

Suspected Ebonyi militia kill 3 children, mother in Benue community

By Peter Duru

MAKURDI— At least four persons including a one-year-old baby, two children and their mother have been reportedly killed in Okokolo community, Apopogolo, Ado Local Government Area of Benue State by suspected armed militia from Ngbo community in Ebonyi State.

The attackers, who reportedly stormed the community yesterday, in a commando fashion, also razed the home of the victims located along the boundary of the two states.

It was gathered that many have been forced to flee their homes not wanting a repeat of a similar attack about two months ago that claimed the lives of over 200 persons with not less than 150 others injured.

According to a source, "they came into the community in their usual commando-style at about midnight when the people were fast asleep. Unfortunately, their victims were the three children and their mother, who were gruesomely murdered after which their house was burnt down.

"This age-long conflict between our people and Ngbo people has led to so many deaths and displacement of our people and it has continued to defy all genuine efforts to have peace restored in the border communities. As we speak, people are already fleeing their homes for fear of being killed in a fresh attack."

Confirming the development, Chairman of Ado LGA, James Oche, said the militia attacked in a guerrilla fashion, maintaining that the hostility in the border area between Ngbo and Akpopogolo people had been there over time.

He said: "We have always experienced these guerilla attacks. You know the history of crisis between Ngbo and Ohaukwu and how we have always cried out that there should be a police presence in the whole of that area.

Contacted, the Police Public Relations Officer, Catherine Anene, said she was yet to receive details of the incident.