

# Communal Clashes Claim 12 Lives In Benue

FROM

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**I**T was a week of tragedy for the rural dwellers of Benue State as about 12 persons are feared dead in three communal crises raging in the state, displacing more than 5,000 persons in the process.

The crises include the clash between the people of Ikyurav Ya in Kwande Local Government of Benue State and their Cross River State neighbours, which reportedly claimed six lives, that between the three villages in Konshisha Local Government of the state, where four persons arose believed to have lost their lives, and the inter state boundary clash between the People of Agila in Ado local government of Benue State and their Mgbo neighbours in Ebonyi State, which claimed 2 lives.

*The Guardian* gathered

that fighting in the three zones are over pieces of land believed to be very fertile by the rural communities. The three communal crises have been recurring for several years especially during the rainy season.

It was learnt that the Ikyurav Ya/ Cross River crisis started last weekend, when some farmers from Ikyurav Ya were accosted by their Cross River neighbours on a disputed farmland. The ambush led to the killing of one of the farmers, while the rest of the farmers escaped. Following the escape of the lucky farmers, the Ikyurav Ya people mobilized and launched reprisal attacks on their Cross River neighbours.

The reprisal attacks, it was gathered, led to the death of three more persons on both both sides. Intervention by the police failed to stop the disturbances from escalating as the Benue State Police Command appears to be

over stretched by the series of crises ravaging the state.

For the Agila/Mgbo crisis that has claimed two lives, the Benue Police Command through its Public Relations Officer, Mr. Emmanuel Deebom said that the crisis has been brought under control, following the dispatch of a detachment of mobile policemen to the area. He warned the people involved in the crisis against taking the law into their hands.

Representatives have already brought the cases to the Benue State House of Assembly, appealing to the House to intervene to bring the crises under control to stem the loss of lives and economic damage done to the areas.

NIGERIA

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