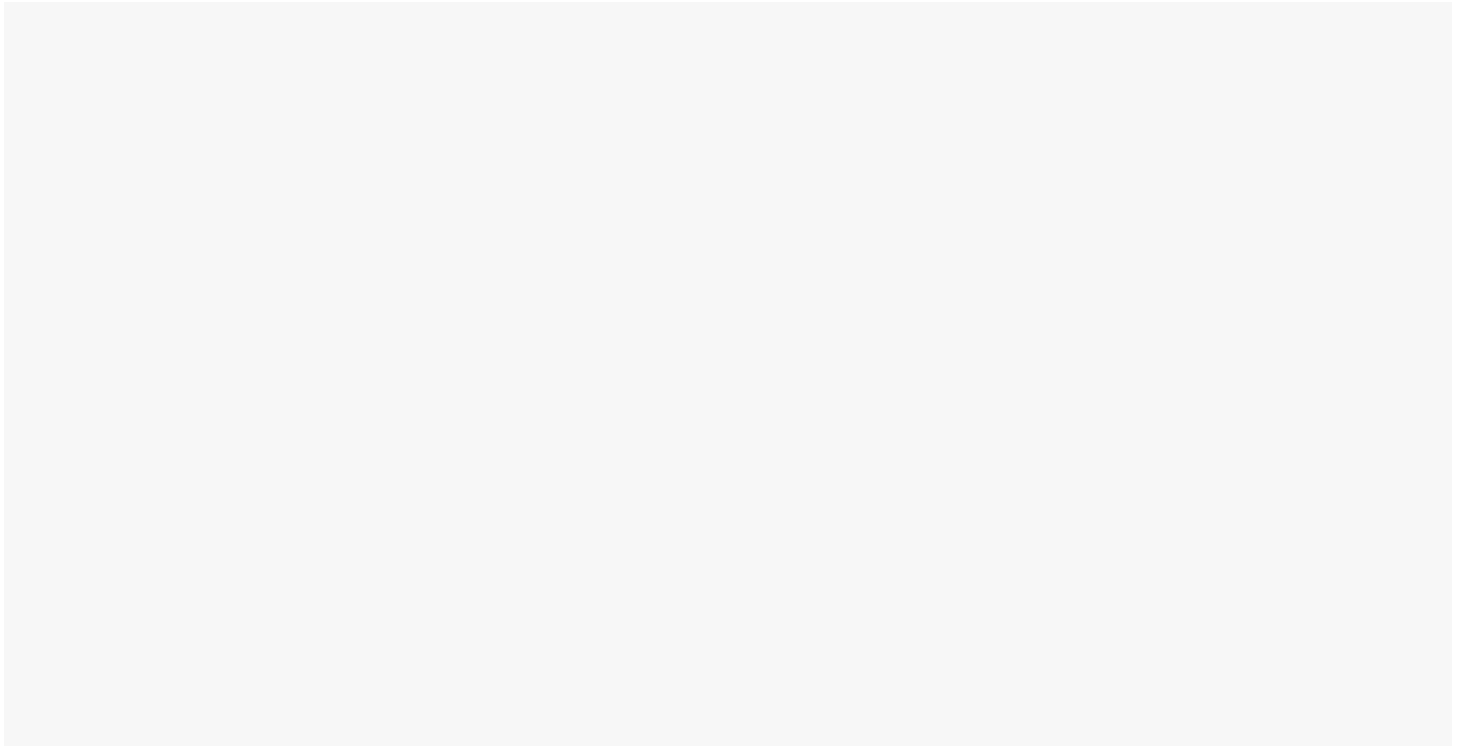


# 10 killed, over 100 houses set ablaze in Benue community



by **Uja Emanuel** April 21, 2019



Over 10 persons have been killed and about 100 houses set ablaze in Aila, Egba ward, Agatu Local Government Area since crisis broke out over fishing pond in Benue State.

The Chairman of Agbaduma Development Association (AGA), Makurdi branch, Benjamin Eigege, disclosed this during interactive session with journalist in Makurdi, Benue State capital.

Eigege also called on the state and federal governments to deploy security men in Aila community to protect lives and property.

He said the people of Aila have been under incessant attacks from neighbouring Egba community over fishing pond which is in dispute.

According to him, suspected militia have so far killed 10 persons in Aila and set houses ablaze, with many rendered homeless.

Eigege noted that the lingering crisis assumed a more dangerous dimension on 18th of March this year when an Aila man, Nghede Ibrahim, was shot dead at the fishing pond by suspected militia from Egba, an adjoining village.

He stated further that the Acting Chairman of Agatu Local Government Council, Alhaji Oyigbocho, visited Aila community to calm down tension and to plead against reprisal attacks, but immediately he left, some suspected militia stormed Aila community and killed 9 persons.

“They set over 100 houses ablaze and destroyed property worth millions,” Eigege said.

More worrisome to Aila community, he said, is that when security men were deployed to the area, instead of going to Aila community, who are always at the receiving end of the attacks, they are now stationed at Egba community, the people he alleged are suspected to be behind the killings.

He traced the history of the bloody lingering crisis to a fishing pond which is in dispute.

According to him, attempts to get protection from the Benue security outfits have failed so they resort to “Save our Souls” messages to the state and federal governments through the media.

He therefore calls for immediate intervention from the government to enable Aila people go back to their ancestral land and farm as raining season has set in.

In its reaction, the Benue Police Command called for calm and promised to deploy more policemen to the area.

Chairman of Agatu Local Government Area, Alhaji Oyigocho, could not be reached but a member of Agatu Local Government Council said efforts are in top gear to bring the Egba/Aila lingering crisis to an end.

He said a meeting of critical stakeholders is schedule to hold soon so as to find lasting peace among the warring communities.



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