

# 10 killed in renewed communal clash in Benue communities

•As police, vigilance group rescue kidnap victims

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NO fewer than 10 people were reportedly killed in a renewed communal clash between the people of Ezza and Effium in parts of Ado Local Government Area of Benue State and Ohaukwu Local Government Area of Ebonyi State.

According to locals, the incident occurred on Friday just as the cause of the crisis was still sketchy.

One of the locals, who gave his name simply as Jude, said that many people died as a result of the crisis.

However, Chairman of Ado Local Government Area of Benue State, James Oche confirmed to newsmen on the phone that 10 people were killed in the renewed communal clash.

Oche condemned the com-

munal clash and stated that the crisis had undermined the peace his administration was working assiduously to achieve.

He called on the Ezza and Effium people to immediately sheath their swords and embrace peace, as he commiserated with the families of those who lost their lives.

In a related development, the chairman said that Police and the newly formed community Volunteer guards in the local government were able to release three people allegedly abducted by suspected herdsmen in the area.

Oche disclosed that some armed kidnappers suspected to be Fulani had on Thursday laid siege to the road between Utonkon and Okpoga and stopped a Lagos bound

commercial vehicle from Oju council and took five persons hostage.

He said, "Operation Puff Adder Police Unit and the newly formed Community Volunteer Guards in Ado Local Government successfully confronted a group of Fulani kidnappers and secured the release of three of five persons abducted".

When contacted, the Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Catherine Anene when contacted said she was going to get the details of the report from the Divisional Police Office in Ado and promised to call back.

But she could not be reached at the time of filing this report. Key players condemn forceful diversion of Lagos bound foreign flights to Abuja.