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Saraki warns against crisis in Kwara communities

From Abiodun Fagbemi, Ilorin

GOVERNOR Bukola Saraki of Kwara State has threatened to invoke section three of the state's Peace Preservation Law on leadership of any community where crisis is reported.

But such crisis must have been the one where loss of lives and property were recorded, leading to the deployment of special squad of policemen and imposition of curfew.

Saraki, while receiving the report of the judicial commission on internecine crisis between the people of Share, Ifelodun Local Council and Tsaragi, in Edu Council

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yesterday in Ilorin, said community leaders should henceforth be custodians of peace and stability at their domain.

He said: "This committee has reduced the works of the government on the Share/Tsaragi crisis. We are going to implement it to the letter. In fact very soon, the government will release a White Paper on it.

"It is a sad development for two communities to fight, leading to loss of lives and property, especially over land. Henceforth, any leader who fails to maintain peace in his domain will be made to face the wrath of section three of the Kwara State Peace Preservation Law."

The quoted law makes a community leader where an outbreak of crisis is reported to face the risk of a jail term.

Late last year, the two communities had renewed their hostilities, leading to loss of lives, including a policeman and property valued at millions of Naira.

Saraki, who said the outbreak of the crisis was a reflection of lack of quality leadership in the two communities, warned leaders of other areas in the state where crisis may be brewing of dire consequences of such development.

The governor while commending members of the committee for their frank and precise recommendations, said culprits of the recent crisis would not escape the wrath of law.

He added: "Those responsible will be severely death with. Nobody will invest in the atmosphere of war. We need peace to progress and be focused. On this, we will not compromise."

On whether or not compensation would be paid to those who recorded losses in the crisis, Saraki said he would need a careful perusal of the recommendation before he would stick his neck.

Earlier, Chairman of the Panel of Enquiry, Justice Mohammed Gafar, disclosed that 80 per cent of the disputed land

belonged to the state government.

Besides, he recommended that the government should do something about the land, while about 20 per cent of it should be equally shared between the warring communities.

For Gafar, government should out-law hunting and further building on the acquired land.

Reacting to the development, Chairperson of Ifelodun local council, Hajia Mojisola Alabi, said the recommendations as enunciated by the governor was acceptable to her.

Her counterpart in Edu, Ibrahim Liman Idris, described it as a welcome development.

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