

# Security personnel, youth exchange fire in Imo community, 3 feared killed

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TENSION and anxiety have enveloped Izombe- an oil bearing community in Oguta Local Government Area of Imo State following violent confrontations between the indigenes and some security personnel in charge of sensitive installations in the area.

Already, the fracas has claimed the life of one of the youths of the community, who was reportedly killed by a security personnel, just as two of the security personnel had equally lost their lives in a reprisal at-

tack, allegedly launched by the youth .

Saturday Tribune gathered that trouble began when the security personnel in the area allegedly confronted and shot an oil bunkering ring leader, adjacent to the oil facility in the community.

The news of the murder, which spread like harmattan fire, was said to have infuriated the indigenes, who quickly mobilised themselves for a reprisal attack.

In the cross fire that ensued, two security personnel lost their lives, while a number of residential houses including

the palace of the traditional ruler of the community and valuable properties worth millions of Naira were razed by the irate indigenes.

As at the time of filing this report, the once busy commercial community has become a ghost town as residents have all fled and gone into hiding in the neighbouring communities for fear of possible attack by the aggrieved security personnel.

A retired civil servant and one of the prominent indigenes of the community, who pleaded not to be mentioned, in a telephone chat with our

correspondent in Owerri, described the incident as unfortunate, adding that all indigenes of the area had gone into hiding in order not to be arrested or attacked.

He said: " my friend it is terrible, everybody has gone into hiding including myself and I cannot give you details now until normalcy returns".

When contacted the Police Public Relations Officers of the Imo State Police Command CSP Michael Abatham, said that he was aware of the incident but pleaded to be given enough time for details.

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