

# Curfew in Benue community over bloody cult clash

**B**ENUE State Governor Hyacinth Alia has imposed a 24-hour curfew on Zakibiam, the headquarters of Ukum Local Government Area, with effect from 3pm yesterday, over the killings in the area.

In a statement, the Technical Adviser to the Governor on Media, Publicity and Strategic Communications, Mr. Solom Iorpev, said: "The curfew shall be observed from 6pm to 6am beginning from July 4, 2024 until further notice."

No fewer than six persons had been reportedly killed on Monday night in Ayati settle-

## • Six killed • INEC office burnt

**From Uja Emmanuel, Makurdi and Tony Akowe**  
ment by a suspected armed gang in the local government area.

The house of the traditional ruler of Borikyo, Chief Myaga Unongo, was set ablaze in the protest that followed after the killing.

An eyewitness said the figure could be more because soldiers deployed to the area have also gunned down two rioters who burnt down the Zakibiam residence of Chief of Staff to the Governor, Paul Biam.

Also burnt was the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) local government office in Ukum.

A victim of the crisis, who escaped from Ayati to Zakibiam, the headquarters of Ukum Local Government Area, Tyowua Iorbee, told *The Nation* that trouble started when some armed youths stormed Ayati community about 11pm on Monday and killed six persons among them a woman.

Yesterday, youths in Ayati took the six bodies in vehicles and protested at the council

Secretariat in Sankera, Zakibiam.

Iorbee said: "They brought the bodies in Toyota vehicles popular called, 'Dog nyash' and forced their way into the Secretariat of the Local Government in Sankera, and set the Health Department blaze, and later the house of the traditional ruler of Borikyo, Chief Myaga Unongo, located near the Secretariat ablaze.

He said it was while the protesters moved into Zakibiam to set the house of the Chief Of Staff to the governor that soldiers intervened and shot sporadically into the air.