

# 8 killed as vigilantes, cultists clash in Delta

From **Paul Osuyi**, Asaba

**AT** least eight persons have been reportedly killed in Okpara town, Ethiope East Local Government Area of Delta State, following multiple clashes between a vigilance group and cult members of the Dominion confraternity. Reports said trouble started when the vigilance group operatives arrested some members of the cult over alleged involvement in a robbery, and handed them over to the police, which drew the ire of other members of the cult group, who went after the chairman of the vigilance group in his farm but did not find him. But his relative, a nine-year-boy,

who was on the farm when the furious cult boys came, was allegedly hacked to death.

A community source said the chairman of the vigilance group, informed about the death of his boy in the hands of the cultists, stormed his farm, where he shot one of the cultists dead while others escaped. According to the source, "after the vigilante team leader had avenge the death of his boy, he carried both dead bodies to town. That was the beginning of the shoot-on-sight for over four days that has claimed about eight lives, while many were left with serious injuries."

It was learnt that members of the vigilance group have vowed to come out for all the cultists disturbing the area, as the activities of cultists had scared many out of town for fear of the unknown.

"While there were rumours that some of the cultists had fled the community, others were said to have been regrouping for reprisal against the vigilantes and anyone connected to the killing of their members," the source added.

The vigilance group chairman, Mr. Onodje Okpubeku, who confirmed the incident, did not, however, state the number of casualties so far recorded but said that policemen and soldiers were helpful in calming the situation.

As at the time of filing this report, the Police Public Relations Officer in the state, DSP Andrew Aniamaka, could not be reached to confirm the development.

## Gunmen attack Malu in Benue

From **Rose Ejembi**, Makurdi

**GEN.** John Malu, younger brother of the late Chief of Army Staff, Gen. Victor Malu, was yesterday attacked by some gunmen at his country home, Tse Adoo village, in Kat

On Monday, Malu's accusers recant in court