

National

Anxiety as cultists kill three, injure scores in Akwa Ibom communities

By Inemesit Akpan-Nsoh,
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There is palpable fear in Awa, Afaha Ubium, Ikot Obong Ishiet, Edem Idim and Ikot Asse communities of Governor Udom Emmanuel's Onna Local Council of Akwa Ibom State following the killing of three persons and injuries to scores by cultists.

Investigation revealed that the cult war, which started two weeks ago and involving Ku Klan Klux (aka KKK or Axe confraternity) and Vikings known in local parlance as (Ekipat and Ekut), centred on supremacy battle and alleged disbursement of funds by industries operating in the area. An eyewitness, Sunday Enang, told The Guardian that the money was allegedly released to the youth leader believed to be a member of 'Ekipat' who reportedly shared it among only his members.

Angered by the development, the rival cult group supposedly regrouped and stormed the youth leader's residence who was met absent, only for his younger brother to be killed in his stead. At Ikot Obong Ishiet, where another cultist reportedly escaped, his mother, father and son were injured.

He said the marauders operated freely in Awa, the village of the governor.

Another eyewitness, who pleaded anonymity, said the brother of another cultist in Ikot Asse was butchered when they could not locate his sibling. He flayed the police for alleged floppiness.

The source added: "As we are speaking now, from 7:00p.m., everybody in this village would leave their house for another for safety because you do not know when the boys would strike. Even residents in Awa, our governor's place, are not spared. We all run away at night and return in the mourning. Right now, movement is restricted."

When The Guardian visited the governor's hometown yesterday, personnel of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SAR), Department of State Services (DSS) and the Nigerian Army were seen patrolling the community. The Police Public Relations Officer in the state, Odiko Mcdon, said nobody had been arrested in relation to the incident, but confirmed that three persons had been killed with scores sustaining injuries.

He said: "Yes there is a cult clash in Onna, though nobody is arrested for now. But three persons are confirmed dead. Investigation is on going. Whenever the culprits are arrested, we would bring them to book. You know this government has zero tolerance for cultism and we would not condone their activities. We are trying to restore normalcy in the area."

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