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## Gunmen kill 13, sack Rivers community

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A gang of gunmen suspected to be cultists on Thursday sacked Obrikom and Omoku communities in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area of Rivers State, killing 13 persons in the process.

The gunmen, who were said to have stormed the communities at about 4am, overpowered youths and policemen deployed in the areas before killing their victims.

A source from the area said while eight persons were mowed down by the attackers in Obrikom, five persons also lost their lives in similar circumstance in Omoku.

It was gathered that the operation, which lasted till noon, had turned Obikom to a ghost town as residents deserted the area for fear further attacks.

An eyewitness told our correspondent that the gunmen had disarmed some Obrikom youths, who were members of a vigilante group before shooting their way into the town.

"It looked like an inter-cult war and they operated from 4am to noon today (Thursday) after they had overpowered policemen and some youths that were on guard in Obrikom town.

"We learnt that eight person were killed on Obikom during the attack. There was also another attack in Omoku, where five persons were killed. In Obrikom, the entire place is currently like a ghost town.

"People have deserted the area because they are afraid that the gunmen may come back again. We were told that they were on a reprisal, but we are not sure as of this moment I am speaking with you," the eyewitness, who is an indigene of the area, said in a telephone interview.

Also, a teacher in one of the secondary schools in Omoku said he had to flee the teachers' lodge and dash down to Port Harcourt as a result of the shooting in the area.

The secondary school teacher, who spoke on condition of anonymity, disclosed that one person was killed at the main gate of the school in Omoku.

When contacted, the state Police Public Relations Officers, Mr. Ahmad Mohammad, confirmed the incident, but added that he was not sure of the number of persons killed during the attack.

According to him, "I am aware of the incident, but the actual figure (of those killed) remains conflicting."

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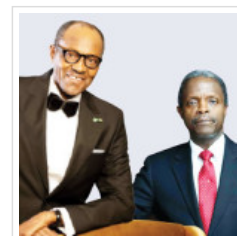
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