

Gunmen kill 8 persons in Rivers

By Victor Edozie, Port Harcourt | Publish Date: Dec 27 2016 2:00AM

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Unknown gunmen suspected to be members of cult groups have killed eight people in Omoku town, Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Witnesses said the bandits in a coordinated attack invaded different parts of the community at about 9 pm on Saturday and shot sporadically before killing eight persons on the spot.

Some residents of the area who escaped the attack said the incident caused panic and grounded Christmas celebration in Omoku.

A resident of Omoku, Mr Eluozo, disclosed that the gunmen specifically invaded Palace Road and two other streets in the area, killing the eight residents in the process.

He alleged that the suspected cult attack was politically motivated, adding that the cultists were empowered recently by an opposition party in the area during the rerun election.

Another source who pleaded anonymity said: "On the eve of Christmas, around 9 pm, I was sitting side with one of my friends when we heard gunshots. As usual, people started running for safety. I ran into them as I was heading to my house. They were in military uniform and well armed. They were shooting from every direction. All the people that came out that night to mark the Christmas eve ran back to their houses."

He said he saw seven of the dead bodies, explaining, "In the morning, I took a walk around the area and I saw seven corpses, including two Hausa men who might have been hit by stray bullets. A member of the Joint-Security Task Force was also among the victims."

He said although the cause of the incident was not certain, “we heard that the cult boys are angry, claiming that the state government settled a cult group and abandoned them. They said they would not stop attack until the government compensates them.”

The Rivers State Police Command Public Relations Officer, DSP Nnamdi Omoni, said he was yet to be briefed about the incident.

Meanwhile, the Caretaker Committee Chairman of Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area, Mr. Osi Olisa, has placed a ban on the operation of commercial motorbikes, Okada, in the area. He said the ban was to check the activities of criminals.