

11 killed in Rivers fresh cult clash

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Friday Amobi, Port Harcourt

NO fewer than 11 persons were feared killed on Wednesday in Omoku town, the headquarters of Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area of Rivers State following a renewed cult clash in the area.

The PUNCH learnt that a cult group suspected to be members of the *Greenlanders* cult stormed the oil-rich area and killed the reported number of persons, leaving several others with varying degrees of injuries.

It was gathered that a well-known medical doctor in the area identified simply as, Dr. Erike, and one other person were whisked away to an unknown destination by the cultists.

This was happening after a group of elite from ONELGA on Wednesday visited the member representing them at the Rivers State House of Assembly, Mr. Christian Ahiakwo, demanding more efforts in restoring peace to the area.

Omoku had been in the news due to incessant cult clashes which had resulted to the death of many innocent people.

It was gathered that the *Greenlanders* had visited the area in a reprisal as a result of its members that were allegedly killed by the dreaded *Icelanders*.

A community source, Mr. Michael (surname withheld), told *The PUNCH* that the *Greenlanders* invaded Omoku around 9pm on Wednesday.

Michael noted that the gunmen were shouting that the *Icelanders* should come out from hiding for a gun battle.

He noted that the Special Adviser to the Caretaker Chairman of ONELGA on Sports and Youths Affairs, Mr. Smart Igwe, was among those that sustained bullet wounds.

The source said that the gunmen stormed Dan Street in Omoku, killed four people and abducted two persons before moving to Obigwe community where they shot three persons at about 1am.

Michael added that the cultists returned on Thursday around 6am and operated till 9am and killed four more persons without any challenge.

He also disclosed that several innocent persons were gunned down, including an aged woman whose name could not be ascertained as of the time of filing this report.

Reacting, the CTC chairman of ONELGA, Mr. Isaac Umejuru, described the renewed attack in Omoku as regrettable.

Speaking through his Chief Press Secretary, Mr. Obed Douglas, Umejuru, explained that the cultists were enemies of ONELGA, adding that they were bent on scuttling his peace efforts in the area.

The LG boss, however, called on the youths in the state to shun violence and other vices, adding that peace was needed in the state.

He said, "The attack is regrettable. The hoodlums are enemies of the community who are bent on scuttling my peace efforts. I call on our youths to shun violence, cultism and other social ills that will destroy the relative peace in the state."

The Rivers State Police Command confirmed the incident, describing it as a cult clash.

The Public Relations Officer of the Command, Mr. Ahmad Muhammad, noted that three suspected cultists were killed in the clash.

"The scenario appears to be a cult clash, leaving three suspected cultists dead," Muhammad stressed.

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Contact: editor@punchng.com