

**RE: \*BILLE’S UNPROVOKED DIATRIBES AGAINST KALABARI: A DESPERATE PLOY TO MASK ILLEGAL ENCROACHMENTS\*; A REJOINDER BY THE CHIEFS AND PEOPLE OF DABIRA COMMUNITY IN THE BILLE KINGDOM 9<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2025**

The Chiefs and people of ancient Dabira Community in the Bille Kingdom, Degema Local Government Area of Rivers State have been inundated with several baseless and frivolous claims and insinuations made by some misguided elements of the Kalabari Community, who masquerade as Torusarama-Piri (Elem-Kalabarij Traditional Council of Chiefs in the pretext of defending a laughable fresh and non-historic title of Dabaye-Amakiri I, Amayanabo of Torusarama-Piri, whatever that means to the stool of King Amakiri (Amachree) of Kalabari domiciled at Buguma, the capital of the Kalabari Kingdom. We are never bothered by such forceful creation of a chieftaincy stool that appears to make mockery of your Kalabari King Amachree stool. It is entirely an internal matter to the Kalabari Community. We are only worried about the deliberate attempts made to turn history on its head in the misleading write-up to ensure that the general reading public is properly informed. We would therefore, respond to the various issues raised in the misleading write-up and take the opportunity to put the record straight.

**1. Historical and Legal Status of Kalabari – Bille boundaries**

We would like to reiterate the position that the leadership in the Bille Kingdom has repeatedly stated on several previous occasions, that the founders of Kalabari were migrant fisher men who came to Bonny and settled there but for their constant violation of the rules, customs and norms of the Ancient Bonny Land, the Amayanabo (King) of Bonny brought them to Bille. The people of Bonny regarded them as “Kengema Awo” which literally means disobedient fellows or people because no matter how much they were informed or guided to keep instructions they continue to violate the rules, customs and norms of the Ancient Bonny Land as if disobedience runs in their veins or DNA’s. Then inform the decision to approach the good people of Bille who at that time were known disciplinarian and would take no nonsense. Bonny felt Bille can cut them to their sizes and they were then introduced to the good people of Bille by the Amayanabo (King) of Bonny with the request “Kala Pa Mbari” (Please give them a little) and they were settled at Lila-Kiri (Elem Kalabari) by the good people of Bille. This therefore is the origin of the name “Kala-mbari” which metamorphosed to “Kalabari”. Some historians in Kalabari have tried to define themselves as coming from various places, this however does not change the true position of their origin which is also captured by few sincere historians among the Kalabari’s even though they try now to shy away from the truth. For this the people of Bille have never changed their narrative of where the founders of Kalabari came from – which is Duke’s Town in present day Cross River State. In various Commissions of Enquiry set up by the Nigerian state, Bille has maintained the same statement and no matter the propaganda, distortions and misconceptions by the Kalabari’s, the truth cannot be changed.

Please find hereunder some documentary evidence of our claims:

In the **1935 Intelligent Report** on the Kalabari Clan in the Degema Division of the Owerri Province, Captain Kelsey, the District Officer at the time said, **“the inhabitants of Bille share rights of the rivers boundaries with Bonny only, commencing from the left side of Anwokiri-toru now known as Kalabari toru which has its start (sic) from Anya creek near Bakana to the Bar.”** In the same Report, Bille's fishing ports along the Anwokiri-toru and Bille Obu-toru were recorded to include **“Tunduro bokobe kiri, Emmanuel kiri, Greenkiri or Feni-paan, Wosaba, Touma, Ekulekule-tombi and Dabira”**. Others were **“Ibi**

**iriawo angabe kiri, Kala-Bille bokobe kiri, Minji du kiri all in the Bille Kubu creek while along the Opu Bille boko there are the Opu Bille bokobe kiri and the Oruama bokobe kiri, Oruama kiri, Imopeleye bokobe kiri, Imopeleye, Eli kiri, Dokubo kiri, Dikama, Ogbodo piri, Ekema kiri, Balo bokobe kiri, and Torusira bokobe kiri.”**

The Report further identified rivers owned and controlled by Bille as Ololo Toru (Sombrero River) up to Ndele Toru, Obu Toru and the river stretching from Anwu Toru to the Anya creek.

