



**Source: Reuters News**

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## **Violent clashes reported in East Galania**

In eastern Galania, violent clashes between the armed wings of the IPRG (Islamic People's Republic of Galania) and GMP (Galania People's Movement), as well as within local communities, have been reported and are exacerbating population displacement from both IPRG, GMP and government held areas in three directions - to the north, west and south.

The outbreak of violence is thought to have been linked to the current drought and resultant food and resource shortages, particularly water. Increasing insecurity has led to population displacement from conflict-affected areas to more stable, generally urban centres. Displacement is exacerbating pre-existing tensions along socio-political and ethnic lines throughout the north and east of the country. UNAMiG peace-keepers are present in areas of increased insecurity but have not intervened to prevent fighting.

Terrified refugees told UN workers how villages were razed to the ground, with men and boys rounded up and either shot dead, or abducted to fight with armed groups. The armed groups are thought to be affiliated with the political party of the former government – the Islamic People's Republic of Galania (IPRG) – and linked to the armed forces of neighbouring Manolia.

Ali (34) - a resident of Paranta village in Pirantresh Province – described the situation *“The attackers came in the night. Houses were burning and everyone was running and screaming. I managed to escape and run to Santini. There I found my wife and two children in the hospital – one of my children was badly injured. I still don't know what has happened to my mother and 2 brothers - I fear for their lives.”*

Suleiman (17) described what he witnessed in Onara Town. *“I saw armed men surrounding buildings and setting fire to them. People were running out and being dragged to the floor. I saw a group of about ten men lined up against a wall. There was gunfire and they fell to the ground. I was so scared. I managed to hide in a side street until they had gone.”*

Whilst some community members have fled conflict areas, others have begun to arm themselves and train boys and men to establish Community Protection Units (CPUs), affiliated or aligned with the GMP or IPRG. Conflict occurring in close proximity to Piri Town suburbs has caused concerns over security and safety and has led to displacement to nearby IDP camps, perceived as safer zones.

There are also reports of further violence in the north of the country and possible movements towards the border from neighbouring Arubia for similar reasons, but information is scarce, and these reports have yet to be confirmed

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