

Eight killed in Port Harcourt

PORT HARCOURT, the Rivers State capital came under siege on Sunday night, as unknown gunmen took over some streets, killing no fewer than eight persons and injuring several others.

Another eight were also killed in a communal clash in Chama Local Government Area at the weekend.

The Nation gathered that the gunmen first struck at Okija/Emenike and other parts of Mile 1 area of the metropolis.

The cause for the shooting could not be ascertained. Some sources attributed the cause to inter-cult rivalry.

Others linked it to the killing of late Golden Isi, the youth leader of Rumuolumeni. He was killed about a week ago. It was said that his supporters are now poised to find the killers.

But police spokesperson, Mrs Ireju Barasua, who confirmed the shootings told journalists that she did not know the reason behind the clash. She said "this one has gone beyond cult clash."

Witnesses said among the casualties were three young men drinking at a beer parlour at Iloabuchi area of Diobu. The gunmen, they said, shot them because they did not run away when others ran when they heard gunshots.

A woman who was driving was hit by stray bullet. Stray bullets also killed three persons in the Diobu area. One of them was a relation of a police officer.

At 8.30pm, the gunmen took over Abali Park area on Aba road and parts of Ikwerre Road, killing one man.

The whole area was thrown into panic as motorists and passers-by scampered to safety.

The Abali Park Police station was said to be the tar-

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get of the shooting because they might have detained a suspected cultist.

While the shooting lasted, the gunmen were unchallenged.

In Khana local government area, about four communities were said to have erupted in crisis. The crisis claimed eight persons, including a traditional ruler in Kor community.

The Nation gathered that the Kor crisis was connected with a chieftaincy tussle that has been raging. Those involved were said to have called in the Degbam and DeyWell cult groups to fight for them.

Many people have deserted the community in fear.

Yesterday, shooting was said to have started again in Emenike and Abonnema areas of Port Harcourt.

It was not possible to confirm the number of casualties in this Monday shooting.

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SPEAKER of the House of Representatives Mrs. Patricia Etteh has advised members of the Action Congress (AC) in Ekiti State House of Assembly to sheathe their sword and allow peace to reign.

She said the lawmakers should desist from playing politics with the issue at stake, which according to her "is constitutional and legislative."

Speaking with reporters yesterday at the Presidential lounge of the Murtala Muhammed Airport, Ikeja, Lagos, Etteh said: "Peace will soon reign in Ekiti State.

"This is because, the