

Five killed in Taraba religious crisis

TROOPS were yesterday deployed in a Taraba State community following the outbreak of religious crisis in which five people died.

A church vigilance group reportedly killed a man who insisted on going through the checkpoint set up to prevent attacks on the church building during service. This triggered riots that led to the death of four people.

The clash was reportedly between Christian and Muslim youths in Ibi Local Government Area of the state.

Rioters burnt down houses and shops in the remote area of Ibi, about 230 kilometres from the state capital of Jalingo, said Ibi Local Government Chairman Isiaku Adamu.

Abubakar Bello, an Ibi resident, told The Associated Press (AP) that churches and mosques were also torched as he stood outside his home to protect it. He said residents were fleeing the town.

A Taraba State government spokesman, Emmanuel Bello, said authorities had sent troops to the area to quell the violence.

Only a few days ago, an innocent taxi driver was allegedly killed by military men in the state, after nine other people were abducted in Jalingo by unknown gunmen.

Six of the nine abducted persons were found dead a day

From Fanen Ihyongo, Jalingo

after their abduction.

The insecurity in Taraba continued to worsen when yesterday, violence broke out in Ibi.

Police Spokesman Amos Olaoye confirmed the crisis, saying "our men are already there to maintain law and order."

The Chairman of the Local Government said he is aware that "one person was killed in the crisis".

He said: "From all indications, the crisis is no longer a religious skirmish. It is a political crisis."

"I am yet to visit the crisis area, but security men, including soldiers, have been drafted to the area to maintain law and order".

An eye witness told *The Nation* that even law enforcement agents drafted to the area were finding it difficult to contain the situation.

A source said the violence started in a small way, but snowballed into a political crisis. The source said: "It could be a retaliation by the offended Muslim. I saw more than five persons killed. Many others were injured; they are receiving treatment in the hospital."

"I also saw the Christian Reformed Church of Nigeria (CRCN) on fire. For now, I don't know the number of churches and mosques that have been razed."

Anxiety over Chime

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were speculations that he was hospitalised in an Asian country for an undisclosed ailment.

No official of the government was willing to discuss the governor's state of health. Officials only told our reporter that the governor still has up till early December to return from his accumulated leave.

But sources claim that the governor was rushed back following complications from the surgery he underwent abroad.

Chime's absence is the most discussed issue in Enugu State as government activities are at a low ebb because the acting governor is believed to have an approval limit that is not more than N500,000.

Chief Press sSecretary to the

Governor Mr. Chukwudi Achife, said a statement would be issued. The statement had not come last night.

Chime was born in 1953 in Udi. He was the Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice under his predecessor Chimaroke Nnamani's administration before being elected the governor in 2007. He was reelected last year.

He attended College of Immaculate Conception, Enugu (1971-78), graduated in Law from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka in 1980 and attended the Nigerian Law School, Lagos (1980-81).

He ran a private legal practice in Enugu between 1981 and 1998. Chime was Secretary of the Nigeria Bar Association (NBA), 1992-94.

OUR ERROR

Our attention has been drawn to a story published on pages one and seven of our Saturday edition to the effect that Sir Daniel Chikwudozie, Managing Direc-

