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Bloody day in Rivers, Bayelsa, Cross River

— 2nd May 2016

From Tony John, Port Harcourt, Judex Okoro, Calabar and Femi Folaranmi, Yenagoa

GUNMEN on Saturday killed 12 persons at Ula- Ukpata and Edoha communities in Ahoda East Local Government area of Rivers State.

But, the state's Police Command confirmed the death of only four people.

Sources from the areas said the gunmen invaded Ula-Ukpata community at about 1.00pm on Saturday and killed 10 persons.

According to the sources, the armed men reappeared at about 9.00pm the same day and killed another two persons.

However, Commissioner of Police, Mr. Musa Kimo, has confirmed the killing of four persons to newsmen yesterday, in Port Harcourt.

Kimo said the killings occurred on Saturday night at

Zion Nwoka's compound in Ula-Ukpata community, giving the names of the victims as Mrs. Monica Zion (62), Gospel Nwoka (45), Patricia Ziko (42) and Rogers Nwoka (28).

Speaking further, the police boss said four patrol teams had been deployed to the community to beef up security and forestall reprisal attack.

2 killed in Cross River

In Cross River State, two people were reportedly killed in a fresh communal clash between Nkpani and Nko communities in Yakurr Local Government Area of the state.

Investigations by *Daily Sun* indicated that one of those feared dead was from Ugep while the other came from Nkpani community just as school and residential buildings were destroyed in both communities.

An eyewitness told *Daily Sun* that trouble started following an alleged killing of an Nkpani man, simply identified as Bassey Obol Lekam, along Calabar-Ugep-Ikom Highway around Nko Junction by Nko youths.

The witness said late Lekam, a butcher, was said to have gone to Adun market last Friday, to buy pigs, but was killed while returning to Nkpani by Nko youths who were parading the axis with dangerous weapons.

Investigations also indicated that a motorcyclist identified as Friday from Afikpo, was also shot but escaped to Nkpani community and announced the death of Lekam.

While Nkpani people mobilised for a reprisal, top government functionaries and security agents prevailed upon them to lay down their arms.

In the build up to the clash, both ends of Calabar-Ikom-Ogoja Federal Highway were blocked by irate youths bearing dangerous weapons and wielding locally made guns.

The incident was said to have heightened among the communities, fearing outbreak of full-scale war among Ugep, Nko and Nkpani communities all in the council area.

The state government, on Saturday, drafted a team of security operatives to the communities to avoid break down of law and order.

But, the crisis was said to have heightened yesterday morning when some youths from Nko allegedly attacked security operatives, Nkpani community, burnt a secondary school and destroyed a residential building.

In reprisal, the Nkpani youths also allegedly invaded Nko community and destroyed several residential houses in the process.

Bayelsa records another 2 deaths

Similarly, in Bayelsa, two persons were feared dead and five others injured in a clash between supporters of All Progressives Congress (APC) and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Nembe Local Government Area of Bayelsa State at the weekend.

An account said trouble started during a wake in Nembe-Bassanbiri in honour of a popular indigene when PDP supporters, led by the Caretaker Chairman at the council, Walter Kuroekigha began chanting party slogans, which allegedly provoked their APC counterparts.

Commissioner for Information and Orientation, Jonathan Obuebite, however, claimed that the APC members became aggrieved after security agents arrested some of their colleagues, who were fingered in the killing of two soldiers and the abduction of an expatriate working for SETRACO Construction Company in Nembe.

He alleged that attempts to prevent the police from apprehending the culprits triggered the crisis leading to the attack of some PDP members in the area who were attending the wake.

A statement signed by the commissioner, however, condemned the renewed violence in Nembe-Bassambiri of Nembe Local Government Area.

"We condemn in strong terms, the gruesome attack on members of the PDP or any citizen by the APC which has led to the death of one person and we say this is one attack too many."

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