

Three killed as youths raid Fulani settlement at Gako

By Adam Umar & Misbahu Bashir

Three Fulani cattle rearers were on Saturday killed at Gako village in the FCT, when some Gbagyi youths allegedly raided the community after a minor dispute over crop waste.

A lot of members of the community, which is situated close to the University of Abuja permanent site, also suffered from various degrees of injuries and our reporter gathered that the place is now a ghost town with the entire village seeking refuge at the university's premises.

The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) said yesterday in a statement by its spokesman Yushau A. Shuaib that two people were killed and 27 communities have been affected.

The agency quoted its Director General, Muhammad Sani-Sidi Sani-Sidi saying, "Over 1500 internally displaced people are currently squatting in a temporary camp on the permanent campus of the University of Abuja in Gwagwalada area."

"The prompt intervention of the two agencies including security personnel from the police, civil defence corp and military had helped to curtail the escalation of the crisis which started Saturday as a result of encroachment of herd of cattle into farmlands in the area."

A member of the village, Magaji Saleh, said on that fateful day, a group of Gbagyi farmers sought their help to pack crops, which they did.

"After assisting them, they left some waste for us to feed our animals but were however, when we allowed another set of herds men feed their animals with some of the waste given us," he said.

He said the farmers ordered the other set of herd men to leave the place and started attacking their animals.

Ibrahim Abubakar, another Fulani, said more Gbagyi youths trooped to the scene and his two brothers, Shuaibu Abubakar and Da'u Shua'bu were killed.

Our reporter saw a large number of the displaced Fulani people taking refuge at the University of Abuja premises.

Leaders of Miyetti Allah in the FCT along with the national leader, Alhaji Abdullahi Bello Bodejo, were said to be assessing the damages in the community, including the burnt huts.

Reacting to the incident, Agora of Zuba, Alhaji Muhammadu Bello, whose domain Gako village is under, expressed his displeasure at the dispute that led to the violence and he called on the Fulani community not to take laws into their hands.

When contacted, the FCT Commissioner of Police, Adenrele Shinaba, confirmed the story and said policemen have been dispatched to the area to curtail the clash. He however said the number of death from the clash was yet unknown, adding that the victims are not up to three as been speculated.

"The deputy commissioner and assistant commissioner in charge of operations are presently in the village taking part in the dialogue between the parties. I am waiting to get more details from them," he said.