

# Three Killed, Scores Injured as Cultists Invade Gov Emmanuel's Village

Okon Bassey in Uyo

A bloody cult clash has reportedly claimed three lives in Awa village in Onna Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State.

Apart from Awa, which is the village of Governor Udom Emmanuel, the other villages affected by the cult war include Alaha Ubium, Ikot Obong Ishiet, Edeem Idim and Ikot Asse, as well as other neighbouring villages in the area.

It was learnt that the cultists laid siege on the affected villages killing three persons and leaving scores with various degrees of injuries.

The cult war, which reportedly started two weeks ago allegedly involved the Ku Klan Klux, better known as KKK or Axe confraternity and Vikings known in local parlance as Ekpat, and Ekut.

THISDAY gathered that these cultists were fighting a battle of supremacy over the control of the disbursement of the cash given to youths by one of the state government-owned industries operating in the community.

An eyewitness, Mr. Sunday Enang, said the money was released to the youth leader who was a member of Vikings

(Ekpat) and he shared it only to his members without giving to members of the KKK (Ekut), the rival cult group in the area.

He said the rival cult members regrouped and armed themselves with dangerous weapons to kill the youth leader who had escaped to the neighbouring village in Ebinan LGA when he observed strange movement around his home.

Enang said the younger brother of the youth leader was killed and the body butchered to pieces when they could not find him at home.

He said that at Ikot Obong Ishiet, where another cultist escaped, the mother, father and son of the 'runaway' cultist were seriously injured.

"Some of the persons killed were brothers or relatives of the cultists who escaped on sighting the rival groups while their brothers who were not aware of the danger were lynched."

Enang disclosed that the cultists operated freely in Awa, the home town of Governor Emmanuel and made a counter parade to shame the police who only showed up in their surveillance van and retired to the stations as the battle between the rival cult groups became bloody.

He said the cultists mounted

road blocks to barricade entrance leading to Governor Emmanuel's residence and seized motorcycles from okada riders passing through the road to the neighbouring villages.

Another eyewitness who pleaded anonymity, said that the brother of another cultist in Ikot Asse was cut to pieces when they could not get the elder brother who is a member of the rival group.

He accused the police of compromise in the cult clashes,

alleging that the police only blew siren around the villages signalling the cultists to escape, adding that the development made it impossible for the police to arrest anybody.

"Nobody has been arrested since this crisis started in Onna. When they wanted to kill in Governor Udom's village, security was beefed up. But the cultists have vowed to kill in the governor's village"

He said the soldiers and the police guarding the resident of

Governor Emmanuel could not help to restore normalcy in the village.

At Awa, the home town of Governor Emmanuel, operatives of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARs), Department of State Services (DSS) and soldiers were seen parading the community yesterday.

The Police Public Relations Officer in Akwa Ibom State, Odiko Mcdon, said nobody has been arrested but confirmed that three persons were killed while others

sustained injuries.

"Yes there is cult dash in Onna though nobody is arrested for now but three persons have been confirmed dead."

"Investigation is ongoing. Whenever the culprits are arrested we would bring them to book. You know this government has zero tolerance for cultism and we would not condone their activities," he added.

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