

5 killed in Cross River communal clash

From **Judex Okoro**,
Calabar

FIVE people have been reportedly killed in a renewed communal clash between Odukpani Qua clan and New Netim community in Odukpani Local Government Area of Cross River State

While three were killed on Good Friday, another two were allegedly killed at the weekend following a surprise attack by gunmen.

Daily Sun investigation revealed that the two communities have been in conflict over issue of aborigines even as the New Netim people have lived together for over a century.

It was learnt that besides the land in dispute, the New Netim have been engaged in a protracted leadership tussle over who becomes the village head.

The clash got to a climax when both communities went into a full scale war in 2016, leading to loss of lives and destruction of schools and the entire village of New Netim razed.

Subsequently, the people were sacked from their ancestral village and said to be leaning in nearby communities of Akamkpa, Biase and Calabar Municipal.

However, the recent hostilities were said to have been caused when some armed men allegedly invaded

the Odukpani Qua clan community and unleashed mayhem on the people as three persons were feared killed with many others injured.

A witness, Sunday Okon, said the hoodlums invaded the community at about 10:00am on Friday in three buses carrying a church banner in front to divert attention.

According to Okon, when they arrived, they started shooting sporadically, leaving three persons dead and several others scampered to safety while some others remained indoors.

He said the surprise attack lasted about 70 minutes and the invaders drove away

through the community to the Odukpani junction and nobody accosted them.

Another witness, Asuquo Nyong, said some armed policemen and soldiers have been drafted to the Odukpani Qua clan community but that two more persons were allegedly killed in their farms along the highway by gunmen.

Nyong said this has sent shocks down the spine of the villagers as they don't understand what is really happening.

The Police Public Relations Officer, Irene Ugbo, could not be reached. But police sources said they have not got official report on the number of casualties.

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