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## 26 die in Lagos, Adamawa communal clashes

THURSDAY, 01 JULY 2010 00:00 NIGERIAN COMPASS



NO fewer than 20 persons were killed in Adamawa and six in Lagos, yesterday, when communal clashes broke out in the states.

The battle in Adamawa was between the people of Shobbo community in Lamurde Local Government Area of the state and those in Dadiya community, Balengain, in Gombe State.

The Lagos clash was between members of two ethnic groups in Ijora and Mushin.

According to reports, about 27 persons were seriously injured in Adamawa and several others in Lagos where machetes and other dangerous weapons were freely used, as the battle spread from the Marine Beach to Ijora-Olopa.

While assuring Lagosians that there was no cause for alarm yesterday, the state Commissioner of Police (CP), Mr. Marvel Akpoyibo, told the Nigerian Compass: "There was a report of fracas, but the police have handled it decisively."

Police spokesman, Frank Mba, also spoke on the incident.

He said: "One person died, and the body has been deposited at the naval hospital, Satellite Town for autopsy.

In Adamawa, eyewitnesses told the Nigerian Compass that trouble started when the people of Dadiya were denied access to a farmland by their Shobbo neighbours.

The lingering land dispute was reported recently to have been resolved and the two communities were living in peace with one another.

However, penultimate weekend, Dadiya residents were allegedly reported to have invaded those in Shobbo, killing, burning and destroying farm produce, farmlands and houses except the only Church in the community.

The entire Shobbo village was said to have been completely razed down, even as women and children suffered in the attack that was carried out when the adults were away on their farms.

Domestic animals were spared in the attack, and Shuwa Primary School in the area was turned into a refugee camp for victims of the skirmishes.

The Chairman of Lamurde Local Government Council, Mr. Solomon Obadiah, who visited the scene, appealed to the warring communities to lay down their arms and embrace peace.

He disclosed that over 300 women and children that fled the area are in the refugee camp and called on NEMA, UNICEF, the Red Cross, other organizations and individuals to quickly intervene with relief materials.

Ijora residents gave various accounts of the Lagos crisis.

One account claimed that the fight started among tanker drivers from two ethnic groups, who were quarrelling over whose turn it was to load fuel in the area.

Another account claimed that trouble started, when some touts were trying to force traders in the area to give them money.

There were gory scenes after the clash yesterday, when police patrol teams moved in to restore law and order. People were seen rushing blood soaked victims to nearby hospitals.

The police said that four suspects caught with machetes had been detained at the State Criminal Investigations Department (SCID), Panti, Yaba.

The clash raised fears, yesterday, of reprisal attacks that could spark bigger trouble, like the 1999 Ketu Mile 12 clashes and the 2001 Idi-Araba killings.

Meanwhile, the police in Adamawa have dispatched anti riot teams to the troubled area. They only confirmed 10 deaths.

While confirming the story in Yola, the Adamawa State capital, police spokesperson Atine Daniel, said normalcy had almost returned to the troubled communities.

Adamawa State House of Assembly yesterday set-up a five man ad-hoc committee to visit the areas and assess the extent of damage to lives and property aimed at proffering solution to the crisis.

By Juliana Francis & Clement Ekong, Yola



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