

Ebonyi youths abduct 5 corps

KENNETH OFOMA, Abakaliki

EBONYI State Police Command confirmed Tuesday that five of its men were taken hostage by the people of Onicha, in Onicha local government area of the state during last weekends bloody clash between law enforcement agencies and the youths. The native were protesting government neglect of the area in the provision of social amenities. However, some of the abductees have also been released.

State commissioner of police, Adenaya Gaya, at a joint press conference with state deputy governor Prof. Chigozie Ogbu, denied that four persons, including two policemen,

ps meet n budget

he told the journalists. added that his efforts at uniting aggrieved parties in the state culminated in establishment of a panel of enquiry to reconcile the people.

"We have to reconcile the people properly and that is why we set up a judicial commission of enquiry so that we can get to the bottom of the problems of the state.

"The tension is now over.

were killed in the clash, but confirmed that one civilian was found dead in a clinic within the community.

Gaya who also confirmed that some of the abducted officers had been released, explained that the command was negotiating with the people for release of the remaining officers, adding that the youths had assured him of the officers safety.

He said that the police was still investigating the mayhem as well as the circumstances heading to the death of the civilian, who was said to have been found with machete cuts on his back and head, a mortal wound the police boss said could not have been inflicted by the police, who carry guns and not machetes.

Earlier, Prof Ogbu had dismissed as baseless, the youths' claim that government had been neglecting their area, saying the community was one of the most peaceful in the state, until the crisis started, and blamed politicians for instigating the youths.

"This act of destruction is strange to our community and against the customs and behaviour of our people. Onicha clan is one of the most peaceful communities in the state. The leaders always work together and have no problem amongst themselves, except for recent times when a handful of

politicians have been fomenting trouble in the community," he remarked.

Trouble started on the night of February 1, 2007 when a group of youths after their meeting drove round the community warning people not to be outdoors the following day, without offering any reason for the action.

Oshiomhole new wage

AKOR SYLVESTER, Abuja

BARELY eight days to drop the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) leadership cap, Adams Oshiomhole has called on the federal government to urgently review the recent 15 per cent increase in wages of the federal public sector saying that the pay rise was taxable and affect no positive change on the workers.

The president also said the congress will deal with the United Bank for Africa (UBA) as it dealt with First Bank Plc for sacking its workers without entitlement and respect for the union, while informing that before the expiration of his tenure on February 16, his leadership would hand the Osun

2007 polls: Utter