

## Again, Three Persons Killed In Benue Communal Clash

By Johnson Babajide - M... On May 3, 2020

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Three persons were reportedly killed in a communal clash that broke out between two communities in Apa and Agatu Local Government Areas of Benue State.

The affected communities, according to sources were Odejo community in Agatu and Ikobi community in Apa local government areas respectively.

It was gathered that some militias from Odejo community on Sunday launched attack on Ikobi community after it was rumoured that an Odejo person whose mother hails from Ikobi allegedly led some Fulani herdsmen to Ikobi community was caught and killed by the Ikobi people.

Another source said that the attack was orchestrated by a fight between two rival cult groups from the two communities in the two local governments.

An indigene of Ikobi community (names withheld), told Nigerian Tribune on the phone that some suspected militias from Odejo community came to attack the Ikobi people.

She explained that the Odejo militia in the early hours of Sunday invaded Ikobi and started shooting guns leading to the death of three persons.

“It was late last night (Saturday) that people started rumouring that Odejo people are coming to attack Ikobi community, the reason being that one of their persons was allegedly missing. Then, just this morning on Sunday, they came in search of the person and they (Odejo people) began to destroy our properties and in the process killed three persons.

“As I speak to you, we cannot really tell you this is the reason or the problem. Unfortunately, the three persons killed were my cousins from the same family. This is a barbaric act and should be totally condemned,” she stated.

Also speaking on the attack, President-General Odejo Community Development Association, Damian Onehi, said that there was no existing conflict between the two communities, saying both villages had been relating well with each as other being neighbours.

“This fight broke out as a result of rumours from both sides. But I tell you that we have good neighbours from time immemorial. We have never had cause to quarrel over land as neighbours do or over women. We inter-marry.

“The Ikobi community were alleging that our people led Fulani herdsmen to attack them which is not true. Again, they said that cult group came to kill someone meanwhile the person that was killed in Ikobi is from Odejo, but came to take his mother who happened to be an indigene of Ikobi.

“I want to urge security agencies to investigate the cause of this fight between the two communities. This has never happened before,” Onehi said.

When contacted the Benue State Command Public Relations Officer, DSP Catherine Anene, confirmed the clash saying two people were killed.

“It was a clash between the two communities of Odejo and Ikobi in Agatu and Apa Local Government Areas of the state over lands. We have deployed our men to the area. However, two persons lost their lives”, Anene confirmed.

Also, the Force commander operation whirl stroke Major general Adeyemi Yekini confirmed the clash.

According to him, with the combined effort of his troops and the 72-battalion normalcy had returned to the areas.

“We have stationed our men there and everywhere is now calm,” he said.