12 dead, 18 hospitalised in communal clash in C/River

By Eyo Charles, Calabar | Published Date Dec 20, 2019 6:24 AM

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At least, 12 people have been killed, 18 hospitalised and several houses razed in the ongoing communal clash between Ebom, Usumutong and Ebijakara villages in Abi LGA of Cross River State.

The incident occurred early Thursday morning following alleged attacked on Ebom community by Usumutong people. An eyewitness, from Ebom community, Chief Sunday Egbo who spoke to journalists from his hiding place, said they were taken unawares.

He could not give the reason for the sudden attack but the state commissioner of police in the state, Mr Njereuwem Akpan confirmed the incident and has called for dialogue between the communities. Recounting the incident, Chief Egbo said they have lost many of their youths. Speaking from a hideout, he said, "As I am speaking with you, Usumutong people invaded Ebom and have killed our youths, houses burnt. I am just hiding somewhere. The whole of that area is under attack, they are now advancing, we are helpless, and we are calling on the government to intervene before they kill us all. " Another victim, Mrs. Lydia Enya from Ebom, said, they were being attacked Ebijakara and Usumutong.

She said the attack was ongoing despite the presence of soldiers who had been stationed there several months ago when the clashed first resurfaced.

A youth leader from Usumutong, Abel ubi said Ebom people first provoked them and they had no choice than to defend themselves.

It is gathered that there had been reinforcements from the 13 Brigade of Nigerian Army in the warring communities.

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