

Violence: Over 250,000 displaced in Nasarawa

•Three confirmed dead

OVER 250,000 persons were said to have been displaced in Nasarawa State following renewed violence between Fulani herdsmen and Tiv communities in Benue State.

Though some residents claimed that four persons were killed in the violence, the police confirmed three.

Trouble started when some bandits allegedly attacked and killed four persons in Kadarko, on their way to the market in Nasarawa State.

A Fulani and an Agatu man were said to have died in the attack.

It was learnt that the attack resulted in reprisal attacks of other tribesmen, including Tivs and Madas.

By last Wednesday, two Mada and Tiv people were said to have been killed in reprisal attacks on villagers at Angwan Yara Mada and Doka.

These reportedly spread to Agbashi in Doma Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.

One of the victims alleged that some Fulani herdsmen were moving on railways lines towards Angwan Yara Mada, Doka and down to Udei, near Doma in Doma Local Government Area.

A lady said she was on her way to Rukubi to see her father but could not reach him on phone when she was attacked.

She said there were two bodies on Rukubi road and that when the driver of the vehicle in which they were travelling sensed that something was wrong and attempted to make a U-turn, two Fulani herdsmen on a motorcycle, emerged from the bush and chased their vehicle.

It was learnt that over 250,000 internally-displaced persons have fled the area and are taking shelter at a primary school



•Some of the displaced persons at a camp

From Johnny Danjuma, Lafia

in Kadarko, about 30 kilometres from Lafia.

The Commissioner for Culture and Tourism, Solomon Ihuman, has visited the displaced persons, promising government assistance.

Those who escaped the violence and are taking refuge at Kadarko, said their homes have been razed with bodies littering everywhere in the bush.

The Tiv Youth President, Peter Ibgacher, has said the state government should assist the displaced persons at Kadarko.

He said others had fled to Benue State.

Describing the situation as "senseless", Ibgacher urged the government to bring re-

lief materials to the displaced to reduce their plight.

He alleged that the state government defaulted when in June it promised to take relief materials to the displaced persons.

A similar attack in June led to the death of 50 people, including a police Inspector and an Army officer.

During a visit to the displaced persons at Kadarko, Ihuman said he was on an on-the-spot assessment of the situation and would report back to Governor Umaru Al-Makura for necessary action.

He noted that after accurate figures of the displaced persons are compiled the government, through the state emergency relief agency, would give the displaced persons relief materials.

Police spokesman Cornelius Ocholi told *The Nation* yesterday that the casualty figures were exaggerated because of rumours.

He said necessary measures were being taken to ensure that the fighting does not escalate.

According to him, policemen, members of the State Security Service (SSS), Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) and other security agencies would forestall any further breakdown of law and order.

Ocholi said there was no cause for alarm, adding that the rumours were being peddled by those fleeing their areas.

He said perpetrators of the violence would be brought to justice.