*The limit of the boundaries of the old kingdoms of Kalabari and Bille is described in paragraphs 117 and 118 of the 1949/50 Report of the Commission of Enquiry into the Okrika - Kalabari Dispute by Mr. Justice G. G. Robinson. The case for Bille is however very plain as in paragraph 118 where the Robinson Report described the boundaries of New Calabar (Kalabari) by adopting the Supreme Court of Nigeria decision on the issue. The facts are reproduced below:*

**118** *So it is interesting to see what territory was given to the Kalabaris by the judgement (of the Supreme Court). It is as follows:*

*‘I regard therefore all that territory from the Old Shipping extending to Bakana, Buguma and Abonnema (including Degema) and as far west as the Kula country occupied by the New Calabar people over which they have exercised ownership for at least forty (40) years and which is now the territorial property of the chiefs and people of New Calabar as representing the people of New Calabar and this property includes all lands, banks of rivers, ponds and creeks and swamps and includes the New Calabar River and the Ekwe River and all its tributaries in the territory of which Old Shipping, Bakana, Buguma, Abonnema, Degema and Kula may be regarded as boundaries **but excluding the country of the Billes who appear to have never lost their independence**’ (Emphasis ours)*

This much was repeated in a memorandum submitted to the Rivers State Sub-Committee on Boundary Changes by Chief (Dr.) Harold J. Dappa-Biriye on October 10, 1997. In the memo, he stated that;

*“The Billes who released Old Shipping to the Kalabari know that the middle of the New Calabar River is our (Bonny/Bille) boundary. This is evident in the map of Bille boundary tendered to the Mbanefo Inquiry Panel.”*

Where were Elem-Minama and Elem-Ido when Bille released the Old-Shipping (Lila-Kiri or Elem-Kalabari) to the New Calabar’s the Kalabari people? Your importation of Elem-Minama and Elem-Ido which never existed at the time Bille released Lila-Kiri to the Kalabari people, into the narrative is an attempt to give some ancestry coloration to your false claims. You believe that by forcefully introducing Elem-Minama and Elem-Ido into false history you can conjure up some ancestral justifications for your false claims. You may go back to readjust your history as you have always done.

Your misguided claim that “For centuries, the Obu-Toru River has been acknowledged as the boundary between Kalabari and Bille territories” is a part of your failed attempt to forcefully annex Bille territories including Dabira. If we may ask, who fixed this your acclaimed Obu-Toru as the Kalabari/Bille boundary? Can you distort the history that the Bille people released

the Old-Shipping (Lila-Kiri or Elem-Kalabari) to the Kalabari people as eloquently affirmed by the people of Bonny? Can Kalabari therefore, be competent to discuss matters of boundary with Bille? The entire Kalabari except for Bakana-Okrika territory is contained within the Bille territory. In the judgment of the Supreme Court above referred, it is noted that Kalabari had exercised ownership of the territory conceded to you for at least 40 years at the time of the judgment. We expect Bonny, Okrika and Nembe who are ancestral neighbors of Bille to talk issues of boundary with Bille, not Kalabari the New “Mboko or Calabar’s” of yesterday.

## **2. Allegations of Unprovoked Aggression By Bille Against Kalabari Communities**

Your allegations of aggression by Bille against supposed Kalabari communities is another indication of Kalabari’s premeditated scheme to paint and present Bille in bad light, and to create some justifications to attack Bille communities as you have done in the past. While we note that **ingratitude and history falsification** have become part of the norms of Kalabari, it remains the fact of history that Kalabari continues to enjoy the benevolence of Bille, and therefore, should not be expected to be aggressive or hostile to Bille.

Yes, Bille gallantly fought wars many years ago. However, many of those wars were against aggressor communities who abducted or killed innocent Bille people. Be that as it may, Bille people are naturally hospitable and receptive. If Bille were aggressive and barbaric, the early founders of Kalabari who were few in number would not have survived. Rather, Bille not only provided space for them to settle but also gave them women as wives and showed them the river routes to the various markets.

The reference to a supposed age-old oath of friendship between Bille and Krakrama community is unfounded. For the record, there has never been any basis for such oath of friendship capable of being broken by Bille, and Bille never broke any oath of friendship.

