

Cult clash claims three lives in Rivers

Stories: **Soni Daniel,**
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RESIDENTS of Diobu in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, on Sunday night, witnessed a serious street fight which lasted for hours as two suspected rival cult groups jostled for supremacy ahead of the April poll.

Eyewitnesses said the fight which started from Azikiwe Street in Mile Two, later spread to Wokoma, Ilabuochi and Emenike streets.

One source said that although the cause of the fight was not immediately known, both sides in the conflict used sophisticated weapons.

A police officer, who pleaded anonymity, said the cultists used dynamite and other Improvised Explosive Devices.

The fight forced most residents who went for

evening church services to stay back in their churches, while those who had gone to relaxation spots kept away from their houses for sometime.

Shops around the affected areas were immediately shut while all the affected streets were deserted as residents avoided them so as not to be caught in the crossfire.

At the end of the fight, three bodies were seen lying on the street. Two of the dead persons were men while the remaining one was a woman.

The Rivers State Police Command said on Monday that there was a problem around Diobu, but did not give details of what happened.

The Police Public Relations Officer for the command, Mrs. Ireju Barasua, said that she was yet to get

details of the attack, adding that she would make the details known later.

However, when our correspondent called her later, one of her aides picked the phone and said that the PPRO was attending to some urgent matters.

Trouble started in the evening of Friday when a group of suspected cultists attacked some persons around Emenike junction in Mile One, killing seven persons and wounding 10 in the process.

Although the police immediately brought the situation under control, the aggrieved cultists went on a reprisal mission on Sunday to avenge the killing of their members.

The groups were said to be fighting for supremacy so that they could be recruited by politicians for the next election.

B: Advisory council approves