

Death toll in Kula crisis rises to 15

By Jimitota Onoyume

PORT HARCOURT— FRESH facts emerging on the Kula crisis on Tuesday claimed about 8 lives indicate that the death toll had risen to about 15.

Vanguard gathered that crisis broke out in the area among factional groups when one of them reportedly made effort to temper with an oil facility in the area. The other groups allegedly mobilised to counter the move. And in the ensuing gun battle the community sources said several persons were killed and scores injured.

Continuing, they said secu-

rity sources had mobilised to the community to calm the atmosphere. *Vanguard* gathered that killing started in the area since Sunday. It would be recalled that the community had been enmeshed in conflict over the distribution of proceeds to the area from oil revenue.

The situation degenerated in January when about twelve chiefs from the community were ambushed and slain by suspected rival groups. The state government about two weeks ago constituted a panel of inquiry to uncover the remote and immediate cause of the problems in the area. The panel government sources said had not concluded sitting.