The people of Krakrama community were migrants from the Bolo country in the present day Ogu/Bolo Local Government Area of Rivers State. As a people who love, welcome and accommodate strangers, Bille received the Krakrama stranger migrants and lodged them first at Belema-Ama (Belema) and later, Kari-Ama. Krakrama people’s cannibalistic lifestyle which made them run away from the Bolo made them to mistakenly kill Bille people. As a punishment for their evil deed, Bille moved the Krakrama people to somewhere around the Opu Osia Community axis of Bille Town for proper monitoring. Due to this close monitoring, they were no longer free to continue their barbaric act. Consequently, they left the Bille environment completely and went to take refuge under Abonnema where they established their Krakrama community. Krakrama community should therefore, be grateful to Bille. But now that they have become part of Kalabari, it is not unexpected that Krakrama community should be ungrateful.

However, due to the very same unbridled greed of the Kalabari (the same greed that made the Kalabari deny and make frantic efforts to erase from history the Bille benevolence of the settlement and release of Lila-Kiri (Elem-Kalabari, now forcefully referred to as “Torusarama-Piri”) to the Kalabari by Bille), Kalabari has resolved to use Krakrama as one of its stooges to perpetuate all manner of assault on Bille.

### **\*Alleged Oilfield Dispute\***

In your usual manner of twisting records, you have claimed that Shell discovered oil in Krakrama territory and named it Krakrama Oilfield. This is a blatant lie. The records in Shell despite the erroneous spelling of the name given to Shell and the manipulation by you people still shows “Krkama (Bille Oil field)” and not Krakrama oilfield. In fact, the detailed records of

the location show “Krkama village near Bille”, the same Krikama village; a community in Bille which was wrongly spelt Krakama to which the Kalabari’s took advantage and tried to smuggle in Krakama. Krakama has no territory within the area that makes up the Krikama (Krkama) Oilfield which is entirely within the Bille Kingdom territory. This is the reason why Kalabari has always attacked Krikama Community in Bille to ensure that it does not exist to reflect the Bille call for correction of the name of the oilfield.

For the record, it is not true that Shell discovered oil in Krakrama territory. The truth is that Shell discovered oil in Bille near one of Bille fishing settlement called “Krikama”, (now Community) within the Bille Kingdom. When the team from Shell came for the acquisition of the area to establish the oilfield, Bille gave them the name of the area as KRIKAMA which was nearest to the first oil well founded by Shell in Bille. Unfortunately, the name was wrongly spelt as Krakama instead of Krikama and Kalabari elements at the Degema Local Council and in Shell (SPDC), deliberately took advantage of the wrongly spelt name with the aim of taking over ownership rights later. We are glad that our forebears did not keep quiet when they discovered the plot, and have since insisted that Bille remains the sole Landlords of the oilfield, which is entirely within the Bille territory.

Your alleged official records are the records of Shell which you used your cronies in Shell to alter, and for the record, Bille had been in possession of the territory many hundreds of years before Shell came to establish the Krikama (Krkama) Oilfield sometime in 1957. Shell is not any legitimate government institution to decide ownership of land. Beside, Bille has many documents to show that Shell later admitted to have taken the expanse of land on which the Krikama (Krkama) Oilfield is established from Bille. Kalabari claim of portions of the Oilfield either directly or through Krakrama community is only part of your age-long acts of aggression against Bille.

Let us put it on record that Bille had all the right to shut down oil operations if Shell was found to play some double standards. Interestingly, in all of the occasions when Bille shut down operations within the oilfield, no Krakrama or Kalabari person came near to restore operations.

Your allegation that Bille forces launched an early morning assault, burnt down and killed any person is another twisted story. You Kalabari people burnt down houses and killed people at Krikama Community as part of your sustained efforts to eradicate the community to pave way for your attempts to claim portions of the oilfield. However, in your characteristic style to victimize Bille, you Kalabari people deserted the place leaving the bodies of the people you killed. Being law abiding citizens, and given the fact that the places that were burnt are Bille settlements, Bille people reported the incident and took the bodies to Degema. Unfortunately, the innocent Bille boat drivers who only went on the errand became the victims of your Kalabari pre-arranged plans with the police to arrest the innocent and law abiding Bille drivers.

