

# 10 dead as Benue, Ebonyi communities clash

BY PETER DURU

**MAKURDI**—NO fewer than 10 persons were feared dead, yesterday, in renewed fighting between the neighbouring communities of Agila in Ado Local Government Area of Benue State and Ngwo in Ebonyi State.

There has been a perennial land dispute between the two neighbouring communities.

Fight started in the early hours of yesterday with the Ngwo community allegedly deploying mercenaries into Agila and threatening to match into Agila main town.

*Vanguard* gathered from an eyewitness, at the Benue State end of the boarder that the renewed fighting has forced inhabitants of Ai-Nedu clan in Agila to flee to Apa Agila for safety.

According to the eyewitness, farmers of Ai-Nedu community had gone to carry out their routine

farming activities, yesterday morning, when they ran into an ambush of over 100 men, who matched through Ogilolo community dressed in military camouflage and armed with sophisticated weapons.

He said: "The farmers fled on sighting the men but they caught up with one Oche Adayi, a father of four, and beheaded him. They moved in, shooting sporadically and killing any living thing within the area.

"Right now we can not ascertain the number of the dead because many people are still missing, while some are believed to be trapped in their farms."

When contacted on phone, the Caretaker Committee Chairman of Ado Local Government Area, Mr. Bernard Ocheba, said: "The attack was just overwhelming; it is sad that despite efforts by the state government to ensure that this crisis

was brought to an end, the people we gave land to habit have now resorted to killing my people. It is sad indeed."

The development led to cancellation of all official engagements of Benue State government. At press time, Benue State Security Council, chaired by the Deputy Governor, Chief Steven Lawani, had convened an emergency meeting to deliberate on the matter.

State Deputy Police Public Relations Officer, Mr. Ejike Alaribe, who said the Police had recorded one death in the fighting, added that the Benue State Police Commissioner, Mr. Christopher Katso, personally directed the Area Commander in Charge of Otukpo to move to the troubled areas to ensure that peace was restored in the communities immediately.

He added that Benue State Police Command was also working in con-

cert with its counterpart in Ebonyi State to ensure that calm returned to the areas.

He said: "We have drafted more men to the area, and I can assure you that calm has returned."

## Kogi to exp 12-day black

BY BOLUWA OBAHAPO

**LOKOJA**—THE people of Kogi State may be in blackout as the Power Holding Company of Nigeria, PHCN, has hinted that there would be massive load shedding as the Geregu Power Station would be temporary shut down for about 12 days.

Lokoja Business Manager, PHCN, Mr. Ameen Shakur, said this, yesterday, in Lokoja, the state capital, adding that this was to enable PHCN work on the 333KVA power line that runs through Geregu to the