

blood of victims to ritualists.

Residents flee Ekeremor community after beheading of security agent

Kunle Falayi with agency report

Residents of Ndoro community in Ekeremor Local Government Area of Bayelsa State are fleeing the community, following the beheading of a security operative by militants, *Saturday PUNCH* has learnt.

A resident of the community, Mr. Henshaw Ebi, told the *News Agency of Nigeria* that the security official was negotiating with a militant leader in the area to disarm when the incident occurred.

"The incident has created panic in the community as residents begun to abandon their homes since Monday when the body of the 'security emissary' was seen in the community without its head.

"The victim cannot be identified. The fear is that the military might come after those responsible any moment from now and invade the community.

"The community has been deserted as we speak due to fear of imminent manhunt for the militants

behind the killing," Ebi said.

However, the Bayelsa State Government said on Friday that there was no cause for alarm.

The government called on fleeing members of the community to return home as the situation had been brought under control.

The Commissioner for Information, Mr. Daniel Iworiso-Markson, said there had been meeting between Governor Seriake Dickson, security chiefs, officials of the military high command, leaders and stakeholders of the community.

Iworiso-Markson said in a statement that the member representing Sagbama/Ekeremor Federal Constituency in the House of Representatives, Fred Agbedi, also attended the meeting.

Iworiso-Markson said it had resolved that the military would move into the community and restore normalcy, while the government would begin a peace process.

He said with the presence of the military in the area, residents are free to go about their normal business.