



•L-R: Head of Service of the Federation, Prof. Dapo Afolabi; former Head of Service of the Federation, Mr. Steve Oronsaye; and Director-General, Bureau of Public Procurement, Mr. Emeka Ezech, during a dinner organised for Oronsaye, in Abuja...on Monday.



•L-R: Director-General, National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency, Mrs. Ngeri Benebo; Director, Environmental Quality and Control, Mallam Maiwada Omar; and Director, Administration and Finance, Mr. Timothy Okeowo, at the third Annual Dinner/Award Party 2010, in Abuja...on Tuesday.



•L-R: Representative of Pan Ocean Oil Corporation, Mr. Gabriel Okoh; Sector Commander, Federal Road Safety Commission, Lagos, Mr. Jonas Agwu; and Unit Commander, Lagos Island, Mr. Segun Ogunbemide, during the Ember months' sensitisation programme for road users, in Lagos...on Monday. Photo: Odutayo Odusanya



•L-R: Consumer Maximisation Manager, Ms. Iquo Ukoh; Category Business Manager, Mr. Guy Kellaway; and Head, Human Resources, Mrs. Marie Owoniyi, during the third draws of the 2010 National Consumer 'Millions and More Promo' by Nestle Nigeria Plc, in Lagos...on Tuesday. Photo: Segun Bakare

18 killed in fresh Rivers, Plateau clashes

Chukwudi Akasike and Jude Owuamanam

NO fewer than 15 persons have lost their lives in a suspected reprisal attack on Kegbara Dere community in Gokana Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Apart from the deaths recorded, more than 80 houses were reportedly set ablaze, while many persons were injured in the onslaught against Kegbara Community.

Armed men suspected to be members of neighbouring B-Dere community allegedly attacked the neighbouring community to revenge an attack by youths from Kegbara Dere, a community also known as K-Dere.

B-Dere community was attacked on October 20, 2010 by youths from K-Dere after an argument over a European football match.

While one person was shot dead, over 60 houses were destroyed in the crisis that also saw the displacement of over 500 persons from their homes.

The latest crisis in the area started when some youths from B-Dere pursued members of K-Dere community from their farms and set their houses.

THE PUNCH gathered that the incident, which began on Monday afternoon, had rendered many people homeless as some members of K-Dere community took to their heels on sighting the advancing youths.

The Coordinator of the Centre for Environment, Human Rights and Development, Mr. Patrick Naagbantun, said the number of people killed so far had risen from five to 15.

Naagbantun warned that if the state and local governments failed to take the

right step to stop such mindless attacks, the crisis between the two communities might continue.

He added that security agencies must take the right step to put an end to the rivalry between K-Dere and B-Dere in order to save lives and property in the two communities.

According to him, "Guns are still booming, even as 15 persons have already been killed. Unless appropriate agencies do something about this ugly development, this will not be the end. K-Dere people will also want to go on a reprisal attack."

Contacted, the Public Relations Officer, Rivers State Command, Dr. Rita Inoma-Abbey, said she got a text message from the Divisional Police Officer in charge of the affected area, which confirmed the renewed communal crisis between the two communities.

Meanwhile, three persons were feared dead on Monday in a fresh attack by suspected Fulani cattle rearers in Gonghwong area of Vwang District, Jos South Local Government Area of Plateau State.

The attackers were also alleged to have injured two other persons and made away with over 100 cows belonging to the native Berom.

But confirming the latest skirmish, the spokesman of the Special Task Force, Capt. Charles Ekeocha, said only one man was killed.

According to Ekeocha, "Yesterday (Monday) at about 8.30pm, there was an attack on Gonghwong Village in K/Vom, Jos South Local Government by suspected Fulani assailants. In the attack, two locals were shot but were rushed to the hospital by policemen on patrol.

"Our own troops deployed

in K/Vom arrived the scene and combed the area. At about a distant of three kilometres from the village, the unidentified corpse of a man was found lying by a bicycle beside the road. At the same point, a Toyota bus with plate number XE 233 BUJ was found being driven by Mr. James Adamu.

"It was carrying 19 youths from Dahwolbok village also in K/Vom and were apprehended with two locally made revolvers, two swords, two machetes, one dagger, four metal rods, six wooden clubs and two catapults. "Other items found on the suspects included eleven handsets, whistles, four sachets of peak milk and some cash of N3, 000.00 etc."

The STF spokesman said the suspects and other exhibits had been handed over to the police for further investigation, adding that the soldiers that arrested the 19 suspects were from the Vom unit. He also said the military squad was not aware of any case of cattle rustling.

In another development, a fresh crisis is brewing in Langtang following the rejection of a former Chief of Defence Staff, Lt.-Gen. Domkat Bali, as the Ponzhi Taroh (the paramount ruler of the Taroh nation).

The pioneer National Chairman of the Peoples Democratic Party, Chief Solomon Lar, and his kinsmen, who rejected Bali's nomination, described it as 'a ruse and affront on the people of Tarohland.'

Lar, who spoke at a retirement party for the Chairman of the Langtang Regional Church Council of the Church of Christ in Nigeria, Rev. Felix Lar, in Langtang accused Governor Jonah Jang of attempting to divide his people by creating an artificial problem with the selection of a new monarch.

Minister tackles Fayemi over location of federal varsity

Femi Makinde, Ado-Ekiti

THE Minister of State for Federal Capital Territory, Navy Capt. Caleb Olubolade (retd), has opposed the siting of the proposed federal university in Ikole Local Government Area of the state.

Olubolade stated his opposition at a press conference in Ijero-Ekiti on Tuesday. He said that Fayemi was wrong to have taken the Federal Government team, which visited the state recently, to a site in Ikole.

The minister said, "The choice of Ikole-Ekiti as the site of the Federal University coming to the state is not final. The Federal Government, which is the owner of the university, will decide where to site the university. Where to site it will

be discussed at the Federal Executive Council meeting and the FG has the final say.

"It is not a state government's project so the governor cannot say where the varsity will be. The FG will fund the project. What is needed from the governor is the certificate of occupancy.

What we need from the governor is land, he only has to give certificate of occupancy.

"The delegation sent to the state ought to have been taken to two or more sites and come up with its recommendation."

But the governor has said that he didn't do anything wrong by siting the varsity in Ikole.

Fayemi, who spoke through his Senior Special Assistant on

Media, Mr. Mojeed Jamiu, said that the governor announced the site of the university in the presence of the Minister of State for Education, Mr. Kenneth Gbagi, and officials of the National Universities Commission. The team had about three weeks ago visited Ikole-Ekiti.

He said, "The governor is right in siting the university in Ikole. Although the governor is from the district but he did not use his power to site the varsity in Ijan-Ekiti his home town.

"Governor Fayemi approved the siting of the university in Ikole to correct the imbalance in the distribution of tertiary institutions in the state."