

# One killed, two injured in Benue communal clash

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FILE

## John Charles

One person was reportedly killed with two others injured following a renewed communal clash that erupted on Saturday in Tyo-Mu settlement of Makurdi, Benue State.

Several houses and properties worth millions of naira were burnt while several people have fled the troubled settlement.

Some residents of the area were sighted leaving the settlement with mattresses and other domestic equipment and heading towards communities within the Nigerian AirForce Base, Makurdi to take refuge.

It was gathered that trouble started when an Ihyarev man (an indigene) attacked one person they tagged as Kparev (a settler), who was found moulding blocks at the bank of River Benue which is said to belong to the indigenes.

According to a native who identified himself as Msughter, an indigene had accosted the settler why he came to the river bank to mould blocks as the community leaders had forbidden people from moulding blocks in the area.

“The settler did not give the indigene any response. In the process, another indigene shot him (settler) in the leg,” Msughter said, adding that the gunshot attracted the attention of troops of Operation Whirl Stroke who were stationed around the area.

He said, “The prompt intervention of troops of OPWS saved the day, though before the arrival of the troops, one person had been shot dead and two others injured.

“This crisis had been on between the indigenes and settlers all of Tiv extraction over ownership of land in this area; many people had lost their lives in the crisis.

“Just last week, a senior officer with the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps, Benue State Command, was killed and now another crisis has started again.”

When contacted, the Force Commander, Operation Whirl Stroke, Major General Adeyemi Yekini, confirmed the incident and said his troops were on the ground.

“The situation is under control and we are on the ground to make sure no group rises up against another,” he said.

Also, the spokesperson for the Benue Police Command, Catherine Anene, confirmed the renewed clash, stating that the command had drafted police personnel to the area to avert further crisis.

She, however, said no casualty was recorded and no arrest had been made but said the command had commenced investigation to ascertain the cause of the crisis.