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Why we arrested 9 Ogbe-Ijoh, Isaba, Aladja leaders— Police

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*Let's stop killing ourselves, youths tell Ogbe-Ijoh, Isaba

By Emma Amaize

ASABA—DELTA State Police Command, yesterday, said it apprehended nine leaders of Ogbe-Ijoh, Isaba and Aladja communities in Warri South-West Local Government Area, Delta State and Udu LGA of the state, to forestall the escalation of the ethnic feud among the Ijaw and Urhobo communities.

This came as Urhobo youths in Udu Kingdom, Delta State, said it was wrong for the people of Aladja, Ogbe-Ijoh and Isaba in Udu and Warri South West LGAs, to be killing themselves, saying: "We should work together to jointly fight our common adversary who is currently unwilling to negotiate with us.



Gov Ifeanyi Okowa

According to the Police, those in custody were the Chairman of Ogbe-Ijoh, Alex Akemotubo, Secretary, Godwin Eneghan and Youth President, Edwin Aken. Others were the Chairman of Isaba community,

Henry Ofoleyo, Secretary, Austin Deinfegha and Youth President, Moses Ogugu, as well as Oma Wisdom, Pastor Kingsley Uwavweahor and Harrison Beta of Aladja community.

Police Public Relations Officer, PPRO, Delta Command, DSP Andrew Animaka, who ruled out bias on the part of the Police, told Vanguard on **PHONE**: “Their arrest was legal. We cannot fold our hands and watch the crisis degenerate. We arrested three leaders each from the communities. It is for these reasons that we arrested them, they are the leaders and nothing happens without their knowledge in their areas and we will charge them to court soon.”

DSP Aniamaka said the police were forced to take action after the Commissioner of Police, Mr. Zanna Ibrahim, had personally visited Aladja and other warring communities to persuade the combatants to sheathe their swords and they refused.

He said: “The State Security Council recently resolved that the security agencies should deal decisively with the situation if there is any further escalation of hostilities,” adding that **since the murder of one Sunday Obruche on November 11, 2016,** abduction of Mr. and Mrs. Augustine Glory, there had been no let down by the communities until one Samson Bebebor was also beheaded in December, last year.

The PPRO listed several persons that were abducted, maimed and kidnapped within the period, saying that Commissioner Ibrahim had to visit Aladja, Isaba and Epama, last month, begging for peace to reign, while the state governor, Dr. Ifeanyi Okowa, summoned the leaders and youths from the feuding communities to Asaba, last year, to read the riot act.

According to him, despite the riot act by the state government and warning that the leaders ordering the attacks would be held responsible for their actions, the communities refused to stop the bloodletting, culminating in the shooting and beheading of another person, last week,

He stated: “Police did not wake up overnight to arrest the leaders. We have been monitoring their activities. We have deployed 200 policemen and since they do not want to let peace reign, we have to speak in the language they understand.”

Meanwhile, in a statement by the national president and public relations officer of Urhobo Progress Union, UPU, Youth Wing, Udu Kingdom chapter, Messrs. Sunday Subi and Matthew Krokele respectively, said: “Udu Kingdom wants peace, we have lived together as one. There is need for us to work together to jointly fight our common enemy who is currently unwilling to negotiate with us. Udu is a peace loving kingdom. We the executives of the national body want peace to reign between our neighbours of Isaba and Ogbe-Ijoh Kingdoms.”

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