Your so-called Ogbudu festival has been one of your many intrigues to attack Bille territory and her people. To set the record straight, it was Kalabari that used the same Krakrama community stooges under the guise of Ogbudu festival to come down to the Bille territory to attack innocent Bille fishermen. Without provocation, Kalabari came under the pretense of Ogbudu festival to attack and abduct defenseless fishermen on whom you connived with the police to put thronped up charges on them. In any case, you had no basis to claim that the innocent fishermen you abducted did anything in the name of Bille.

The alleged renewed attacks (2000-2001) are manifest misinformation. Bille never attacked any community, not Ke, and never Krakrama. Kalabaris should be bold to tell themselves the truth. The saying goes that it is easier to wake up a person who is genuinely asleep than to wake a person who pretends to be asleep. This is the case with you Kalabaris who pretend to be asleep as you have clearly demonstrated in both previous and the present misleading write-up under reference.

In November, 2000, it was you Kalabari people led by Alhaji Asari Dokubo the now king of Torusarama Piri that abducted almost all the passengers including women and children in a fully loaded double engine speed boat carry over 25 passengers from Port Harcourt to Bille Town. Of the total number of passengers, only 3 persons escaped with bullet wounds into a nearby mangrove. The rest of the passengers including the women and little children, you Kalabari people took to Abalama, thereafter to Buguma sandfield where you murdered them in cold blood.

The attack was most unanticipated, and while Bille was wondering about the source of the unprovoked attack, the same Kalabari forces led by Alhaji Asari Dokubo and leader of the IYC stormed Krikama Community, killed people and burnt down houses again. The intention is clear: to wipe off the Bille –Krikama Community so that there should be no such community to reflect the Bille call for Shell to correct the name of the Krikama Oilfield which Kalabari element in Shell or SPDC and Government had influenced to make Krakama Oilfield and are now pushing to be Krakrama Oilfield. In the attack, Kalabari killed and burnt down houses at Krikama. Let us put it on record as Bille leadership has previously done, that while you Kalabari people executed these premeditated assaults on Bille, you further bribed virtually all the media houses in Rivers State to refuse any announcement from Bille to conceal your atrocious acts of aggression and murder against Bille, and to ensure that no form of Government intervention comes in. Kalabari plan was to completely annihilate Bille. Thus, Bille only succeeded in drawing Government attention to the Kalabari attack from outside Rivers State, and in swift response, Kalabari made a counter announcement in the State that Kalabari was not fighting Bille, that it was Ke and Krakrama that are fighting Bille. It is in this regard that Kalabari people influenced the Rivers State Government to nick-name the Commission of Enquiry later set up by the Government to investigate the crises as “Judicial Commission of Enquiry into the Conflict between Bille and Ke in Degema Local Government Area”. Yet at the proceedings in the Commission of Enquiry, the blind saw, and the deaf heard that the entire crises was an assault by Kalabari on Bille.

To create justification for the misleading claim that Ke and Krakrama were fighting Bille and to divert Government attention, Kalabari either masterminded killings and burning down of houses at Ke or made some doctored videos to make it look like Bille had done anything to Ke. No, Bille did nothing to Ke or Krakrama which is located in Asari Toru Local Government Area, near Abonnema. Bille is conscious of its contributions to the formation of Ke and always sees Ke as blood brothers of the Bille Kingdom. Kalabari should tell the truth about what gambles it played with Ke and leave Bille out of the narrative.

The people of Bille are law abiding citizens who do not promote acrimony and warfare. Bille people are not bothered by the numerous insults and negative incitements emanating from the Kalabaris, especially from the self-styled king and people of Torusarama-Piri.

It is interesting to note that the Kalabaris parading as chiefs of Torusarama-Piri have documented what they consider as **Bille's 'unprovoked aggression' against the Kalabaris**. We reject these frivolous claims. This is because we in Bille, have always had a good rapport with those who see us as brothers, even as we have always treated the people of Ke, Kula, Abissa and Idama as our blood brothers and neighbours. We are aware that the people of Kalabari have since the late 17<sup>th</sup> century left Elem Kalabari to found their new havens in Bakana, Buguma and Abonnema. We are therefore not surprised that Mr. Asari Dokubo and his likes are attempting to relocate to the same fishing port to perpetuate his illegal and devilish acts of sea piracy, oil bunkering and sinister attacks on the Bille territory with the support of powers at Aso Rock. But, we will never allow him or anyone to attack Bille and go free again like he did in vain in 2001, as revealed recently in a letter by the Autonomous Communities of Tombia, dated May 5, 2025, to the Sole Administrator of Rivers State.

