

Bayelsa on Saturday

# 4 killed, 3 villages sacked in Cross River communal clash

From **Judex Okoro,**  
Calabar

**FOUR** persons have been reportedly killed in a renewed communal clash between Abanwan and Orugbam communities in Bisae Local Government Area of Cross River State.

The two communities have been at daggers drawn over the ownership of some parcels of land.

This was coming barely four months after both communities went into war in the first week of last December, destroying houses and killing innocent persons in the process.

But, the recent hostility seems to be a reprisal from the Orugbam community, whose houses were allegedly burnt down last year by the neighbouring Egbor, Ipene

and Abanwan communities, following a quarrel that ensued during burial arrangements.

Checks by Daily Sun revealed that youths from Orugbam attacked Egbor, Ipene and Abanwan communities in the wee hours of yesterday, killing four persons and razing buildings within the areas.

It was learnt that since Orugbam community was burnt down last year, the residents have been living as refugees at Unwana, Afikpo and the surrounding Ebonyi communities, and finally invaded Egbor, Ipene and Abanwan communities to avenge what happened to them last December.

A witness, Bassey Abeni, said: "The warlords, numbering over 60 youths, said to be Orugbam people with

mercenary from Ebonyi, invaded Egbor at about 4:00a.m, yesterday, and after killing two people there, razed the community.

"They moved to the nearby community, Ipene, and not seeing anybody, burnt down houses before going for their target, Abanwan, where they also killed two people before setting the village on fire."

Abeni, who said the people of Ipene heard gunshots suspected to be machine guns early, on Sunday, and left the community before the Ebonyi warlords arrived, added that the villages are deserted and the people hiding in the bush frustrated.

"As I'm talking to you, all of us are in the bush; we suspected that one day the Orugbam people would strike, because when they

were sacked from their communities last year, they promised to revenge.

Another witness, Emmah Ugah, from Egbor, alleged that the Ebonyi people had always been in alliance with Orugbam, to take over the oil plantation in Egbor, and were often assisted by Orugbam until the latter was sacked last year.

Confirming the incidence, Special Adviser to Governor Ben Ayade, Ani Esin, said the military and regular policemen have taken over the place.

Also, the state Police Public Relations Officer, Irene Ugbo, said: "Our men, both the mobile policemen and the regular policemen are on ground now, and while I cannot confirm the casualty figure, I learnt houses have been burnt," she said.

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