

Gunmen invade Benue market, kill 30

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By Peter Duru

MAKURDI—It was a bloody Monday, yesterday, in Zaki Biam, Ukum Local Government Area of Benue State, where over 30 persons, including women and children, were reportedly killed by unknown gunmen.

The attackers also razed several buildings and a petrol station in the area, while several other people were said to have sustained injuries in the attack.

Vanguard gathered from an eyewitness that the attackers stormed the Zaki Biam International Yam Market area on motorbikes and in cars, popularly known as Dog Yash, and opened fire on anyone within sight.

According to the eyewitness, “it was at about 3p.m, when the well-armed men came in from Shetile area of Katsina-Ala council, drove straight in their cars and motorbikes to the International Market area and started shooting sporadically.

“Everyone started running helter-skelter. There were gunshots from everywhere like what we see in the movies. There was stampede, children and women were gunned down.

“In the mist of the confusion the armed men set several houses ablaze, including a filling station after which they fled the scene.

“As I speak with you, the affected buildings are still on fire and the entire area and its environs have been deserted, several persons are still missing.

“There is heightened tension and Zaki Biam is in a sombre mood, while families are wailing over their slain loved ones in the bloody attack. Nobody knows the reason or motive for the attack and the masterminds are also not known. We have not seen anything like this in Zaki Biam after the military invasion of 2001.”

When contacted, the Benue State Police Commissioner, Bashir Makama, confirmed the attack but said the command was yet to confirm the number of those killed in the incident.