

would delay hearing in the trial.

the charge against their clients be

prosecuted.

Obong Crisis: One Killed, Nine Missing in Bloody Clash

Fears that the crisis rocking the Efik kingdom over the throne of the Obong of Calabar would lead to a bloodbath became real early Friday morning as one person was killed and nine persons declared missing, while several others were injured, in a bloody clash at Cobham Town.

There had been fears that the insistenté of a faction of the Etuboms Traditional Council backed by top officers of the Cross River State government opposed to the capping of Edidem Bassey Ekpo Bassey II as the Obong of Calabar to have access to the kingship shrine, Efe Asabo, to carry out

From Ernest Chinwo in Calabar

a second installation would lead to bloodshed.

The factional group led by Etubom Essien Ekpenyong Efiok in the early hours of Thursday made their fourth attempt to cap Etubom Ekpo Okon Abasi Otu at the Efe Asabo but was repelled by youths of Ikot Etonko (Cobham Town) community.

The people of Cobham Town, custodians of the shrine, had vowed to resist any attempt to hold a second capping of an Obong in the lifetime of one already capped,

describing the insistence of the factional group to cap Etubom Otu as "an act of sacrilege and provocation which we are going to resist."

The group, THISDAY gathered, made their fifth attempt at about 4.30 am on Friday backed by some thugs who invaded the community in a bid to have access to the shrine.

Acting chairman of the Cobham Town Combined Council, Etubom Ekpo Eyo said one male member of the community was killed by the assailants while nine others were missing and several others injured in the Friday attack. He said the assailants also carried away the body of the dead man in a pick-up van to conceal evidence of what they had done. Eyo said that despite the attack, the invaders could not gain access to the shrine.

When THISDAY visited the community, blood stains were seen all over the place, while members of the community were in groups discussing the incident in low tones.

Most of the people were also apprehensive of talking to unknown persons for fear of giving out information to security agencies, who they allege, are giving cover to the assailants.

Peace Meeting Ends in Stalemate

From Chuks Okocha

in Abuja

With this decision, it was gathered that Clark and his team accused the PDP chairman of taking sides and walked out of the meeting.

Clark, after storming out of the meeting, addressed a press conference where his group rejected the directive of the PDP and pledged to

petition President Umaru Yar'Adua, who is the leader of the party and chairman of the Board of Trustees, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo.

Clark, who quoted from a report of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) on the state congresses of the party, said since Nwaoboshi was not validly elected, party members would resist attempts to foist him on them.