

20 Feared Dead In Boundary Dispute Between Cross River, Benue Communities

At least 20 persons have been feared killed in a renewed clash between people of the Yache-Ijieggu community in Yala LGA of Cross River State...



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At least 20 persons have been feared killed in a renewed clash between people of the Yache-Ijieggu community in Yala LGA of Cross River State and Tiv settlers from Benue State, over lingering boundary dispute.

It was gathered that many also sustained various degrees of gunshots and machete cuts in the clash on Sunday while houses on both sides were reportedly set ablaze.

A resident in Yache, Augustine Odey, said the hostilities resumed on Thursday afternoon when their son, Ayeku Godwin Ochuole, went to his farm, where Tiv assailants allegedly attacked and killed him.

He said the incident allegedly resulted in the abduction of, at least, nine other persons who suffered various degrees of bullet wounds.

Odey, a youth leader in Yache has blamed the governments of both states for not being proactive.

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He alleged that armed 'soldiers' moved with the Tiv settlers to unleash mayhem on them.

"The latest of the attacks resumed on Thursday through Sunday when the Tiv people of Benue State accompanied by the military successfully penetrated the Ijiegwu-Yache Community and shot at Ijiegwu people who went to farm. This resulted in the gruesome killing of an indigene of Ijiegwu-Yache," he said.

Security operatives, including army officers, denied any involvement in the killing.

The security team leaders, Lt. Alex and Lt. H. J. Enoibor said the Yache boys frequently thwart peace efforts.

Alex said, "They have made our peace efforts to be difficult. We had thought we wouldn't be here for up to two weeks but it is going to be months now. They should know that war is not good at all.

"We have scheduled to hold a joint peace meeting with all stakeholders on Wednesday, hoping that it will finally bring about an amicable settlement."

The violent boundary clashes started about two months ago when the Tiv settlers allegedly refused to continue the payments of royalties for their stay on Yache lands.

One of the Tiv leaders, Mr Jacob Uswa alleged that the Yache boys have continued to spring surprise attacks from the bushes, killing their own people.