

Five killed in cult clash, A'Ibom police fume

15th December 2022



Akwa Ibom State Commissioner of Police, Olatoye Durosinmi

By Patrick Odey

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No fewer than five persons have been reportedly killed in a cult war involving two rival confraternities, Vikings and the Mafians, in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

Sources close to Ibom Plaza, where the incident happened, said the fight started around 6.30pm on Tuesday and lasted for about two hours.

PUNCH Metro gathered that policemen and soldiers were later deployed in the scene.

A petrol attendant, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the clash triggered fear as business owners quickly shut their outlets and fled.

A tricycle operator, Mr Aniekan Akpainyang, said the incident started following a minor disagreement at a sport betting centre along the Ikot Ekpene Road by Ibom Plaza.

He said, "A member of the Vikings Confraternity placed a bet to the tune of N5,000, but could not pay after he lost. The shop attendant asked him to pay or drop his phone, but he refused. Instead, he called his gang members on the phone; they came, pounced on the attendant and raided the shop."

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He said a booking man at the shop, who belonged to the Mafians, called his gang members as well, which led to a free -for-all.

According to Akpainyang, two people died in the Plaza area and one at the Ikpa Road Junction, close to the University of Uyo town campus.

"Two others had earlier been killed on Okokon Etuk Street some few meters to the Uyo City Centre," he added.

The state Police Public Relations Officer, Odiko Macdon, who confirmed the incident in a statement on Wednesday, was, however, silent on the casualty figure.

The statement read in part, “The Commissioner of Police, Olatoye Durosinmi, condemned in strong terms, the unfortunate incident which caused palpable fear among the good people of the state. The CP has reminded those involved in this dastardly act to note that the ban on cultism in the state is still in force and that henceforth, perpetrators of such acts will be apprehended and prosecuted in accordance with extant laws.”