

# Three killed in Imo oil-producing communities

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**A**T least three people were killed in a triangular communal conflict involving some oil producing communities in Imo State on Friday.

The communities involved in the fresh crisis are Umokorie in Umokpo, Amainiyi and Umuoni.

Only Umoukpo youths were said to be involved in the battle for the control of the youth association that plays a central role in terms of liaising with the oil companies.

Investigation conducted by our correspondent revealed that a faction of the two groups launched an attack on their perceived opponents and killed a youth from Umuokorie, last month.

However, a month after the incident, the Umokorie people allegedly mobilised and launched a reprisal on the suspected killers of their kinsman at Amainye, but their targets were said to have fled their community to seek refuge at Umoni in Mbano clan.

It was learnt that the situation in the area degenerated when two of the youths from Umoni, who engaged Amainiyi to defend her people were shot dead during the ensuing confrontation between the two communities.

With the killing of the two youths from Umuoni, the members of the communities were said to be embroiled in

mobilisation for yet another reprisal in Umokorie, which sources fear might affect oil production in the area.

Already, the member representing the Oguta State Constituency in the House of Assembly, has called the attention of the state legislature to the killings and the escalation of tension, anxiety and fear in the oil producing area.

It was further learnt that Igbomezie, the Transition Committee Chairman of the Oguta Local Government Area, Mr. Emman Nnani, and the Coordinator of the Aloma Development Centre, Mr. Felix Uba, have made efforts to call the attention of the police division in Oguta to the development to prevent a further breakdown of law and order.

When our correspondent contacted the Police Public Relations Officer, Imo State Police Command, Mr. Linus Nwaiwu, on the telephone on Saturday, he said that he had not been fully briefed on the development.

He said he could not confirm the exact number of people that had been killed so far.

He stated, however, that a detachment of riot policemen had been deployed in the area to prevent further breakdown of law and order, stressing that there was no more tension in the area.