

PDP youth leader, 9 others killed in fresh cult clashes in Akwa Ibom

INIOMBONG EKPONTA - UYO

NO fewer than 10 persons were killed and several others injured as the ongoing clashes between rival cult gangs rage in some rural communities of Akwa Ibom State.

The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) youth leader of Ward 8, in Etim Ekpo Local Government Area, Honour-

Man shoots staff over demand for wage arrears

OLALEKAN OLABULO - LAGOS

A young man who had reportedly gone to recover his salary arrears from his master has been shot in his two legs in Orile Idimu area of Lagos State.

But the police in the state have arrested the master, Nwagei Chuks, while the victim has been rushed to the hospital for treatment.

It was gathered that the victim, Uchenna Ukor, a resident of 37, Ifelodun Street, Abule Orile Idimu area of Lagos State had gone to his master's home to get his outstanding wages when the incident happened.

An argument was said to have ensued between

able Sunday Jeremiah, popularly called **Sparko**, was among those killed at the weekend.

The late **Sparko**, former youth council chairman of Ikot Udobong community and current PDP Executive member representing Utu Etim Ekpo Ward 8, was alleged to be one of the leaders of the Iceland cult group.

It was learnt that six armed hoodlums stormed the deceased's residence on motorcycles at about 9:00p.m. on Friday night and hacked him to death.

"After shooting at him several times at close range and bullets failed to penetrate his body, the gunmen resorted to using axes and machetes on him," a close neighbour, who would not want his name in print told **Metro**.

"The sound of sporadic gunshots sent everybody scampering to safety and when there was calm, we came out to see his badly mutilated body," he added, calling on the government to thoroughly investigate and find the killers.

The Village Head of Ikot Udobong, Chief Joseph Umoekam, who also confirmed the incident, said he personally reported the matter to the police, who came and took the deceased's remains to the mortuary.

It will be recalled that the deceased's last public outing was penultimate Thursday, when politicians and elders of Etim Ekpo Council chose him to speak on behalf of his clan, Obong, on the dispute over the political leadership of the local government between Sir Archibong Akpan

and former police chief, DIG Udom Ekpoudum.

In the renewed cult war, one person simply identified as Mboemem, a pig seller at Ikot Eke village square in Etim Ekpo Local Government, was also killed at the weekend by two unknown gunmen who chased and shot him in a compound in his village.

"Two persons tried to stop him on his motorcycle but he refused to stop after sensing danger," an eyewitness told **Metro**.

"They used another mo-

torcycle to pursue him and he fled into another person's compound to escape, but they blocked him and shot at him severally at close range," he added.

At Ikot Nta village in Ukanafun Local Government, three persons including the youth leader and the village head, Chief Emmanuel Jim Umaheyo, were killed allegedly by a cult group in a tussle linked to the youths' leadership of the community.

The late monarch, it was gathered was shot dead by two armed hoodlums on motorbike for alleged meddlesomeness in the dispute over who becomes the next youth chairman of the community.

The youths' leadership crises, **Metro** also gathered, led to the killing of two youths in Anwa Uyo area of Ukanafun Local Government Area and another one at Omum Unyam village in Etim Ekpo Council.

Two others were killed at Ikot Ekpene Local Government Area when rival gang members reportedly trailed their targets and ambushed them at a vigil preceding the funeral of another member.

Several arrests, according to police sources had been made in the recent times and the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Ms. Cordelia Nwawe, told **Metro** on phone yesterday, that the police would



Scene of a fire incident at Abesan Estate, Ikeja, Lagos on Sunday. PHOTO: SYLVESTER OKORUWA