

7 traders killed in Onitsha —Counsel

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LIVESTOCK traders at the Bridge head, Onitsha, Anambra state yesterday claimed that seven of their colleagues were shot dead by soldiers during a violent clash.

At least two traders were confirmed killed and 10 persons injured Saturday when traders protested their relocation from the Bridge-head by Anambra state government.

Counsel to the traders, Mr. Anthony Orunkoya told newsmen in Onitsha yesterday

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that his clients told him that seven of their colleagues were killed during a clash with soldiers from 302 Artillery Regiment.

The soldiers, he alleged took away some of the corpses of victims.

Meanwhile, Minister of State for Environment, Housing and Urban Development, Chief Chuka Odom and General Officer Commanding (GOC) 82 Division, Enugu Maj.-Gen. Adamu Ibrahim will visit Onitsha today following the clash.

Anambra State Commissioner for the Environment, dr. Ifedi Okwenna, told newsmen yesterday that the Minister will be in Onitsha to inspect the disputed land on the Bridgehead Onitsha, saying that the visit was scheduled for last week but postponed.

Daily Champion also gathered that Gen. Ibrahim will be Onitsha Army Barracks to get first hand information on the clash between his men and traders.

Meanwhile, the police have

insisted that two persons were killed in the clash. Anambra State Commissioner of Police Mr. Oliver Osuchukwu, said that soldiers confronted hoodlums who wanted to disarm them when they came to dislodge the traders from the market.

Addressing newsmen yesterday on the clash Dr. Okwenna, alleged that the traders attacked the soldiers, wanted to collect their arms and in their self-defence shot at the traders. He said that a combined team of Army and Police were called in because each time they go to the market, his staff were attacked by hoodlums.

He said that he was exercising the mandate of the State Executive Council to beautify the entrance to the state, saying that he has visited almost all the states in the country and no state allows a market, at its major entrance.

He said that they had already given the traders alternative place near General Cotton Mill (GCM) Onitsha, which they had accepted.

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