

17 die in Kogi communal crisis

By Boluwaji Obahopo

LOKOJA—NO fewer than 17 persons have been killed in renewed hostilities between the Bassa Kwomu and Egbura Mozum clans, both in Bassa Local Government Area of Kogi State.

Sources said the crisis, which started in April, took another dimension when the Bassa militias stormed Mozum in the wee hours of Monday morning. They were repelled by the youths of Mozum community.

The militias, later at 4pm, returned to Mozum and were engaged in fierce fighting by the youths of the community, leading to the loss of many lives.

Following the development, some residents around Ketechi, Ojoh and environs, where the militias were stationed before launching the attack on Mozum, have fled the area for fear of being invaded.

Vanguard gathered that those who fled their communities as a result of the crisis are currently taking refuge at the Divisional Police Headquarters in Oguma.

A prince from Mozum community, resident at Oguma, Shaibu Abubakar, was reported to be one of those killed in the fight, while returning from a fishing expedition.

Confirming the development, the member representing Bassa

constituency at the state House of Assembly, Sunday Shigaba, said the killings are still ongoing, even as he disclosed that concerted efforts were being made to restore normalcy to the affected communities.

He appealed to law enforcement agencies to send more re-enforcement, adding that the military and the Police on ground are not adequate to tackle the situation.

However, the state's Commissioner of Police, Mr. Ali Janga, said there are no killings going on in Bassa Local Government, saying "I wonder how those spreading the falsehood came about it."