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Leadership (Abuja)

Nigeria: Four Dead, Abia Varsity Shut

Oliver Ndife

23 January 2009

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Umuahia — At least four persons have been confirmed dead and several others injured following crisis which erupted at the Abia state University, Uturu, in Isukwuato Local Government Area.

Trouble started when it was discovered that a porter working with the university whose name was yet to be ascertained as at press time was found murdered. The porter, also a final year student of the institution, was said to hail from Uturu community and lived opposite the school.

The deceased was alleged to have been killed by one of the cult groups operating in the university. The cult groups were said to have visited him and demanded for his handset and later shot him dead.

Angered by his killing, youths from his village organised a protest to the University but were attacked by the cultists on their way to the school. This resulted in a free for all fight which led to the destruction of properties belonging to the university.

Many people were wounded in the course of the fracas. Leadership gathered that the wounded are now receiving treatment at the University's Medical Centre.

The situation threw the Uturu community into pandemonium, prompting staff and students of the university to go into hiding.

Meanwhile, the university authorities have closed down the institution and ordered the students to vacate the campus to avoid further loss of lives and properties.

Governor Theodore Orji who reacted swiftly over the crises, directed the state Police Commissioner to send police men to the area to maintain peace and order.

Sam Hart, the Chief Press Secretary to the Governor confirmed the crisis but did not give details.

He also confirmed that the Governor has asked the police commissioner to dispatch his men to Uturu to ensure peace and order.

Also the police spokesman, Ali Okechukwu, an ASP, confirmed that they have received the report of the trouble in Uturu. He said the commissioner has since dispatch police men to the area, adding that they are waiting for details of the crisis.

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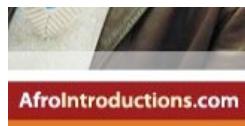
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