

# A'Ibom, C'River land dispute clash claims 40 lives

**Mudiaga Affe, Calabar**

**N**O fewer than 40 persons were feared dead, while four riot policemen and the village head of Ntan Obu Ukpe in Eniong of Odukpani Local Government Area of Cross River State were allegedly beheaded in a renewed communal clash between Ntan Obu, Cross River and the Ikpanya in Ibiono Local Government, Akwa Ibom State.

Already about 2,000 indigenes of Ntan Obu are now refuge in nearby communities of Odukpani Local Government, while all the houses and churches were destroyed by the invaders who were allegedly supported by Fulani herdsmen.

Confirming the report, Chairman of Odukpani Local Government Area, Mr. Stephen Asuquo, said the people of Ntan Obu were attacked by the Ikpanaya neighbouring community of Akwa Ibom State in the wee hours of Wednesday last week.

Asuquo said, "The remote cause is the struggle by people from the Ikpanya for the land that belongs to the Ntan Obu."

"Something akin to this took place a year ago and the deputy governors of the two states met and agreed that everything should return to status quo ante.

"So the people from Ikpanya have tried to lease out Ntan Obu land to cattle

rearers for their cattle there.

"You can appreciate it because it is flood plane; once the rain subsides and the waters recede, the land leaves alluvial product on the land which acts as a natural fertilizer to the vegetation.

He claimed that only few building were still standing in Otan Obu.

He added, "The only two buildings that are standing are two churches, but the churches were looted, the

musical instruments were all carted away. Some of the displaced persons are in Asan Eniong and nearby villages."

Also commenting on the alleged invasion of the community, the Paramount Ruler of Odukpani Local Government Area, Ekanem Umo, said, "The fight had left the community completely destroyed. They broke down the whole village and spares only the church but there is nothing inside the church."

## Nigerian leaders lack commitment

**Tunde Odesola, Osogbo**

**S**ECOND Republic Governor of Kaduna State, Alhaji Balarabe Musa, has blamed Nigerian leaders

for the myriad of problems facing the country.

Speaking at the inaugural lecture in honour of the late activist, Mr Ola Oni,