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Many killed in clash between police, illegal miners

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Many people have lost their lives in a clash between illegal miners and the police at a mining field in Mayo Sine area of Mambilla Plateau, Taraba State.

Daily Trust gathered that the incident occurred yesterday afternoon when a team of armed policemen stormed the field to dislodge the miners but met resistance.

It was further gathered that the miners, about 10,500 in number and mostly from neighbouring west African countries, had been carrying out illegal mining in the area for the past 10 years.

Daily Trust also learnt that the police on arrival destroyed temporary structures used by the miners as their houses and confiscated items used by the miners to dig out the precious stones.

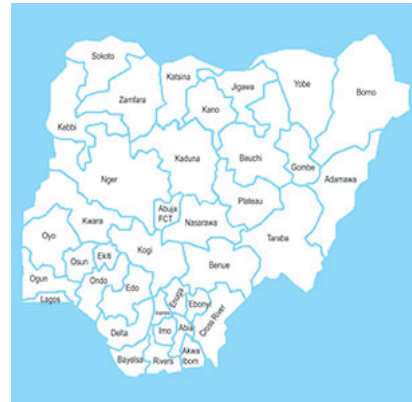
The field where the illegal mining activities was taking place had been earlier allocated to a mining company but the illegal miners refused to relocate, leading to the dispatch of police personnel to dislodge them.

The action of the police, it was gathered, angered the miners who started a rampage, chased away the policemen and set equipment of a foreign mining company ablaze.

A source who pleaded anonymity, told our reporter that in an attempt to disperse the rampaging illegal miners, the police opened fire, killing many miners and injured several more.

Contacted, the state Police Public Relations Officer, DSP David Misal, said he was just hearing of the incident and was yet to get details.

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