

Burial ceremony turns bloody in A-Ibom, as cultist kill one

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By Emmanuel Ayungbe

UYO—A burial ceremony went awry in Udianga Enem, Etim Ekpo Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State, weekend, as cultists, armed with sophisticated weapons, invaded the ceremony, killing one of the mourners.

The cultists opened fire on a group of mourners, killing one person, Udemé Dickson, popularly called Ele, while seven others escaped with bullets wounds. The attack, the second in about three weeks, was said to have been led by a militant leader of the Iceland cult group, Akaninyene Jumbo, alias Iso Akpafid, from Ikot Ibekwe village in neighbouring Ukana-fun Local Government Area.

An eye witness told Vanguard: “We were just planning the funeral of our in-law from Nto Unang village after we returned from the vigil, when, suddenly, we saw five motorcycles bearing armed men.

“Before we could escape, they opened fire immediately. “Some of us were lucky to escape unhurt. But our friend, Udemé Dickson, was shot in the head and chest, while others fled with bullets wounds.”

Udoekoriko said: “Currently, the entire village is completely deserted, giving the hoodlums enough room to break into people’s homes to steal agricultural products, livestock, clothes, cash and household properties.”

Confirming the incident, the Divisional Police Officer, DPO, in-charge of Etim Ekpo, who simply identified himself as Supol Chris, lamented that efforts by the Police to tackle the problem were being frustrated by political leaders of the area.

He said: “It is a very pathetic situation because the entire area is deserted. When the incident happened, we went there with over 10 police patrol men. “But sadly, we could only see few old men and women who are barely able to walk. The Local Government Chairman has not been cooperating with the Police and no one is ready to volunteer information.

“They know these cultists, but they are not willing to provide information on where they could be located.

“The Police High Command, including the Inspector General and the state headquarters are aware of the situation in Etim Ekpo.”