

# 15 feared dead in C'River as communities fight over road

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**A**SABA—NO fewer than 15 persons were reported killed and a village sacked on Tuesday, when two communities in Biase Local Government Area of Cross River State, clashed over a road that they have used for decades.

Afono and Ibini communities, all in Biase council of the state reportedly went to war when youths from Afono blocked the only road leading to the two communities, refusing to allow their Ibini neighbours to have access.

Meanwhile, following the recent clashes between herdsmen and farmers in Ibusa, Oshimili Local Government Area of Delta State, the state Commissioner of Police, Mr Hafiz Inuwa, yesterday, appealed to community leaders across the state to help the police in dismantling farms settlements across the state.

This is coming a day after hundred of farmers fled their camp (residential area) in Ibusa, following invasion of their farms by suspected armed herdsmen, who launched attack on them and the development has threatened farming in those areas.

Also in Anambra State, the state government has set up a 10-man panel of inquiry to look into the Omor and Umunbo communal crisis in Ayamelum LGA of the state. The crisis was between farmers from the two communities at the clusters of the developed areas of the Lower Anambra Irrigation Project (LAIP) over allocation of farm land at the cluster. During the recent clash, properties worth millions of naira were destroyed.

In Cross River State, Van-

- Only houses, farms were destroyed — PPRO
- Delta CP calls for dismantling of farm settlements
- Anambra sets up panel to look into Omor/Umunbo communal clash

guard gathered that trouble started two years ago, when Orugbam and Abanwan, two other communities in the area fought a war, while some villages around the area had taken side for and against Orugbam, while Afono has been in support of Orugbam and Ibini in support of Abanwan.

According to a resident of Ibini, Max Ogba, the incident started when youths from Afono blocked the road and three youths from Ibini went and dismantled the barricade.

He said, "As they were returning back to Ibini, they did not know that Afono youths had laid ambush and attacked them. Two of the Ibini boys died while one escaped to tell the people.

"That was on Monday. On Tuesday, Ibini youths entered Afono and they fought. Three more people from Ibini died while about 10 people from Afono died, bringing the total number of the dead to 15.

"As I am talking to you now, the Ibini youths have razed down Afono and there is no single soul there now. Even youths from Orugbam who went to support them have fled."

An indigene of Afono, who pleaded anonymity told Vanguard, "The problem between us and Ibini is that since Orugbam people were displaced from their ancestral home, Ibini people have been looking for our trouble. Our youths only went to block the road to avoid their trouble.

"But because they are in support of Orugbam, they

felt threatened and attacked us. Now, they have succeeded in killing not less than 10 people in our village and burnt down our village," he said.

Vanguard learned that Erei land, to which all the four warring communities belong, has been divided since the war between Orugbam and Abanwan.

When contacted, the Police Public Relations Officer PPRO, Irene Ugbo confirmed the crisis, saying, "It is not true. No person was killed. The only thing was that farms and some houses were destroyed.

"When we heard about the crisis, the Commissioner of Police, Uche Anozia quickly sent police

officers and Mobile Policemen and very soon, the CP State Security Adviser will meet with traditional rulers," she said.

## We have invited warring communities to Calabar —SA security

Contacted, Special Adviser to Governor Ayade on Security (South), Ani Esin said on telephone that the communities have been invited for a meeting in Calabar on Friday.

"We are aware of the violence and skirmishes

## CSO urges President Buhari

- Says PANDEF's position on NDDC re

By Chioma Onuegbu

**U**YO—A civil society group, Niger Delta Movement for Peace and Justice, NDMPJ, has called on President Muhammadu Buhari to dissolve the Interim Management Committee, IMC, of the Niger Delta Development Commission, NDDC.

National Coordinator of NDMPJ, Etifit Nkereuwem in a statement yesterday, in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State advised the National Assembly to withhold the 2020 budget of the NDDC until the committee was dissolved.

His words, "Following the recent and worrisome developments in the NDDC, we believe that the IMC of the commission has failed to achieve its objectives and therefore, should be dissolved.

"We urge the National

Assembly not to recognise the IMC henceforth, because it is illegal, undemocratic and unacceptable. The National Assembly should withhold the NDDC 2020 budget until Mr President dissolves the IMC.

"The National Assembly should liaise with President Buhari to ensure the immediate inauguration of substantive Governing Board of NDDC that has been screened, and confirmed last year by the Sen-

## Delta kingdom

**U**GHELLI—THE Ekade Ruling Family of Ewu Urhobo kingdom, Ughelli South Local Government Area, Delta State, has inaugurated a new executive to pilot its affairs.

The inauguration was sequel to the resolution of