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Jigawa cattle rearers, farmers in bloody battle

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Pyramid Trust

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Sunday Trust magazine -

Conflicts between farmers (Hausa) and rearers (Fulani) is one of the phenomena claiming lives and properties in the northern part of the Nigeria. Jigawa state is one of those states where such conflicts remain a source of death. In fact, the menace is becoming worrisome.

Although successive governments in the state have succeeded in curtailing the situation in the past, the menace is currently re-surfacing in some local governments of the state. Pyramid Trust findings revealed that, about six cases of such clash had been were recorded recently in the state.

Further investigation shows that, 11 persons were confirmed dead, while several others sustained various degrees of injuries in different farmers/rearers clashes that occurred in various parts of the state. Properties worth millions of naira were also said to be destroyed by angry youths that were actively involved in the ill-fated clashes between the two clans.

It was gathered that the unfortunate clash had in the recent times occurred in Miga, Kaugama, Birnin-Kudu, Garki and Maigatari local governments respectively. It was learnt that, six lives were lost, while several others sustained injuries in Miga/Make clash, two in Birnin-Kudu, and two other persons in Maigatari while additional one person lost his life during the Garki farmers/rearers clash.

Pyramid Trust gathered that, those killed in Sindimina village of Birnin-Kudu local government are Muhammad Inuwa (Hausa) and Malam Ilu Dan-Fulani (Fulani). Four others were said to have sustained various degrees of injuries during the clash.

Investigation in the local government indicated that one of the deceased died on the spot, while the other died in the hospital. It was also gathered that, out of the four injured persons, two sustained fractures, one on his leg and the other on his hand.

In Maigatari local government, report also indicated that, one person was killed from both side, while two others sustained injuries from gun shots. Those killed include Mallam Jaji Tata (Nigeian) and Alhassan Idi (Nigerien). Pyramid Trust gathered that, the most unfortunate aspect of the Maigatari farmers/rearers' conflict was that, the fight involves usage of gun and it was between the nationals of Nigeria and Niger republic.

It is said that, the camels' rearers were nationals of Niger republic and they crossed into Nigerian boarder through Hana-Kango village in Maigatari local government of Jigawa state. It is further said that 18 farmlands were allegedly destroyed by the visiting rearers.

Pyramid Trust gathered that, when the rearers first entered into Hana-Kango, farmers in the village notified the local government authorities, which in turned sent the conflict resolution patrol team to the area to forestall eruption of conflict between the indigenous farmers and the visiting camels' rearers.

Our correspondent further leant that, the presence of the patrol team had initially forced the rearers to vacate the area, but they later returned to the area after the patrol team left the village. A villager in the area, Malam Muhammad Ibrahim hinted Pyramid Trust that, when the rears returned, they destroyed their farmlands and also threatened to deal with any farmer that attempt to prevent them from rearing within the vicinity of the village.

Ibrahim added that, farmers in the area on their part, mobilised themselves and confronted the rearers with a view to stopping them from destroying their farms produces, but in the process, one of the rearers suspected to be their leader, pull out a gun from his local bag and shot to death one of the farmers, Malam Jaji Tata.

Shortly after rearer, Alhassan Idi shot the farmer, added Ibrahim; the remaining farmers overpowered him and seized the gun before they also killed him. He explained that, the deceased was shot on his stomach and he died on the spot. The rearer on the other hand, he said was beaten to death by the provoked farmers.

It is said that, a Kalasin model gun, ammunitions, knives and cutlasses and some charms were recovered from rearers by the police. According to the Chairman of Maigatari local government, Alhaji Isa Zakari Bosuwa the injured persons were adequately treated under the sponsorship of the local government.

Bosuwa explained that, Maigatari has the highest cases of farmers/rearers clash in the state. He added that, this is because the local government has shared border with Niger republic. As a result of that, Fulani from Niger republic do cross-bordered into Maigatari through the neighbouring villages for cattle and camels rearing.

It was learnt that, the Miga/Make recent clash has attracted the attention of the present administration of Jigawa state. Adequate measures were therefore put in motion to forestall future occurrence of the unfortunate incident. Part of the measures taken by the state government includes setting up of a powerful committee, which thoroughly investigated the matter and reported back to the government.

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TO SUSTAIN OUR LANGUAGES, WE MUST TEACH STUDENTS IN LOCAL LANGUAGES –DR AYAKOROMA

Dr. Barclays Ayakoroma is the executive secretary of the National Institute for Cultural Orientation (NICO). He is advocating the use of indigenous languages in imparting and acquiring knowledge as a...

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The committee, under the chairmanship of head of service, Alhaji Mustapha Aminu recommended for a white paper, which resulted for the sacking of a District and ward heads in Miga and Make respectively. The committee further recommended that, government should continue to assist police and other security agencies in the state with a view to addressing the menace.

Pyramid Trust learnt that, over 50 persons were arrested by the police in connection with the Marke/Miga farmers/pastoralists clash. According to the state police commissioner, Alhaji Abdullahi Sani Fana, policed authority has completed investigation and the suspects have already been arraigned before the court of law. Alhaji Fana further confirmed the death of four during the Make/Miga clash.

The commissioner however, warned the farmers and the rearers to desist from any act capable of generating conflict between the, saying, police would not hesitate to prosecute anybody found directly or indirectly involve in facilitating such conflict no matter how highly place he or she is.

However, present administration of the state has adopted various measures of addressing the menace. The state government has set up a powerful committee called Conflict Resolution Committee under the chairmanship of the secretary to the state government, Dr Aminu Abdullahi Taura.

The committee, Pyramid Trust observed also comprises as members, the state commissioner of police, the state Director SSS, all the five emirs, commissioners of local government, land, environment, Justice and Agriculture respectively.

Additionally, the state government had recently distributed 27 new Brand Toyota Hilux to the 27 combined patrol teams of Police, Civil Defence and Vigilante. Each of the 27 local governments of the state got one patrol team. In addition to that, a special allowance is being given to all security personnel in the patrol teams.

According to the chairman of the state conflict resolution committee, Dr Aminu Abdullahi Taura, government would not fold its arms watching Fulani and rearers killing themselves in the state. He pointed out that, government would use all available avenues to address the situation.

Pyramid Trust however learnt that, the combined patrol teams are currently patrolling the state 24 hours daily. The state government has also directed all the 27 local government chairmen in the state to sit up in ensuring peace and unity in their respective areas, while police and other security agents have been alerted to always be vigilant.

Government had also banned night rearing and possession of dangerous weapons by the rearers especially while rearing in the state. Additionally, government had resolved to provide adequate water and cattle rest points across the local governments of the state.

Local governments' chairmen, Districts, Villages and Wards heads were urged to put their heads together with security agencies in particular and the state government as a whole with a view to addressing the problem once for all.

However, the fundamental question that is still awaiting answer from the authority concern was that, why the farmers/rearers conflict is re-surfacing in the state now? Is this because the attention given to the problem by the government is not adequate or it is because the police and other security agents are not doing their jobs adequately?

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