

Uchenna Inya
ABAKALIKI

METRO

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Crisis: Umahi blames LG chair, lawmaker, commissioner, aide

...says 25 killed, 26 arms recovered, 125 houses burnt

Governor Dave Umahi yesterday blamed politicians for the communal crisis between Effium and Ezza Effium people in the Effium community in Ohaukwu Local Government Area of Ebonyi State.

The governor specifically mentioned the Chairman of Ohaukwu Local Government Area, Chief Clement Odah, and the member representing Ohaukwu North constituency in the state House of Assembly, Hon. Chinedu Awo, as brains behind the crisis.

Umahi also blamed the state Commissioner for Local Government, Samuel Okoronkwo, and his Special Assistant on Parks Development, Emmanuel Igwe, for the crisis.

The crisis led to the killing of many people with houses and other valuables burnt.

Umahi said officially, 25 deaths had been recorded, 26 arms recovered from warlords, while 125 houses were burnt.

He added that fuel and gas stations were also burnt.

The governor said the crisis

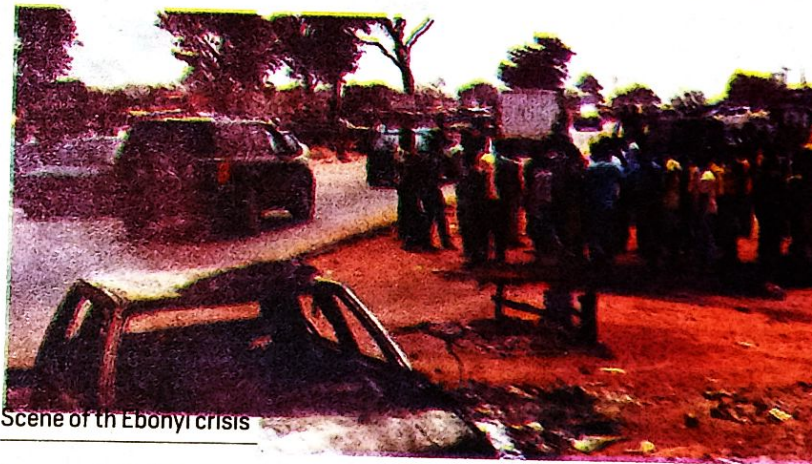
wouldn't have occurred if Odah, Awo, Okoronkwo and Igwe listened to his instructions on how to solve the little problem which was occurring in the community before it escalated to the uncontrollable situation now.

He spoke in Abakaliki, the state capital, during a meeting with stakeholders of the community to find a lasting solution to the crisis.

The governor said money was being contributed by the warring parties to promote the crisis and vowed that he would prosecute anybody sponsoring the killings in the community.

He added: "There is no way Ezza will say that they don't know what is happening at Effium and there is no way that Effium will say that they don't know what is happening at Effium.

"If they ask you to contribute money whether you know what the money is for or you don't



Scene of the Ebonyi crisis

know what the money is for, the moment you contribute to spilling of blood, it means that you and your generation to the fifth generation will be cursed.

"If you are here or you know anybody contributing money to buy arms to spill innocent blood, you have to go home and begin prayers because come rain, come sunshine, the word of God must come to pass, whether you like it

or not. We are all here because God gave us the opportunity.

"A small diabetes or kidney problem or cancer will demobilise anybody but you don't have it because of the mercy and the grace of God. So, I have called you as our leaders and stakeholders to ask what do we do to stop this? Enough is enough!

"Let us not forget that this problem started by the Council

Chairman, Clement Odah and Hon. Chinedu Awo, the House of Assembly member. When the problem started between them, I called them several times, one on one, three of us. We sat and I pleaded with them. In fact, at a time, one of them walked away on me. It took my begging the Speaker for the House not to sack the person on this same issue. I just took it that there is nothing a father will not see, there is nothing leadership will not see. The two of them are engaged in supremacy because of 2023 that they do not know whether they will see.

"Officially, we have recorded about 25 deaths, 26 arms recovered from the hoodlums, about 125 houses burnt, fuel and gas stations also burnt.

"I have written to the Minister of Humanitarian Services to come to our aid. I have written to the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to come to our aid."