

Some burnt buildings

FROM EMMANUEL ADEYEMI,
LOKOJA

The attackers may have done their worst and gone but the major victim of their assault, the *Onu-Oda-Adogo* of Ette, Chief Aaron Ako, will continue to live with the scars of the midnight invasion of his palace in Ette, *Olamaboro Local Government Area* of Kogi State during which he lost his royal robe, staff of office and managed to escape being killed to tell his story.

The attack about a fortnight ago was the second within days of communal clashes between Ette and two communities in Enugu State. Some gunmen were said to have invaded the palace of the monarch on September 20 at about 1 am, beat him black and blue and killed his security guard who attempted to save his life.

The royal father was said to be recuperating in another community as a result of injuries sustained from the attack when another attack occurred three days later. His palace, vehicles and houses of some notable indigenes of the community were said to have been burnt down.

Speaking on phone with *Saturday Sun* on the incident, Chief Ako bemoaned his fate, saying that every valuable in his palace, including his royal robe, staff of office, money, cars and generating set, among others, were set ablaze by the invaders.

In the second attack, it was gathered that at least five people were killed while about 1,200 persons were displaced with dozens of houses burnt.

The clash, it was gathered, was as a result of a boundary dispute between Umugboagu and Umopu communities in Enugu State and Ette community in Kogi State.

While addressing a press briefing recently in Lokoja, after the attack, spokesman of the Ette Community Development Association, Abdullahi Mohammed Sani said his people are now endangered specie.

He said some groups of armed men invaded the community again on Tuesday, September 23 and razed down 40 houses including the only hotel in the community belonging to one Dr Matthew Abula.

He said aside the palace of the community's monarch that was completely razed, 78 other prominent members of the community also had their houses, cars and business concerns razed.

He said the attack had paralyzed business outfits such as schools, hospital and other

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■ Palace, vehicles, others razed in communal clash



Chief Ako

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cial services, including the General Hospital Ette have been looted while the resumption of schools has been aborted by the insur-

gents.

"The palace of the *Onu-Oda-Adogo* of Ette, Chief Aaron Ako, who was sacked from his palace, was also burnt down. As we speak with you, none of us can go back to our community as all our properties that we laboured to build have been burnt down.

"Our wives, children and relations are scattered, the community has been turned to a ghost town and we now live as refugees in neighbouring communities," said his people are now endangered specie.

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