

28 killed in Rivers communal clash

Port Harcourt curfew extended

NO fewer than 28 persons have been reportedly killed in renewed communal conflict in Rumuekpe, Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Rumuekpe, which has been embroiled in a chieftaincy and youths leadership battle, was invaded Wednesday night by some unknown gunmen.

These "mercenaries" were said to have been brought in by a factional leader of a youth group. Having taken the town unawares, they were said to have gone round the community, unleashing violence.

By the time they were through, 28 persons had been killed, *The Nation* learnt. The group which lost members is reportedly warming up for a reprisal attack.

But a Police source who confirmed the conflict said only nine persons were killed in the clash.

On July 27, Chief Egbe, a Senior Agricultural Science teacher at the Holy Rosary Secondary School, Port Harcourt and a native of Rumuekpe, was killed in front of his school by three youths who rode on a motorbike.

They were said to have approached Egbe while he was delivering lecture.

FOLLOWING the reappraisal of the security situation in the state, the government of Rivers State has announced an extension of the curfew in Port Harcourt for another one week. This is to sustain the peace already achieved, the government said. The decision to extend the curfew was disclosed by the Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice, Mr Okey Wali, who briefed Government House reporters on the outcome of the Executive Council meeting in Port Harcourt.

Mr Wali said the council praised the steps taken to secure lives and property, stressing that the need to sustain the gains recorded necessitated the extension of the curfew by one week.

Council, according to Wali, was grateful to President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua and the Service Chiefs for their prompt action to ensure that peace returned to the state.

The Commissioner said the Council considered the unfortunate statement by some indigenes in collaboration with some non-indigenes who addressed a press conference in Lagos, calling for emergency rule. He described their action as most regrettable because, according to him, there is no basis for such a call.

**From Clarice Azuatalam,
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Thinking they were seeking information, Egbe went to see them; he never returned. After killing him, they took away his cell phone. When the line was called later, a voice was said to have replied: "We have finished with him."

There is tension in Bodo, Gokana Local Council of the state, following the killing of Mr Baribor Kerebion by suspected members of Deebam cult.

The Nation gathered that Kerebion was killed over a disagreement on proceeds from sale of condensate, a by-product of petroleum.

Suspecting that the member had short-changed them, the cultists trailed him to his house.

"They did not see him, but they picked Kerebion who is one of his relatives, but not a cultist. They kept on stabbing him, until he became unconscious," sources said.

Some good Samaritans took him for treatment but the cultists followed them and threatened that they would kill anyone who helped him, it was said.

Kerebion was left to bleed to death.

Major Sagir Musa, the Army spokesman, said they had not been informed on the killings.