



President Umaru Yar'Adua (right), and Vice President Goodluck Jonathan responding to party supporters at the Eagle Square during the PDP Convention in Abuja on Monday.
Photo: Jide Oyekunle

Land Dispute Claims One In Koshebe

By Abdulkareem Haruna
REPORTER, Maiduguri

Lingering land dispute in Koshebe village, a suburb in Mafa Local Government Area of Borno State, has claimed the life of one person, while several others were injured.

Koshebe, now a displaced community, is a cosmopolitan settlement of farmers and cattle breeders.

The two groups in the early hours of Tuesday last week engaged in bloody clash over land and grazing reserve.

Daily Independent gathered that most of the casualties are now receiving medical attention in the Accident and Emergency unit of the University of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital, Maiduguri.

Those said to have been wounded by gunshots included Mallam Ahlan and Umar Abdul. Eyewitnesses said several members of the belligerent neighbourhood had since fled the village, nursing the fear that a counter attack might occur soon.

Chairman, Mafa Local Government Area, Alhaji Mahmud Lawan Maina,

confirmed that, "One person was killed while others were injured and properties destroyed."

He denied claims that hundreds of people had fled the village or were displaced, adding that normalcy had since returned as police have been deployed to restore orderliness in the area.

One of the villagers, who identified himself as Seiyina Abba, told *Daily Independent* that the disagreement began with the prevention of villagers from trespassing into grazing reserve for hunting, tree felling or animal grazing.

"Most of us were going into a grazing reserve for various reasons when forest workers stopped us from entering the place. But along the line, the current chairman of Mafa, Mahmud Lawan, told people during his campaign in 2007 that he was going to allow people to gain entry into the land if he was elected chairman and people voted for him.

"When he was elected,

people began to trespass the land. Sometime ago, forest officials came and insisted that no one goes into the place. Some days back, a former councillor came and ordered some people to trespass the reserve and they did. On Saturday, some security men asked a *Bulama* to identify those people that trespassed the reserve, which he did and the people where arrested.

"The chairman of Mafa went and bailed them out after few hours and when they returned they accused our group of revealing their identity to security men and we began to argue. The argument subsided and every one left. Unknown to us, they were planning to ambush us in the early hours of yesterday, which they did at about 12: a.m. We defended ourselves, everyone had different weapons, some of us had dane guns since many of us are hunters and we engaged ourselves as a result of which some people were shot and one person died."

He added that at the time of speaking to newsmen he didn't know the whereabouts of his

wife and children, as over 300 people had been displaced.

Chairman, Mafa, Mahmud Lawan Maina, said in a telephone interview that disagreements between the villagers had been on for a long time over land, which each group claimed belonged to its members. He denied promising to give free access to the grazing reserve.

Maina also said that the former councillor, one Abdallah, was not responsible for the crisis but one village head, *Bulama* (apparently referring to the one who was said to have revealed the identity of those arrested), was responsible for the clash.

Efforts to get police side of the story was not successful as the PPRO could not be reached but Police sources confirmed that the Police CID was on top of issue and investigation was on with arrests likely to have been made.

and my intention is to give Jigawa a purposeful leadership. I want to run an open government; government of the people by the people and for the people. So, *Insha Allahu*, I will invite you to celebrate my victory as elected governor of Jigawa," the Senator added.

NGO Celebrates First Anniversary

By Grace Omoshaba
REPORTER, Lagos

Catch Them Young Club, an anti-HIV/AIDS and students-centred club, held its first anniversary in honour of the former Principal of Trinity Missionary College (TMC), Plateau State, Danjuma Josiah, who before his death on March 8, 2008, endorsed establishment of CTYC.

Coordinator of CTYC, Nosiru Abolore, said Josiah supported the club, adding that the club was affiliated to the National Youth Service Corps and supported by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Nigeria, in collaboration with its partners especially the association for Reproductive and Family Health (ARFH), which contributed a comprehensive material package that was used in imparting skills to young Nigerians to fight HIV/AIDS.

He said the club has a vision of providing adequate information and education to students on the dangers and prevention of HIV/AIDS, stressing that it challenges and develops students to be academically, morally, psychological and technically innovative to promote the ideals of the NYSC scheme.