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Seven killed in Akwa Ibom communal crisis

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27/12/2010 00:00:00

Seven persons were killed at the weekend in a clash between Idua Ukpata and Esukma communities, Oron Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State.

According to an eyewitness, Etim Anwana Emmanuel, the incident occurred during the traditional wrestling festival organised by the youths of Esukma.

Emmanuel said: "We were still celebrating our traditional wrestling festival when they (Idua Ukpata) attacked us with machetes, guns and other weapons. I believe the attackers were mercenaries.

"Several of the injured are receiving treatment in an undisclosed hospital in Oron. Several houses belonging to the Esukma people were razed."

The Oron Local Government Chairman, Ini Okon, who visited the scene yesterday with the Commissioner of Police, Sani Magaji, has provided relief materials and shelter for those displaced.

He appealed to the people to remain calm and warned against any reprisal attack.

Magaji said those found culpable would be brought to book.

It was learnt that the attack was a fall-out of similar crisis between the communities two years ago.

A community leader in Oron, Chief Esang Umoh, said: "The people of Eyo Abasi had sold a parcel of land to the Idua Ukpata people, but a gas company wrongly paid compensation to the Idua people without informing the landlords from Eyo Abasi.

"The matter degenerated to a full-scale war, with the palace of the village head of Udung Okung

in Eyo Abasi razed and scores of people killed."

Governor Godswill Akpabio is expected to visit the area today after receiving reports from Magaji and Okon.



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The people of that area though sitting on oil and gas, have never benefited from compensation and patronage from oil from their land. Why would they not argue when they site a few Naira. The area (ORON NATION) is not even treated as an oil producing area. It is time appropriate Agencies of government acted before things get out of hand. God bless Nigeria.



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