

## Bloody weekend in Benue: 22 killed in rival gang war



By Peter Duru

**Makurdi**—No fewer than 22 persons have been killed in Chito and Tyo Akosu communities of Ukum Local Government Area of Benue State, following a rival gang fight and attack on a drinking spot.

It was gathered from sources in the area that the gang supremacy fight, which erupted, weekend, in Chito Community between the notorious criminal armed groups, known as 'Chain Gang' and 'Full Fire', left about 15 persons dead, while several others sustained gunshot wounds.

One of the sources said that the killings at Tyo Akosu settlement was perpetrated by armed men, who stormed a drinking spot in the village and opened fire on unsuspecting customers at the bar.

He said he could not readily confirm if the attack at Tyo Akosu was an extension of the Chito fight, but noted that the suspicion among the locals was that the supremacy fight was fast spreading in the communities of the council.

One of the sources explained that "It all started on Friday afternoon, during a fight for supremacy between kingpins of crime in Ukum council. They are known as Chain and Full Fire gangs, with their operational base located in the council.

"Both groups are looking for each others necks. Full Fire employed the services of another banditry group to help kill the Chain gang, which got wind of the plan and laid ambush for them.

"They opened fire and killed all of them. Some persons claimed that 10 persons were killed in the bloody fight while others said they counted 15 bodies.

"But it was an internal fight for supremacy among gangs and not a communal crisis. In fact, the locals ran away because they feared for their lives. They feared that in the course of the reprisal, they might be affected despite being innocent."

It was gathered that after the Chito bloody fight on Friday evening, a gang of armed men Saturday evening stormed the drinking spot at Tor Akosu village and opened fire on the customers at the bar, killing seven persons and injuring several others.

He said: "Though we cannot say for sure that it was an extension of the supremacy fight but we cannot rule it out because we cannot tell who belongs to whatever groups anymore.

#### Related News

**Peter Obi to address world press conference today**

**Again, PDP demands removal of Imo REC**

**Iranian Nobel winner Narges Mohammadi begins hunger strike in prison**

"Ukum has become something else, we are all living in fear as we speak because we cannot tell who is who among our local boys," he said.

Contacted, the Police Public Relations Officer, Catherine Anene said she was yet to receive information on the incidents.