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25 Killed In C'River Land Tussle

Fyneface Aaron • Friday, Mar 20, 2009

A protracted land dispute between two communities in Cross River State has so far claimed 25 lives and destroyed property worth millions of naria.

Disturbed by the ugly trend, the state Governor, Senator Liyel Imoke has ruled out any possibility of either of the warring factions enjoying eventual ownership of the property.

Addressing representatives of the feuding communities, Onyedama, Obubra and Nko in Yakurr Local Government Area shortly after inspection of the war-torn area, Senator Imoke said, since the parcel of land has become a reason for senseless blood-letting and willful destruction of property, government has acquired the disputed land for development purposes.

Governor Imoke described as unnecessary and retrogressive the manner of destruction and hatred so far

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experienced in the state over a parcel of land that should have united the communities, and warned that government will deal decisively with any group that breaches the peace.

When contacted on the development, spokesman for the Nko community, who identified himself as Chief Akpama Isokon, said they were still counting the dead and evaluating their losses.

He told our correspondent that even now, three persons kidnapped by Onyedama war lords were yet to be found.

However, the clan head of Adun-Obubra, Ovarr Peter Ewang and Mr Moses Egba, have alleged that the people of Nko raided the Onyedama community and beheaded about two persons before the fight erupted.

Our correspondent, who visited the area, reported that trouble erupted over the death of one Sunday Onyama, a native of Onyedama, who was allegedly beheaded in his farm at Ogban forest at the boundary with Nko by the Nko people.

Meanwhile, the police have arrested scores of people

from both communities, including the clan head of Nko, Obol Effiom Ayimobi as well as one Obol Bassey Usang Ofem, Chief Richard Ubi, Mr Ofem Jack and the councillor representing Nko in the Yakurr Local Government Legislative Council.

When contacted, the Cross River State Police Public Relations Officer, Mr Etim Dickson, said the police were still investigating the various claims of the warring communities but confirmed that lives were, indeed, lost.

The police image maker, who was on the entourage of the governor, assured journalists that a detailed report would be made public after the investigation.

Friday Nwagbara

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