

Three die as hunters, herdsman clash in Benue

Johnson Babajide | Makurdi

THREE persons were reportedly killed when hunters and herdsman clashed in Benue State.

Several others were also injured during the clash which occurred at Okpomaju village in Okete Ward of Otukpo Local Government Area on Monday.

It was gathered that the incident occurred during a hunting expedition in the area, resulting in the death of one herdsman and two hunters.

According to report, the

clash occurred when herders, said to be new in Okpomaju community, opened fire on sighting the hunters.

Two of the hunters died, while some sustained gunshot wounds.

The hunters' response, however, led to the killing one of the herdsman.

A farmer, who identified himself as Oga Sunday, told newsmen that he was chased away from his farm by a herder who was armed with gun and machete, while his harvested yams and other farm produce were grazed on by cattle.

One of the hunters in Okpomaju, who did not want to be named, said: "We were on our usual hunting expedition on Monday when we encountered a group of herdsman who opened fire on us, leading to the death of some of us.

"Immediately, we fired back and fell one of them, while others retreated.

"One of our colleagues who was hit in the stomach was rushed to the Federal University of Health Sciences Teaching Hospital, Otukpo, for medical attention."

When contacted, the mon-

arch of Otukpo, known as Och'Otukpo Odu, Chief John Eimonye, confirmed the incident, but said the leader of the herdsman and himself were planning to meet to find a solution to the crisis.

Also confirming the incident, chairman of Otukpo Local Government Area, Mr Maxwell Ogiri, said measures were already being put in place to prevent a recurrence.

When contacted, the state Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), CSP Catherine Anene, said she was yet to receive the report of the incident.