We wish to reiterate that Ke, Idama and Kula were founded, according to Oral Tradition, by persons of Bille origin. Some of the founders were said to have rebelled against the throne of Bille and emigrated out of fear. Specifically, Kula was established by Opu Ada ye Sira or Kala Sira of the Opu Sira Community in Bille. Agbaniye Owukio, a brother of King Agbaniye-Jike also left Bille when he had a dispute with his brother and settled on the land that is now known as Idama. They are all regarded as sister settlements and have never had any violent confrontation with Bille people. They were semi-autonomous in the period until in the later part of the last century when they sought and joined Kalabari as a union, thus becoming part of the Kalabari kingdom. Angulama Community in Kalabari were originally part of the Opu Angula Community in Bille. All these historical facts are well known to Kalabari.

### **3. Allegations of sustained Defamation of DabayAmakiri I**

The good people of Dabira community has not seen any defamatory remark that Bille has ever made against "Da Amakiri Tubo, Alhaji, Mujahid Asari-Dokubo, Dabay Amakiri I" as described and purported in the falsehood presented by the Kalabaris masquerading as Chiefs of Torusarama-Piri. There is nothing that Bille has ever said about Alhaji, Asari-Dokubo that is unfounded. While in fact, we wonder which particular Bille community and its cronies have engaged in the alleged sustained complaint of slander and misinformation against Alhaji, Asari-Dokubo (and of course no community in Bille does so), it is important that we make a few comments on the rather infantile reference made to Alhaji, Mujahid Asari-Dokubo as Dabay-Amakiri I and the true personality of the man who became known as Dabay-Amakiri I.

Amakiri was a young child that King Agbaniye-Jike of Bille adopted at Engeni. His name, "Amakiri" was the shortened form of the name "Billein-Amakiri" which was given him by King Agbaniye-Jike. At the time, Okuma, a Bille woman and sister of King Agbaniye-Jike was married to, and resident with her husband, Daba at Lila-Kiri (Elem-Kalabari). Agabaniye-Jike therefore, gave the young child, Billein-Amakiri (Amakiri) to his sister, Okuma to be fostered. This was how Amakiri became known as Okumaye-Amakiri which literally means Amakiri the son of Okuma or Dabay-Amakiri which literally means Amakiri the son of Daba because he was seen to be the child of Okuma and Daba. Amakiri spent quality times with King Agbaniye-Jike who took him like his own biological son and mentored him to become brave.

While growing up, Amakiri became very sick of some contagious and deadly disease. In line with the typical Bille custom prevalent at the time, Amakiri was immediately taken to Ke which

was originally known as Torusira-piri for healing. This was how Amakiri lived in Ke. The Ke people often consider it an insult that Bille people tell this truth that Ke is the Torusira (Torusarama) Piri. This is never intended to anger anyone. It is to state the truth that customarily, Ke was the isolation ground where the sick were kept and treated, and this was the reason why no war was taken to Ke.

It was due to the marriage between Okuma and Daba that Amakiri lived at Lila-Kiri (Elem-Kalabari) and later became the King of Kalabari after helping to fight war for the Kalabari. The Kalabaris have continued to conceal the fact that King Amakiri I (Dabaye-Amakiri I or Okumaye-Amakiri I) made a declaration that upon his demise at old age, his remains be returned to Bille for burial and that in line with his wishes, his body was released to, and buried in Bille. His tomb where he was buried is known up till date. It is also a fact constantly being suppressed by Kalabari that subsequent kings like King, Obaye Abiye Suku-Amachree also made similar request which was turned down to hide the truth from younger generations of Kalabari people. You can now see why we wonder how Alhaji, Mujahid Asari Dokubo should ever be addressed as Dabaye-Amakiri I, and Amayanabo of Torusarama-Piri (which ordinarily is Ke).

