

Nigeria: One Feared Dead As Aguleri/ Umuoba Anam Fight Over Land

By Vincent Ujumadu

Awka — IN what appears to be an emerging reoccurrence of the infamous Aguleri /Umuleri war between 1999 and 2002 in which hundreds of lives were lost, a clash between Aguleri and the neighbouring Umuoba Anam, on Friday, over a stretch of land close to the Anambra River has led to the loss of one person, while 10 persons sustained various degrees of injuries.

When Sunday Vanguard visited the area yesterday, it was observed that four houses, including the building housing the World Bank -assisted Anambra State FADAMA 111 Project, were burnt down, while the magnificent building housing Aguleri Micro Finance Bank was torched.

Also, all the dredging equipment, estimated to be over N50 million belonging to JCECAN Global Link Nigeria Ltd, as well as welding machines, rubber floaters deep black hosts, batteries, 150 plastic chairs and 30 canopies for hiring, were set ablaze.

One of the victims, Mr. Chibuko Ifediegwu, whose injury was said to be severe, was on admission at the Borommew Hospital, Onitsha.

Truck loads of policemen were seen guarding the area while the state commissioner of police, Mr. Hosea Karma, met with the traditional rulers of the two communities imploring them to call their youths to order.

A youth leader in Umuoba Anam, Mr. Sam Ifeatu, who narrated the incident to Sunday Vanguard, said trouble started when somebody from Aguleri, simply called Obi, rechanneled filthy water from the town to the river spot where his people usually take their bath and collect water for their domestic use, instead of channeling it through the Aguleri end.

According to him, when the people complained, the said Obi threatened them and this led to a confrontation between youths of the two communities during which guns were freely used.

However, a community leader in Aguleri and a member of the Igwe Aguleri cabinet, Chief Ralph Igwa, said Umuoba Anam had no claim to any parcel of land in the area as the place they are presently residing was given to them by Aguleri people.

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