

Mob burns FG fishery project over killing of native in Rivers

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UNKNOWN persons on Sunday set ablaze the Federal Government-sponsored African Regional Aquaculture Centre, Aluu in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State.

The centre, an outstation of the Nigerian Institute of Oceanography and Marine Research, Lagos, was set on fire following a disagreement between youths of the area and security men attached to the centre.

Eyewitnesses said the attack was triggered by the killing of an unnamed youth of the community by a policeman attached to the ARAC.

The source said that a 'stray bullet' from the policeman's rifle hit the boy on

Saturday.

But the Rivers State Commissioner for Agriculture, Chief Ndubuisi Adikema, described the arson as appalling and a setback to the development of fishery in the country.

Adikema, who visited the centre in company with his Community and Chieftaincy Affairs Matters counterpart, Mr. Clapton Ogolo, regretted the damage, saying that it would cost the government a fortune to rebuild the centre.

The commissioners blamed the youths for taking the laws into their hands, instead of reporting the incident to the appropriate quarters.

At a meeting with the paramount ruler of Aluu, the

commissioner, however, sympathised with the natives over the death of the youth and promised to probe the circumstances surrounding the incident.

Adikema said, "All those involved in the sad incident are to be dealt with in accordance with the law."

He pleaded with the irate natives not to molest the employees of the ARAC but to allow them access to their offices.

The paramount ruler of the area, Chief Alfred Omodu, called on the government to bring the suspected killer to justice and compensate the family.

Omodu also assured the commissioners that those who destroyed the centre would be made to face the law.