

Xenophobic Attacks Spurred By Local Leaders: Study

Written by Rudi Prinsloo
Friday, 13 March 2009 23:51 -



Community leaders played a role in the xenophobic violence in May 2008, a study by the International Organisation for Migration released on Wednesday showed.

"The idea that it was caused by a faceless crowd doesn't hold water," said Jeanne Pierre Misago, a researcher at the Forced Migration Studies Programme at Wits University.

"Community leaders were involved."

He said local leaders organised xenophobic attacks to improve their credibility within the community.

"They can then say they are the one true leader of the community."

Misago was speaking about the findings at a conference at the Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg.

Misago said these local leaders had some co-ordination in organising xenophobic violence in neighbouring townships.

Media reports also played a role by showing successful looting by mobs and the inability of police to handle the situation.

Source : Sapa /ts/kt/gj

Date : 11 Mar 2009 13:21