For the record, all that Bille say about Alhaji, Asari Dokubo has strong factual bases. He, Alhaji, Asari Dokubo led the Kalabari forces to attack Bille communities in the 1998 and 2000 to 2001 crises, a fact he has openly boasted about on many occasions. Alhaji, Asari Dokubo has repeatedly threatened to wipe out Bille from the surface of the earth, claiming that “only small Obu-ama (Harry’s town) will finish Bille in one day”. When Bille was faced with problems of incessant sea pirates’ attacks and kidnapping on the waterways, an arrangement was made by the Degema Local Government for Bille Internal Security to secure innocent commuters. Within the period, the ugly incidents of sea piracy, kidnapping and oil theft activities came to a halt. Yet it was Alhaji, Asari Dokubo that constantly protested that Bille people were chasing his boys. Who were those his boys?

You were wrong when you stated that Bille leaders refused to acknowledge Alhaji Asari Dokubo in the supposed rescue of 19 kidnapped victims on 26<sup>th</sup> May, 2025. Indeed, Bille leaders and her people do not return ingratitude to anyone who renders help to the least person from Bille notwithstanding any perceived differences. It is ingrained in the culture and norms of Bille to show appreciation, and we are aware that the leadership in Bille in appreciation of the safe release of the kidnapped victims did acknowledge the various security agencies in Nigeria and specifically, the Alhaji, Asari Dokubo led Amama soldiers for their efforts in securing the safe release of the victims. Your anger seems to have emanated from the fact that the acknowledgement was extended to the various security agencies.

However, by your unprecedented call for a solo-appreciation to Alhaji Asari Dokubo, we, the good people of Dabira are compelled to respectfully question whether the acknowledgement made by the leadership in Bille was not misplaced. We say so because the discerning mind would ask why such a kidnapping incidence should ever take place when your Royal Fouché Security Services (Amama Soldiers) claimed to be fully in charge of securing the waterways. Did the Amama Soldiers allow the kidnapping to take place because the boat was conveying Bille passengers? These and many other questions pose a serious indictment on the face of the Alhaji, Asari Dokubo led Amama Soldiers that claims sole responsibility for the rescue of the kidnapped victims.

### **3. False Encroachment Claims as Diversionary Tactics**

There is no basis for any claim that Bille ever encroached or plans to encroach upon any Kalabari territory. We have shown earlier in this writing how Bille released Lila-Kiri (Elem-Kalabari) to the Kalabari people who later moved away to establish Bakana, Abonnema and Buguma. Bille people have never encroached on any place to be regarded as Kalabari territory. Rather, the reverse has always been the case uses Krakrama, Ke, Kula and several other Kalabari affiliate communities to encroach on Bille lands. A typical example where Kalabari used Ke is the recent case in Suit No: **PHC/589/2003 between CHIEF (PRINCE) OMONI FESTUS ELI ORUKIO SALO & 3 ORS vs. SHELL PETROLEUM DEVELOPMENT COMPANY NIG LTD (SPDC) & 4 ORS** in which the Rivers State High Court delivered judgment in favour of Bille.

#### **4. Alleged Peaceful Coexistence and Kalabari Restraint**

We appreciate the desire of the Kalabari people to be committed to peace, the rule of law, and mutual respect. It is necessary, though, to remind the people of Kalabari, especially the people who now claim to belong to the Torusarama-Piri Kingdom that they should tell their 'new king' to allow the sleeping dog to lay down. Your fathers to whom we gave our land, when they came begging from Duke's Town, did not attempt to claim our ancestral lands, they rather sought other free spaces and established their Kingdom without intimidating the people of Bille.

The Bille territorial history is clear and unambiguous and is supported by sources external to Bille that the Bille, Bonny, Okrika and Nembe were long established with their mutual territorial boundaries before the advent of Kalabari. The Bonny people confirmed how Bille release Elem-Kalabari to the Kalabari people. Beyond that, you may wish to know that the land known as Buguma today was originally occupied by the Anya people (present day Ogbakiri). A fight between the Anya people and Bille led to the Anya people vacating the land which became part of Bille territory by conquest. These events happened many years before the arrival of the Calabar people who founded Kalabari, and it is for this reason that the river leading to Buguma was originally known as Anya Toru meaning Anya River. Today, Kalabari occupies the land as Buguma. Kalabari is young to this environment. You therefore, need to be told many things that happened before your arrival and formation.

