



Four killed as Nasarawa communities fight over land

25th June 2024



Map of Nasarawa State

Collins Agwam, Lafia

No fewer than four persons have been reportedly killed and others injured during land dispute in the Keana Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.

Our correspondent gathered that the crisis erupted around the Nasarawa-Benue border communities housing the indigenous Alago and Tiv farmers in the area.

Speaking on the matter on Tuesday, the President of Mzough U Tiv, Nasarawa State branch, Philip Nongu, told journalists that an unspecified number of residents of the area had been killed during the attack.

“Based on available information, residents of the area including students of the Federal Girls College, Keana have been killed, and many students of the school are still trapped in their hostels,” he said.



A resident of the area who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not permitted to speak on the matter narrated that at the last count, four people had died: two from the Alago tribe and two from the Tiv origin.

“I have been hiding in a location with my family members. What I can say at the moment is that four people have so far died as of the last time I got information on the land dispute, which has now become a full-blown crisis.

“Two people from each of the tribes were killed during the attack, and many sustained various degrees of injuries. Up till now, some youths are still chanting war songs in the area.

“We are appealing to the Nasarawa State Government and the security agencies to act fast in order to address the situation, and to restore normalcy to the area,” the source said.

Speaking on the incident, the Senior Special Assistant to Governor Abdullahi Sule on Public Affairs, Peter Ahemba, condemned the attack while saying that one person had been confirmed dead and four wounded.

“The crisis started from the Nasarawa-Benue border community and later escalated into the Keana town leading to the death of one person and many wounded,” he said.

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Ahemba, however, stated that the situation had been brought under control with the deployment of security operatives to the area.

While urging the people not to resolve reprisal attacks but to allow peace to reign, the governor’s aide called for calm among the warring parties, saying, “Killings and destructions do not provide solutions to societal challenges.”

Meanwhile, the Tiv community in Nasarawa State, under the umbrella of the Tiv Development Association, has condemned the clash.

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President of the association, Simeon Apusu, who made the condemnation while speaking with newsmen shortly after an Emergency State Executive Council meeting of the association in Lafia on Tuesday, also condemned the killing of innocent Tiv farmers residents in Keana town and the destruction of their property by armed men.

He regretted that the situation had led to the displacement of hundreds of Tiv farmers in Keana town and those of Obosidoma and other nearby Tiv villages in the area, insisting that the resort to violence in conflict situations was counter-productive; hence, dialogue must be encouraged as the best means of resolving disagreement amongst communities.

The TIDA President commended the state government for proactively deploying security operatives in the area to forestall further breakdown of law and order and called for the deployment of more security operatives in Keana town and other surrounding Tiv villages in the area to enable the displaced persons to return to their homes.

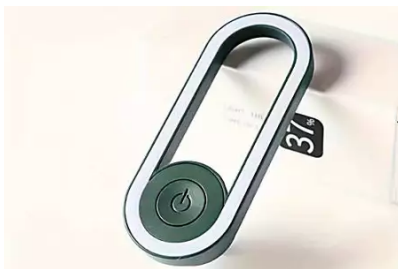
“I also want to appeal to the state and the Federal Government to hasten the ongoing boundary demarcation process between Nasarawa and Benue states in order to provide a permanent solution to the incessant land dispute between farmers at the border areas of the two states,” the TIDA President added.

Confirming the incident, the state Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Ramhan Nansel, said policemen had been deployed to Keana LGA to restore normalcy in the affected areas.

“Two persons died, and five others were injured during the crisis. Normalcy has been restored in the affected areas.

“The incident is condemnable, but I can assure you that the Nasarawa State Police command is on top of the situation,” he said.

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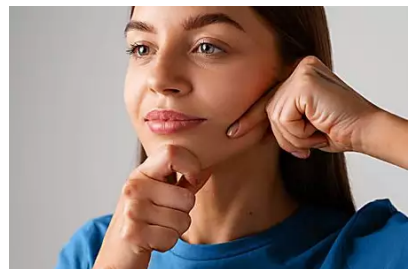
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