land that demarcates them from the people of Ariam in Abia State.

The six villages in Akwa Ibom include Abama, Ikot Okum, Esa Ikwen, Nto Ndong, Utu Ikot Inyang, and Utu Otong.

It was gathered that the boundary dispute has persisted for decades, but the recent fracas started when a man from Abama went to his farm to harvest cassava last December and was accosted by heavily armed men from Ariam, who beat him up and inflicted deep machete cuts before he escaped.

An eyewitness from Abama community, who pleaded anonymity, said the six communities regrouped for a reprisal attack and killed one person from Ariam.

“The funny thing is that Ariam fighters killed our brother and escaped with the corpse, but we don’t carry their corpse.

“They have to return our brother’s corpse for burial, or we will fight them. This fight has persisted for many years.”

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He accused the people of Ariam of destroying the stream that was supposed to serve as a natural boundary between the warring communities.

“On this disputed land, there is a stream that is supposed to serve as a natural boundary between us and Ikwuano in Abia State.

“But the people of Ariam always fill the stream with sand just to destroy the natural boundary and trespass.

“Unfortunately, this stream refuses to dry up because you can’t destroy natural features. The government should step in and address this problem.”

Confirming the incident, the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) for Akwa Ibom, DSP Timfon John, said one person from Ariam in Ikwuano Local Government Area of Abia State has lost his life, while three persons from Ikot Okum community in Akwa Ibom were seriously injured.

“Yes, it is a boundary clash between Ikwuano Local Government Area and Obot Akara Local Government Area in Akwa Ibom State.

“One person from Ikot Okum is missing. An investigation is ongoing to arrest the perpetrators.”