

Govt extends curfew in Port Harcourt

CHINEDU WOSU, *Port Harcourt*

At least 28 persons were feared killed Wednesday night in a renewed communal violence at Rumuekpe in the Emohua local government area of Rivers State.

The development came as the state government extended, by one week, the dusk to dawn curfew it imposed on Port Harcourt, the state capital.

Daily Champion gathered that the Rumuekpe community which has been embroiled in a chieftaincy tussle for sometime was invaded late Wednesday night by some outsiders whose identities are yet to be ascertained.

The invaders were said to have been brought in by a factional leader of a youth group, having taken their opponents unawares as they were said to have gone round

the community unleashing terror on the people.

We learnt that the invaders killed about 28 persons on the ground that aggrieved groups were planning a reprisal attack on their sister group within the community.

Daily Champion recalls that last month over five prominent persons were brutally murdered by the youths over unresolved chieftaincy dispute in the area.

It will be recalled that in July, 2007, Chief Egbe, a senior agricultural science teacher with Holy Rosary Secondary School, Port Harcourt and a native of Rumuekpe was killed in front of his school by three young men on motorbike.

Reacting, the State Commissioner of Police, Mr Felix Ogbaudu who confirmed the killings said policemen had been deployed to Rumuekpe to restore law and order.

Meanwhile, the State Government has announced the extension of the curfew imposed on Port Harcourt for another one week, to sustain the peace already achieved.

The decision to extend the curfew according to statement credited to the Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice, Mr Okey Wali, was the outcome of the State Executive Council meeting in Port Harcourt.

In a release signed by the Chief Press Secretary to the State Governor, Mr. Paulinus Nsirim, he stated that the executive council deliberated on the security situation in the State and commended the steps taken to secure lives and property within the State, emphasising that the need to sustain the gains recorded necessitated the extension of the curfew by one week.