

Akwa Ibom-Abia boundary Crisis: One dead, one missing, three injured



By Chioma Onuegbu, Uyo

One person has been confirmed dead, while three others sustained varying degrees of injuries in the ongoing boundary crisis between Ariam in Ikwuano Local Government Area of Abia State and Ikot Okum in Obot Akara Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State.

The Akwa Ibom State Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), DSP Timfon John, confirmed the incident to newsmen yesterday in Uyo. She noted that the deceased hailed from Abia State, while the missing person and the three injured were from Akwa Ibom State.

“Yes, it is a boundary clash between Ikwuano Local Government Area and Obot Akara Local Council in Akwa Ibom State. One person from Ikot Okum is currently missing. Investigation is ongoing to arrest the perpetrators,” she said.

The conflict reportedly involves six Akwa Ibom villages: Abama, Ikot Okum, Esa Ikwen, Nto Ndang, Utu Ikot Inyang, and Utu Otong. The boundary dispute has spanned several decades.

According to sources from the affected Akwa Ibom villages, the recent clash began in December last year when a man from Abama was accosted by armed men from Ariam while harvesting cassava on his farm. He was allegedly beaten up during the encounter.

An eyewitness from Abama, who requested anonymity, stated that in a reprisal attack, the six villages regrouped and killed one person from Ariam.

The witness further alleged that the people of Ariam were attempting to destroy a stream that serves as the natural boundary between the communities.

“Unfortunately, this stream refuses to dry up because you can’t destroy natural features. The government needs to step in and address this problem,” the eyewitness urged.