

Death Toll Hits Six As Ogoni Cult Clash Escalates

The cult clash which claimed three lives at Bodo in Gokana Local Government Area of Rivers State yesterday escalated with another three deaths bringing the total number of deaths in the clash to six.

THISDAY learnt that the fresh deaths are apart from those still missing since Thursday when the clash started with the sporadic shooting of automatic weapons by the rival groups.

Sources who spoke from the din of the clash said that for two days running, residents have been unable to venture outside their houses while police sent to the area were said to have encountered superior firepower by the

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groups.

It was learnt that two Ogonis seeking for supremacy in the coming elections allegedly deployed the cult groups, one of which is said to be based in the community while the other group that attacked first is said to have been hired mercenaries.

Since the breakout of hostilities by the two rival cults, no school has opened for business while the area is totally deserted. Vehicles that use to ply the route now refuse to go there while those that do stop passengers a long way from the point of clashes.

Problems started at about

2am Thursday morning when gun shots woke residents from sleep.

Investigations revealed that the cult group based outside the Bodo community had on the instruction of their patron, also a politician from the community, had kidnapped three members of the home based group.

The cult in the community then organized and went for a face off with their rivals who they allegedly found ready to combat them. The war was then taken to the cult group based in Bodo which led to the shoot out.

There has been police intervention to quell the clash which does not seem to be yielding much dividends.