

Seven feared killed in Cross River communal clash

2 Gov imposes curfew on warring communities

Joseph Abasi-Abasi |
Calabar

SEVEN persons have been feared killed following a communal clash between the Tiv people of Benue State who settled in Yache community in Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State and the indigenes.

A source informed the *Nigerian Tribune* that the conflict was over a farmland boundary in the two communities.

The source added that apart from those killed,

several others, including women and children on both sides were injured.

The deputy governors of Benue and Cross River states had earlier met in the same community where they sued for peace while resolving the differences.

A community leader in Yacha, Augustine Odey Adula, who spoke with the *Nigerian Tribune* by phone, said the clash started on Sunday.

He said: "Some of our youths went to enquire from Tiv settlers why they

have refused to pay royalties as usual for settling on our land. The Tiv people seized one of our youths, beat him to stupor and he died.

"Of course, that triggered a reprisal, but they [Tiv people] were prepared. They attacked and killed seven of our people and burnt 15 houses."

Adula said the Tiv people had been paying royalties for the land, but they just decided to stop for no reason.

When contacted, Cross River State Police Public

Relations Officer (PPRO), Irene Ugbo, confirmed the development, adding that security operatives had been deployed in the area.

Meanwhile, Cross River State governor, Senator Bassey Edet Otu, has imposed a dusk-to-dawn curfew on Ugaga and Igbekurekor communities, as well as Benekaba and Ujama communities in the council area.

The governor, in a press release signed by his Chief Press Secretary, Emmanuel Ogbeche, said the curfew is with immediate effect.