

TUESDAY 22 AUGUST



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6 killed, houses razed as Delta communities clash in land tussle

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By Ochuko Akuopha

OLEH—FOLLOWING a protracted land dispute between Igbide and Okpolo-Enwhe, Isoko South Local Government Area of Delta State, about six people are feared dead, scores wounded and several houses set ablaze.

Also, hundreds of people have fled the communities during the mayhem, which occurred over the weekend.

The attack came 11 months after the leadership of the feuding communities signed an undertaking to end their 15-month crisis and maintain law and order in their domains.

Recall that hostilities broke out in the communities on May 6, 2016 after over 40 years of legal battle, resulting in the death of several people and destruction of properties.

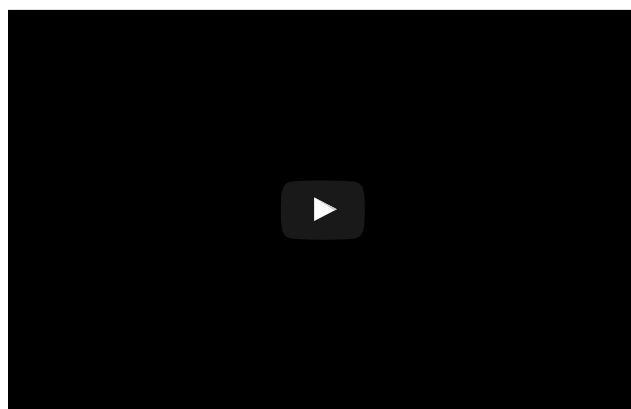
Though details of Sunday's incident were scanty at press time, sources said sporadic gunshots began at about 10a.m. around the neighbouring communities and lasted till about 3p.m.

It was gathered that some of the victims, who sustained gunshot wounds, have been rushed to nearby hospitals.

Efforts to reach the Police Public Relations Officer of the state command, Mr. Andrew Aniamaka, for comments proved abortive at press time, but a senior police officer in the Oleh Police Division confirmed the incident.

Reacting to the incident, Chairman of Isoko South Local Government Area, Sir Ithiako Ikpokpo, described the attack as "callous, distasteful, and a sad reminder of the loss of our common values and sense of brotherhood.

"This has clearly gone beyond a land dispute as precious lives are daily slaughtered by an evil and criminally-minded few. Government will not tolerate the excesses and unbridled callousness of some blood thirsty murderers who have elected to foment monumental havoc.



"The full weight of the law will be deployed in dealing with troublemakers and merchants of violence. It has come to a head. This mindless madness must stop."