

Nasarawa crisis: Death toll rises to 85, 100,000 displaced

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THE death toll in the ongoing violence between the Alago and Eggon communities in Obi Local Government Area of Nasarawa state has increased to 85, while over 100,000 persons, including women and children, have been displaced.

The hospitals around the conflict areas have witnessed a high influx of persons that sustained injuries and are receiving treatment.

The activities of the of militias have overwhelmed both the military and police drafted to restore law and order in the area, even as the state governor, Umaru Al-

Makura, is yet to return to the country five days after the crisis began.

However, our sources with the Red Cross, said that they would be entering the troubled area on Sunday to carryout an assessment and determine the kind of intervention to give the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

The source observed that as at Saturday, the troubled spot was inaccessible and there was "little or nothing we could do"

The source explained that even though thousands of persons have been displaced, there is yet to be an organised setting to cater to the IDPs arising from the crisis, adding that they are "scattered"

She further noted

that some of them have moved to Keana council; others to Agwatashi and Obi councils, while another group have headed towards other locations in Plateau State as well as Lafia, saying that until there was an organised setting, "there is not much we can do"

Even the state Police Commissioner, Umar Shehu, who spoke with *Daily Independent*, could not give the actual figure of casualties of the crisis.

He, however, admitted that houses in the area "have been set ablaze by the suspected Ombatse militia group."

Daily Independent visited some of the affected communities and reports that most of the villages were deserted and razed

by fire.

But, in a state broadcast on Saturday, the Nasarawa state Governor, Umaru Al-Makura, who was represented by his deputy, Damishi Luka, sued for peace.

He said: "This unprovoked attack by some Eggon youths suspected to be members of the outlawed Ombatse cult on the innocent people of Adabu and other parts of Obi and Assakio towns is to say the least barbaric condemnable and an affront on the security life and property of innocent citizens."

The governor, however, assured members of the public that government has taken measures to bring the matter under control.

