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NEWS HEADLINES

2 die, 6 hospitalised, 5 missing in Onne/Okrika over land dispute

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18.Nov.2014 | [DISCUS_COMMENTS](#) | Dapo Falade-Port Harcourt

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Two people reportedly lost their lives, while six were hospitalised and five others missing in the aftermath of a violent clash over a land dispute at the Onne Seaport in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, in the early hours of Monday.

It was gathered that some youths, chiefs and women from Okrika had besieged the Federal Ocean Terminal (FOT) of

the Onne Oil and Gas Free Zone in protest over refusal by the authorities to make them part landlords of the company.

A source at Eleme disclosed that the villagers, in their hundreds, arrived FOT as early as 3.45a.m and blocked the entrance to the company, thus refusing workers access.

Trouble was said to have started when youths from Onne who, on getting wind of the development, stormed the area to disperse the protesters, an action which led to the violent clash.

Mr T.E. Ajubo, a legal practitioner from Okrika, said the Onne youths attacked the protesters who, he said, were on peaceful demonstration and that two people died after the attack.

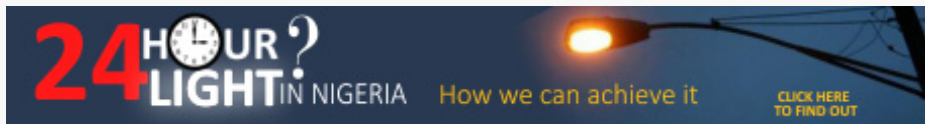
Describing the attack as unwarranted, he also said six persons had been hospitalised, five others missing, while three vehicles, including his Nissan Pathfinder jeep, were destroyed by the attackers.

Ajubo said the 1996 agreement establishing the Onne Free Zone stated that whenever there was expansion and it encroached into another community, that community automatically becomes part-landlords.

He said the operations of FOT had adversely affected the life of the Okrika people, accusing politicians from the area of thwarting in taking their grievance to the Senate on the issue.

However, reacting to the incident, the lawmaker representing Eleme constituency in the Rivers State House of Assembly, Honourable Josiah Olu, condemned the action of the Okrika people and called on the security agents and the Federal Government to avert future recurrence.

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