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# 7 feared dead, 4 missing in A-Ibom over renewed attack by Abia community

By Chioma Onuegbu

**U**YO—NO fewer than seven residents of Ikpanya Clan, in Ibiono Ibom Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State reportedly died during the recent attack on the community by warriors of Ugbo community in Arochukwu Local Government Area of Abia State.

It was gathered that four persons were missing, scores severely injured while over six houses were razed in the fresh clash between the two communities over a parcel of land, which has lasted for decades.

Further investigation revealed that a woman and an indigene of Ikpanya, identified as Memfin Udo, was gang-raped by the Arochukwu warriors during the attack on the Ikpanya village in March that lasted for days.

Narrating the ordeal of his community to newsmen, yesterday, the Clan Head of Ikpanya, Chief

Isaac Onosin, described the constant attacks from the Ugbo people of Arochukwu as unfortunate.

Onosin, however, lamented the lack of commitment from the authorities of Ibiono Ibom Local Government Area regarding the calamity that has befallen the people of Ikpanya.

His words: "Ikpanya community shares boundaries with eight villages of Arochukwu in Abia State, but the perennial and incessant crisis always involved one village, that is the Ugbo people. And, it has always been during the farming season.

"The people of Ugbo attack our people as they go to the farm. They will beat our women and chase them away and pack the palm fruits. These people have continued to trouble our people every year. I lifted the ban on cutting of palm and they started cutting palm fruits on March 6.

"On March 8, when my people went to cut palm fruits, the Ugbo people attacked, beat them up, and destroyed the palm fruits. I reported the matter to the chairman of our local government council and he told me that they would have a security meeting, and after that, he would answer me. He didn't say anything other than that.

"The council chairman has never visited the area, and there is no police station there. I have been writing to the state government to give us a police post, but no response."

He called on the government to come to the aid of victims of the clash by providing them with relief materials, stressing: "We need peace, let government come and rebuild the burnt houses, and see to it that they do something for the families that lost people."

However, the matter has been presented to Akwa Ibom State House of Assembly, by way of a motion by the member representing

Ibiono Ibom state constituency, Godwin Ekpo.

The Police Public Relations Officer, Mr Odiko MacDon, reacting said: "We are aware and the Commissioner of Police is working hard to see that the situation doesn't escalate. He directed that our men be deployed in the area, so our men are on ground as we speak.

"Also, the CP has called a stakeholders' meeting on the way forward. We are also looking at a political solution to the crisis"

On the call for a police post in Ikpanya, he said: "There is a Divisional Police station there, but, if the need arises for a police outpost to be sited there, the police authorities will not hesitate to take the necessary steps. But, for now, our men there can take care of the situation."

4 Armed robbers