For over a century and till date, it has not been said that Bille and Bonny, or Bille and Okrika, or Bille and Nembe, or Bonny and Okrika are fighting for whatever reason. The reason for this is because these Kingdoms understand and respect their respective territories and have subscribed to simple principles of peaceful coexistence. If Kalabari can emulate this rare virtue exhibited by Bonny, Bille, Nembe and Okrika, we think that the entire riverine environment in the old Rivers States part of which is now in the present Bayelsa State would be calm and peaceful. Unfortunately, we notice that each time any crisis is reported within these areas, it is between Kalabari and Bonny, Kalabari and Nembe or Kalabari and Bille. There is grave need for Kalabari to do a thorough self-assessment to be sure that Kalabari indeed, encourages peaceful coexistence with other neighbours.

#### **5. Call for Dialogue and an End to Hostility**

Bille people have never planned any attack against any Kalabari community and do not have reason to be afraid of anyone. In fact, it remains a troubling puzzle in Bille that Kalabari which enjoyed benevolence by way of settlement, language, protection and provision of women for marriage from Bille, and the affiliates of Kalabari whose origins can also be sincerely traced to Bille, would be the ones to enter into a grand conspiracy for over a century to seek to destroy Bille. We are yet to know the evil Bille did to Kalabari or the communities which later affiliated themselves with Kalabari. We would wish to be told.

We are aware that in many of Kalabari historical writings, it has been stated that Bille destroyed and conquered over 33 villages. Yes, this is a fact of history, and Bille does not deny it. However, Bille did not move all out to destroy the villages without justifiable provocation. As we have stated earlier, in almost all of the cases, the people in those villages abducted and killed Bille people. Yet those eras were gone, because, after all, when Krakrama people abducted and killed Bille people, Bille did not kill them, but rather brought them into Bille Town for closer surveillance. They later, left the Opu Osia Community area of Bille Town to Abonnema because they felt it was unbearable for them to be put under surveillance since they no longer have the freedom to perpetrate the evil and barbaric deeds. Again, it is not clear if some remnants of the villages Bille conquered as noted by Kalabari historians are not part of the Kalabari of today. If there be any such group, it would be appropriate to come out plain rather than to hide under Kalabari to hunt Bille continuously.

## **6. Appeal to Government and Security Agencies**

We reiterate the call by the leadership of Bille on the Federal and state Government, genuine security agencies in the state, and the leaders of the various Ijaw clans to call Alhaji Asari Dokubo and the people of his 'new kingdom' to allow the Bille people free access to and from Bille communities including Dabira without molestation. We equally wish to join in reminding the Rivers State Government that a timely release of the Report of the Judicial Commission of Enquiry set by the Rivers State Government in 2001 would have settled some of the present issues of Kalabari encroachments on Bille territories. We call on the Federal and Rivers State Governments to take appropriate and necessary steps to address the lingering issues before the Kalabaris led by Alhaji, Asari Dokubo lunches another offensive attack on Bille communities again as was done in the 2000 and 2001.

## **7. Conclusion**

We wish to end this address with the repeat of our assertion that the coronation of Alhaji Mujahid Asari-Dokubo, as King of Torusarama-Piri (a crown without any history) is only a ploy to give him power to oppress people and annex our lands including Dabira, Ele, Touma, etc.. That Bille released Elem Kalabari to the Kalabari people when they came begging should not make anyone think that the people of Bille will sit back and allow any such individual or group to annex Bille settlements. We know that Bille people shall continue to uphold peace but remain agile even as we will never abandon our right to defend our people, our lands, and our dignity.

Dabira Community is part of the Bille Kingdom and no one will be allowed to take it by force. We shall remain resolute to continuously defend our land, our territory. "Billienbo, Billienbo Birasime"

**For and on behalf of Chiefs, Elders and people of Dabira Community, Bille Kingdom.**



**CHIEF OFIRI J. NUNGO**

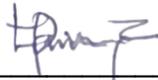


**CHIEF SIYEPIRIBO STANDFORD**



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**DAPPA, DAKORU DANIEL**  
DABIRA, COMMUNITY SECRETARY



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**TAMUNOTONYEMIE PHILIP**  
DABIRA, YOUTH CHAIRMAN