

# Gombe declares 24-hour curfew as 15 killed in communal clashes

Chima Azubuike, Gombe

NO fewer than 15 persons have been confirmed dead, following the invasion of Nyuwar and Hemen (Jessu) communities in the Balanga Local Government Area of Gombe State by gunmen, during which many houses were razed while property were destroyed.

Speaking during an on-the-spot assessment of the area, the Gombe State Governor, Muhammadu Yahaya, alongside the state Commissioner of Police, Ishola Babaita, appealed against reprisal, adding that the perpetrators, allegedly from Adamawa State, would be punished.

Yahaya said, "You can see the

level of damage; here in Hemen seven people have died, and in Nyuwar, eight people died, totalling 15 people.

"We are going to follow it up to ensure it doesn't happen again, we will ensure those that committed this crime are brought to justice.

"It was yesterday (Monday) night that they crossed from the other side. The curfew we imposed will remain until normalcy returns."

The governor said he had commenced talks with relevant persons Adamawa State towards finding lasting solution to the perennial crisis.

Also, a resident of Nyuwar, who identified himself as Mr Dibi Tsaga, said the crisis could be traced to farmland tussle which

happened in Adamawa State between Lunguda and Waja ethnic groups in 2017.

Tsaga noted that the invasion of Nyuwar community inhabited by Lunguda ethnic group by about 300 gunmen suspected to be Waja people on Monday took them by surprise.

Earlier, the state government declared 24 hours curfew on three communities in the Balanga LGA – Nyuwar, Jessu and Tolde over the attack.

The Secretary to the State Government, Ibrahim Njodi, said, "Gombe state Government has imposed a 24-hour curfew on Nyuwar, Jessu and Yolde communities in Balanga Local Government area of the state with immediate effect."