

Cult clash claims two, Akwa Ibom community residents flee

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Residents of the Inen community in the Oruk Anam Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State have reportedly fled their homes following a fresh clash between the *Debam* and *Iceland* confraternities, which claimed two lives on Saturday.

It was gathered that the victims' corpses were found on a narrow bush path leading to one of the neighbourhoods on Sunday.

An eyewitness, Mrs Nko Etukudoh, said, "We woke up this morning (Sunday) to see two corpses on the footpath leading to another village. On inspection, we discovered that it was our brother, Ufot Johnson-Uwah, also known in the community as A'Raggae, and one other, Papa Lucky, from the Etok Inen village. We were shocked.

“A’Raggae was lying down naked with his boots on his legs. Blood was oozing out from his nose. Papa Lucky was lying down with his clothes intact.”

She said the elder brother of A’Raggae, Iboro, along with the village head, called the police in Oruk Anam, who rushed to evacuate the corpses to the mortuary.

Etukudoh explained that A’Raggae was a youth activist and socialite before he was engaged by the Al Madal Construction Company, which was handling road construction in the community, while Lucky was a speedboat helmsman ferrying foodstuffs and passengers from the community to the Bonny Island in Rivers State.

A source, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said A’Raggae was the Chairman of the Inen Vigilante Task Force and worked to secure the area against thieves before the construction firm engaged him as chief security officer.

The source added that when the cults clashed two months ago, killing six persons in the community, the deceased was invited by the police, but he turned down the invitation.

“After the killing of two soldiers on this road last year, the company handed over security at the site to A’Raggae, but last month, one of the persons killed during a cult clash was a company employee, who was cut into pieces. Today, the chief security officer of the company and another person have been killed,” the source said.

The Police Public Relations Officer in the state, Nnudam Fredrick, who confirmed the incident, said information from the Divisional Police Officer of Orukanam on the clash was sketchy, adding that only one person was killed.

“I have just received sketchy information from the DPO of Orukanam confirming that there was a clash between two cults and that one person was killed,” Fredrick stated.

He said the command would soon despatch police personnel to apprehend and bring the culprits to justice and restore normalcy to the community.