

② Irate youths burn two scavengers to death

From Bassey Anthony, Uyo

I RATE youths have burnt to death two Hausa scrap metal collectors in Afaha Oku, Ikpa Community in Uyo Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State.

The incident, which occurred in the early hours of Sunday when many residents of the area had gone to church, is said to be a reprisal.

The Nation gathered that one who is indigenous to the community who was simply identified as Anietie was beaten to death by some alleged Hausa boys.

Aniekan Udosen, a resident of the area, who narrated the incident, said: "What happened was that the youth the two Hausa scrap metal collectors killed was indigenous to Afaha Oku Village.

"Anietie went to collect his clothes from the laundry that Sunday morning. While returning to his compound, he sighted the two Hausa scrap collectors, with some items they removed. There is also a welding shop in front of the compound.

"I learnt that he accosted them and asked them what they were doing in his compound; that who gave them permission to remove things from the compound. So, the two Hausa boys beat him and he collapsed. When Anietie's brother who was inside the house saw what happened, he raised the alarm.

"People came out and caught the two Hausa scrap collectors. I learnt that the boy died while being rushed to the hospital. So, it was the news of his death that got the youths angry, and they descended on those two Hausa boys, threw them inside the gutter and burnt them to death."

Confirming the incident yesterday, the Police Public Relations Officer, Mr Odiko MacDon regretted that the deaths would have been averted if the residents and the scrap collectors had not taken the law into their own hands.

MacDon noted that police preliminary investigation revealed that within the hours when people have left for church, the two scrap metal dealers entered Anietie's house and stole certain items.

"Unfortunately for them, the man just came back and met them in the act. So, when he accosted them, a fight ensued. Unfortunately, the man went into a coma, which he never recovered from. He passed on while being rushed to the hospital.

"So, the angry youths also attacked the two people responsible for his death, and lynched them. They were burnt. But the police moved in immediately to restore normalcy, evacuated the remains, and also contacted the community leaders of both sides and also the youths and urged them to maintain peace.

The PPRO reiterated that whoever was caught in the act of committing a crime should be handed over to the police for discreet investigation and prosecution, to avert lawlessness in society.