

IKOT—AKPAN UDO-ARMED youths suspected to be from Amazaba community in Eastern Obolo Local Government Area have laid siege to adjoining creeks in Ikot-Akpan Udo, Ukpum Ete clan, in Ikot Abasi Local Government Area, both in Akwa Ibom State, from where they plan and launch sporadic attacks on the latter in the last few weeks.

The lie in wait has sparked fresh apprehension between the two warring communities, as Ikot-Akpan Udo villagers, predominantly anglers and farmers, could no longer venture to the river and forest for fishing and cultivation of their farms for fear of attack by the gunmen.

The powerlessness of the Akwa Ibom State Government and the Police to provide round-the-clock security for the people of Ikot-Akpan Udo and bring to book the invaders, who had killed 18 persons and razed more than 500 houses in the last eight years, has escalated tension in the locality.

The apprehension exacerbated Sunday, July 12, when the supposed invaders from Amazaba gruesomely murdered 32-year-old Joel Sunday Jeremiah, native of Ikot-Akpan Udo.

Indigenes of Ikot Akpan Udo claim that Amazaba people were settlers from Andoni, a part of the old South-Eastern State, which was merged with the Rivers State. What is flagrantly conspicuous is that both communities have been at daggers drawn for a long time.

The assassins who kidnapped Jeremiah, a father of two children, who went to patch the leakages in his fishing boat, brazenly took him to Isotoyo hamlet, inhabited by Amazaba people and butchered him.

Before the abduction and murder of Jeremiah, gunmen