

Police arrest nine over communal clash

Adelani Adepegba

THE police in Enugu State have arrested about nine persons in connection with the communal violence that rocked Mgbowo village in Awgu Local Government Area of the state.

They were picked up when

policemen swooped on the community which had been in the throes of crisis following clashes by youths of the village over the traditional stool.

The Public Relations Officer, Enugu State Police Command, Mr. Michael Abattam, told our correspondent in a telephone interview on Wednesday that

the arrested persons were the principal suspects who threw the community into what he described as "an avoidable and regrettable situation."

He said that the police were still scouring for four others he called ringleaders of the violence, adding that security agents had fully secured the village and calm

was gradually returning.

Abattam debunked claims by some villagers that the crisis was precipitated by the police who were said to have killed about five youths.

He said that it was the rivalry between two factions of the youths that led to the bloodshed which reportedly claimed

no fewer than seven lives.

Abattam, a superintendent of police, said that the police would not rest until the ringleaders who masterminded the violence that swept the sleepy community had been fished out.

The Mgbowo community had witnessed a bloody violence when some youths attacked one another over the creation of an autonomous community in the area.

Some villagers however pointed accusing fingers at the police, alleging that they (policemen) caused the violence when they shot at some youths who were protesting their deployment in the village to check the annual "Iriji" festival which the villagers were about holding.

The villagers claimed that some influential residents had invited security agents to prevent the festival from being turned into a political platform.

ALSCON workers stage protest over unpaid salaries

Chukwudi Akasike

CALM has returned to the Aluminium Smelter Company Nigeria Limited at Ikot Abasi after irate workers locked up the management staff of the company on Monday to protest their unpaid salary arrears.

The workers were said to have been angered when the management insisted that it would first pay their terminal benefits before releasing their three-month salary arrears

over formally to the white men and they are telling us to come and take our terminal benefits when they have not paid us our salary arrears. Is that the right thing to do?" he queried.

Another worker who preferred anonymity told our correspondent that he had worked for over six years with ALSCON.

He said that the decision of the management to pay them their terminal benefits

was a ploy to avoid paying them the salary arrears which the company was owing them.

A management staff who refused to be identified said he was not competent to speak on the issue.

He, however, told our correspondent that the issue had been resolved and the workers would get all they were owed by ALSCON.

Speaking to our correspondent on the matter, the

Police Public Relations Officer, Mr. Suur Chafa, said that an unidentified person from the Bureau of Public Enterprise came to the company and announced that ALSCON was set to pay them their terminal benefit.

Chafa, a superintendent of police, told our correspondent in Uyo on Wednesday that the workers went wild and locked up members of the management.

Duke can't intimidate me, says lawmaker