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**Thur, January
22, 2009**

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Countryman

2 killed in ABSU crisis

Jayne Uche-Ukonne, *Aba*

Two persons have been confirmed dead and several others injured following a crisis which erupted at the Abia State University (ABSU) Uturu, in Isukwuato Local government area.

The university authorities have closed the institution to avoid further break down of law and order.

The killing of a porter whose name was yet to be ascertained as at press time within the university was said to have sparked off the trouble. The porter, also a final year student of the institution, was said to have hailed from Uturu community and lived opposite the school.

He was alleged to have been killed by members of one of the cult groups operating in the university, who visited him Tuesday and demanded for his handset and then shot him dead.

Angered by his killing, youths from his village yesterday organised a protest to the university but they were said to have been attacked by the cultists on their way to the school. This resulted in free for all which led to some facilities belonging to the university being damaged by the aggrieved youths resulting in the death of an unnamed student.

Many people were wounded during the fracas and are now receiving treatment at the University's Medical Centre.

The situation threw the Uturu community into pandemonium, prompting staff and students of the university to go into hiding.

Meanwhile, the university authorities have closed down the institution and ordered the students to vacate the campus immediately.

Abia State Government had earlier reacted swiftly to the crisis. Governor Theodore Orji was said to have immediately directed the State Police



Commissioner to send policemen to the area to maintain peace and order.

Press Secretary to the governor, Mr. Sam Hart confirmed the crisis but did not give details. He also confirmed that the Governor has asked the police commissioner to dispatch his men to Uturu to ensure peace and order. "We are on top of the situation. The Governor has directed the police commissioner to send policemen to the place to maintain peace and order", Hart said.

Also, the state police command confirmed the crisis. The police spokesman, Ali Okechukwu, an Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP), confirmed the incident. He said the commissioner has since dispatch policemen to the area. He however, said that they are waiting for details of the crisis.

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