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Benue gang war: 10 passengers killed

By Peter Duru

●Govt taking steps to end menace —Security Adviser

MAKURDI — The ongoing bloody rival gang war in parts of Ukum Local Government Area of Benue State, Monday evening escalated, with the killing of 10 passengers on tricycles and a commercial motorcycle in Ukoosaa-Atam village, Sai in the same council area.

Sai community is about one kilometre from Ayati in the council, where three persons were killed on Sunday after the bloody gang war between the "Chain Gang" and "Full Fire" groups broke out over the weekend.

A source in the area said the armed men, who belong to one of the rival gangs stormed the village and opened fire on the passengers on motorbikes and occupants of tricycles killing 10 of them and injuring many others.

According to the source, "The spot where the attack and killings happened on Monday evening was Ukoosaa-Atam, which is about one kilometre from Ayati town headquarters of Borikyo Council Ward of Ukum LGA.

"The armed men, who everyone suspected are part of the ongoing gang fight in Ukum,

came on a Baja motorcycle to the village and opened fire on passengers of keke and commercial motorcycles, killing 10 persons while others sustained injuries.

"This is one among the several attacks that have been going on in Ukum communities recently and people are now forced to flee their homes for fear of being killed."

Speaking on the security situation in Ukum council, Special Adviser to the Governor on Security and Internal Affairs,

Joseph Har, who confirmed that the crisis was between rival armed gangs, assured that the state government was taking steps to put an end to the menace.

He said: "It is rival gang fight and not a communal crisis, but I can assure you that the government is adopting measures, including using the carrot and stick approach to ensure that the boys are persuaded to come out of their hiding and embrace peace."

Contacted, the Police Public Relations Officer, Catherine Anene said she was out of the state.