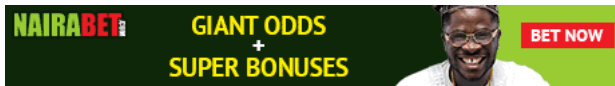


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Gunmen kill naval personnel, 18 others in Rivers (/gunmen-kill-naval-personnel-18-others-in-rivers)

June 4, 2016

Written by: Dapo Falade - Port Harcourt

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There were fear and anxiety as gunmen killed no fewer than 19 persons, including a naval personnel in Aluu and Obite in Ikwerre and Obite communities of Etche and Ikwerre local government areas of Rivers State, on Saturday.

The gunmen, suspected to be members of the Greenlanders cult group, invaded Aluu in an alleged reprisal against the Icelanders and killed 19 persons, including a nursing mother.

The cultists also left several other persons with bullet wounds in the attack.

Fifteen persons were said to have been killed in Ikwerre Local Government Area, while four lost their lives during the cult clash in Obite, Etche Local Government Area.

Sunday Tribune learnt that the assailants launched a coordinated attack, acting on information that members of the Icelanders were taking refuge in Aluu.

The incident had left the residents of the area in anxiety as some people in the affected communities have fled their homes.

"Some cultists we believe to be member of Greenlanders entered the community and killed some people. The boys operated in a very terrible manner. They went to a supermarket and opened fire and killed over six people," a resident said.

A source who didn't want his name mentioned for fear of being attacked, informed Sunday Tribune that some people sustained gun shot wounds, noting that residents suspected the cult war ongoing in the state as reason for the attack.

Also several persons suspected to be members of the Greenlanders were allegedly killed by the Icelanders in Obite, as another source said the armed cultists engaged in looting spree and also destroyed property in the community.

Residents noted that the assailants invaded the community by 9.00 a.m., "shooting and looting every viable item they see."

"They entered the compound of the Chief Security Officer of the area with the intention to kill him but unfortunately, the person they met was his in-law," a resident added.

However, the caretaker chairman of Ikwerre Local Government Area, Mr Samuel Nwanosike, said the reports about the incident were being overblown, adding that the government had swiftly responded to the situation and restored normalcy in the area.

Nwanosike, who visited the area with some security personnel, said the suspected cultists had been chased out of the area, adding that the army raided some hideouts in the area.

Sunday Tribune could not get a police confirmation of the incident as of the time of filing this report, as the state police spokesman, DSP Ahmad Muhammad, did not respond to an SMS sent to his mobile phone in that respect.

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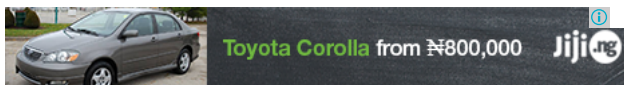
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