

Members of ActionAid and civil society at a peaceful rally to stop discretionary tax incentives and implication for Nigeria in Abuja, yesterday.

CULTISM: Gunmen Attack Hostel, Kill 7 Benue Varsity Students, Security Man

BY SOLOMON AYADO, Makurdi

Gunmen suspected to be members of a cult group early on Wednesday, killed seven students of the Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi (UAM), even as they attacked a students' hostel and murdered a private security man in the place.

LEADERSHIP gathered that the incident happened at a private owned hostel in the South-core campus of the institution and that the corpses of the deceased were discovered in the place at about between 6 and 7am. The students protested but security operatives quickly averted it.

It was further gathered that the attack was propelled by a clash between some rival students' cult groups. Another version said

it was gunmen believed to be Fulani militia that have been terrorizing the agrarian areas of the state.

However, the information officer of UAM, Mrs. Roseline Waku who spoke to LEADERSHIP by telephone yesterday said one student was murdered on Monday while the three students and a visitor, as well as a private security guard was killed on Wednesday. She said the names and departments of the deceased students would be communicated when investigation is completed.

According to Waku, two of the deceased persons were confirmed to be original students of the university while another was a visitor whom the management of the institution was making effort to confirm if

actually the other was a student.

"Three students were killed, and another a visitor. The corpses of the students, as well as a private security man were conveyed to the Madonna hospital Mortuary in Makurdi. The situation is at the moment pathetic and the university management has informed the police who are now very much on campus, and an interim arrangement has been made for the vigilante group to be patrolling the school environment."

The police public relations officer, ASP Moses Yamu confirmed the incident to newsmen yesterday and said five persons were killed in the clash but that men of the police command, based on tip off, have been deployed to the university to maintain law and order.