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7 feared dead, 52 houses torched as Anambra, Kogi communities fight over oil wells

on April 02, 2013 / in [News](#) 7:16 pm / [Comments](#)

AWKA- NO fewer than seven persons were feared dead and 52 houses burnt when the people of Enugu-Otu Aguleri in Anambra East Local Government Area of Anambra State and Ashonwo/Odeke in Ibaji Local Government Council of Kogi State engaged in a bloody clash over disputed land on their oil –rich borders.

BY VINCENT UJUMADU

AWKA- NO fewer than seven persons were feared dead and 52 houses burnt when the people of Enugu-Otu Aguleri in Anambra East Local Government Area of Anambra State and Ashonwo/Odeke in Ibaji Local Government Council of Kogi State engaged in a bloody clash over disputed land on their oil –rich borders.

Kogi people have been laying claims to the oil wells in Aguleri –Otu in Anambra State shortly after President Goodluck Jonathan commissioned the Orient Petroleum Refinery in Anambra State last year.

A community leader in Enugu-Otu Aguleri, Chief Anekwe Arinze told reporters Monday that the people of Ashonwo/Odeke allegedly invaded their community at about 1:30am when they had all gone to bed.

He said: “We were sleeping when suddenly we started hearing gunshots everywhere and when some of us came out to know what was happening, we saw our houses on fire.

“Our children and women who tried to escape were shot and many were wounded. We heard them saying the land belongs to them and that we cannot take it. That was when we knew it was Kogi people.

“Some of our men who summoned the courage to pursue them could not get them because when they noticed our prompt response, they ran away. Already we have counted seven corpses. They also kidnapped three men.

“But we cannot fold our hands while they kill our people. They must release them to us hale and hearty.”

However, the Transition Committee Chairman of Anambra East Council area, Comrade Chinedu Obidigwe who could not confirm the number of casualties lamented the level of destruction in the community by the people suspected to be from Kogi State, saying that it was unfortunate that they took laws into their hands by not going to court to prove their case.

Obidigwe further urged both communities to exercise restraints and avoid taking the laws into their hands.

Anambra State Police Public Relations Officer, PPRO, Mr. Emeka Chukwuemeka told Vanguard that he he heard of the clash informally, adding that he did not have the details yet.

It was gathered Tuesday that some soldiers had been deployed to the area to maintain law and order.

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