

# 7 killed over youth leadership tussle in Edo

From **Tony Osauzo**, Benin

**NO** fewer than seven people, including a soldier, have been reportedly killed in Obayantor community in Ikpoba-Okha Local Government Area of Edo State, in clash between rival youth groups in the community over leadership tussle.

It was learnt that the deaths occurred when a faction of the youth leadership in the community reportedly led security personnel into the community, to comb it over alleged possession of firearms by a rival group and, in the process, a soldier was said to have been killed, which provoked a reprisal in which no less than six people, mostly youths, were killed.

The Army has, however, denied the death of any of its personnel in the clash.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, a son-in-law to an 80-year-old woman, said the incident happened on Saturday night, and that his mother-in-law had to trek through the bush for hours before she was rescued and taken to Benin City. On its part, the 4 Brigade of the Nigerian Army in Benin said it never carried out a reprisal in the community, but an operation based on intelligence from the Department of State Service (DSS).

Spokesman of the Brigade, Capt. Yemi Sokoya, said against some reports making the rounds, soldiers were not in the community because of reprisal, adding that the personnel of the brigade were guided by rules of engagement and code of conduct for internal security.

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