

# 4 killed as soldiers, youths clash in Edo

From Usman A. Bello, Benin

**F**our persons were reportedly killed in the Obayantor community in Ikpoba Okha Local Government Area of Edo State following a clash between some youths and the personnel of the Nigerian Army.

It was gathered that the incident happened last Friday in the community said to be witnessing leadership tussle after the removal of its youth leader (Okhaegele) and the installation of a new one.

A resident, who craved anonymity, alleged that someone hired soldiers to the community with a view to reclaiming the Okhaegele and that during the fracas two soldiers were killed.

He said the soldiers later launched a reprisal attack on the community.

A source within the community said the soldiers came in large numbers and fired gunshots sporadically, forcing the people to scamper for safety.

He said four persons were shot dead.

However, the spokesperson

of 4 brigade headquarters of the Nigerian Army, Benin, Yemi Sokoya, denied that soldiers were hired to the community.

He also dismissed the killing of two soldiers.

“Soldiers were not hired to the community and no soldier was killed. It was not a reprisal attack but an operation based on the intelligence of stockpiling of firearms,” he said.

He said the troops recovered three English pump action guns, two AK 47 rifles, one double-barrel gun, 32 live cartridges, and phones.