

28 killed, others missing in Benue communal clash

From Scholastica Onyeka, Makurdi

NOT fewer than 28 people have been killed in an alleged attack that was launched on the people of Okpobula Community, predominantly Ezza, in Ado Local Government Area of Benue State.

Residents from the area told newsmen that the war which actually started from the crisis started on Monday and lasted till yesterday, with properties destroyed, includ-

ing houses and domestic animals.

A witness, who pleaded not to be named, said the identities of the attackers of Azioke 1& 2 in Okpobula community, who are both Benue and Ebonyi indigenes, are the Effhoms living within the boundary areas of Benue and Ebonyi states.

He said: "These people (the attackers) invaded our community this afternoon and launched unprovoked attacks on us.

"Nobody knows what happened before today's at-

tacks. The warlords came into the community at about 11am this morning, unknown to us, and started killing anything in sight. The next neighbour to me is a family of eight and they were all killed. In my family, we are six in number, they killed two of my children and I'm yet to see my wife and two other children.

"So far, we have seen many dead bodies while escaping from the area and many others are missing with many injured, while many are now displaced."

The Executive Chairman, Ado Local Government Council, Chief James Oche, confirmed the incident, describing it as inhuman. He said the crisis started from Ebonyi State and spread to Ezza community in Benue State. He said there has been age-long communal fighting between communities in Ebonyi and Benue states. He said one of the largest markets in Ezza community in the local government was completely destroyed.

(Continued on www.sunnewsonline.com)