

Scores feared dead in Akwa Ibom community



by **Bassey Anthony** May 8, 2019 in **News, News Update**

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Scores are feared dead and many missing following alleged attacks by suspected Cameroonian gendarmes on Abana, a fishing community on the fringes the Bakassi Peninsula.

The Village Head of Ifa Ikot Akpan, Uyo Local Government Area, Etteidung Edem Ebong, who confirmed the incident, said the victims were mostly Akwa Ibom indigenes.

The monarch added that several others have been abducted and kept at a detention facility in Cameroon.

A fisherman, Etebong Bassey, who escaped and fled to his community in Uruan Local Government Area, said the unresolved multiple taxation by Akwa Ibom and Cameroonian authorities triggered the fracas.

He said: "As fishermen, we have been paying multiple taxes to different authorities in Akwa Ibom and Cameroon for several years. The youths became angry and protested over the issue. So the Gendarmes cashed in on the protest and invaded communities within the Shell Creek area."

According to him, those affected hail from Akwa Ibom communities, including Ifa Ikot Akpan, Ekpene Ibia, Ikot Akan, Ikot Otoiye, Nnaenine and Ikot Inyang, all in Uyo and Uruan councils.

He recalled that "three days ago, some fishermen, indigenes of Uyo and Uruan councils, who visited home for a funeral, were forced to return to Abana when they got a distress call that their homes had been invaded and several people killed, some abducted and property destroyed".

Ebong appealed to the state and Federal Government to intervene to rescue the missing victims.

"Yes, the victims returned to my palace with tales of woe. They told me their settlements at Abana had been destroyed with over 40 of them killed, while several others were arrested on trumped up allegations of starting the problem that degenerated into a crisis.

"Therefore, I appeal to appropriate authorities to help release our people from captivity and save their lives as many of those affected are from my domain," Ebong lamented.

Ekikere Umoh, Chief Press Secretary (CPS) to Deputy Governor Moses Ekpo, whose office is in-charge of boundary matters, said: "the Office of the Deputy Governor has no business with communal wars".

Police spokesman Odiko Macdon could not be reached for comments.