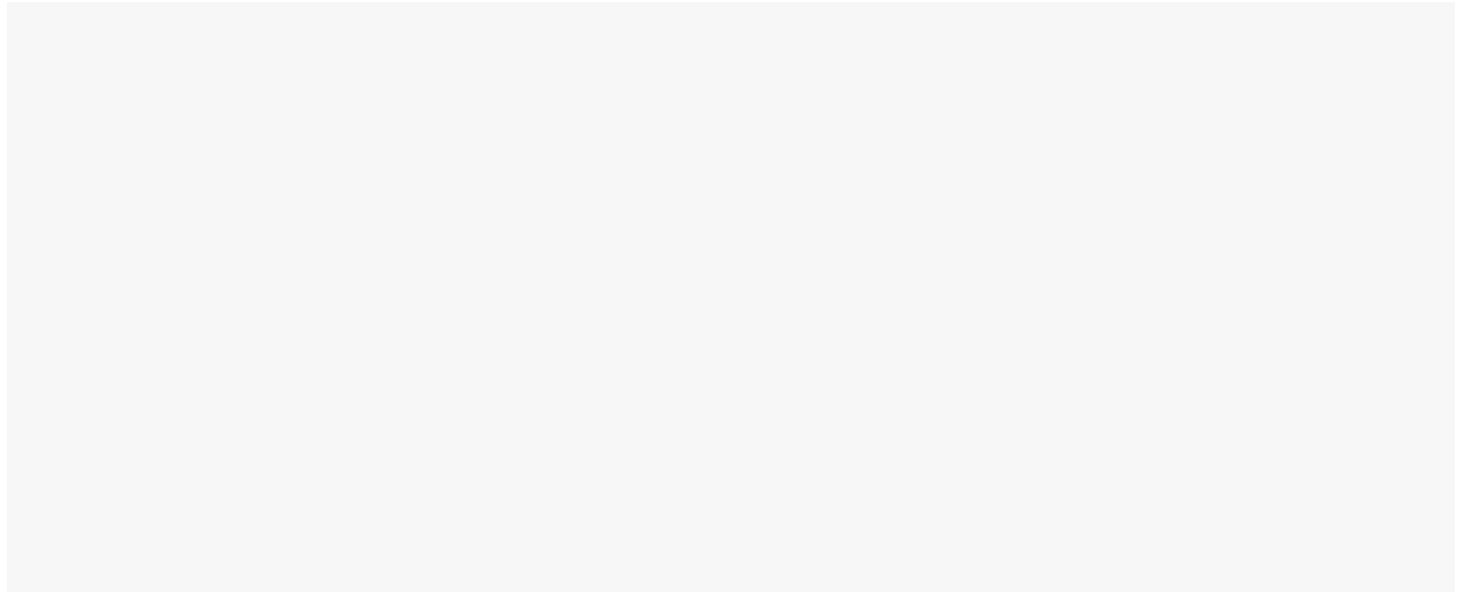


# Four feared dead in Rivers cult clash

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***By Rosemary Nwisi, Port Harcourt***

At least four persons are feared killed and many houses razed as two rival cult groups engaged in battle of supremacy in Sime Etche communities in Etche Local Government Area of Rivers state.

The incident reportedly took place early hours of Monday.

Spokesman of the Police Command, Nnamdi Omoni, A deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP), confirmed the attack in Port Harcourt, the state capital.

He however said that nobody was killed in the fight.

But a community source, who broke the news, stated the fight was between members of Dey-gbam and Dey-well cult groups.

He narrated that trouble started Sunday evening with the murder of a cultist by an opposing gang at Okehi, the headquarters of Etche LGA.

The eyewitness, who was simply identified as Emeka, told newsmen that the killings later spread to other communities within Etche as the cult gang whose member was killed went on reprisal rampage in the area.

The source said three of the other victims were killed on the early hours of Monday in Ulakwo, Igbodo and Mba communities of Etche LGA, respectively.

Emeka noted that many houses were also burnt down while residents of the communities have fled their homes for safety.

He said: “Members of the Degbam group killed a member of the Deywell group on Sunday night and this morning another one person was killed in Ulakwo, another one at Igbodo and Mba communities.

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“Some houses have also been burnt down in Okehi, while residents have fled for fear of been killed by the rampaging cult groups.”

But Omeoni assured that nobody was killed in the cult fight and that normalcy had returned to the communities.

He urged residents to go about their normal business as security has been beefed in the area.

He noted that tactical teams have been deployed in the area by the Commissioner of Police Mustapha Dandaura, adding that the situation has been arrested.

Omoni noted that no suspect has been arrested, stressing that when police arrived the area that the bandits took to flight.



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