

Benue: 10 killed in renewed Tiv/Jukun crisis

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Rose Ejembi, Makurdi

Ten people were feared killed, yesterday, and several houses burnt in a renewed Tiv/Jukun clashes in Vaase Community, in Ukum Local Government Area of Benue State.

Special Adviser to the Governor on Security, Colonel Paul Hemba (retd), who disclosed this to newsmen in Makurdi, the state capital, stated that over 3,000 people have, so far, been displaced and are currently taking refuge in Jootar Community, in Ukum local government area of the state.

Hemba, who had been involved in peace talks between Benue and Taraba state governments, to seek ways of resolving the issue, expressed worry over the fresh crisis. He said there may be more casualties as security agencies are still combing the area to recover more dead bodies.

“Efforts have been made by the state government to stop the crisis which started from Kente, a border town between Benue and Taraba.

“I have travelled to the area three times in the week.

“The crisis started in Kente, which is largely occupied by Jukun, Tiv population.

“While there, I held meetings with the Aku Uka of Wukari and the Special Adviser to Governor Darius Ishaku on Security, which also had in attendance the Tor Sankera, from Benue axis, Chief Abu Shuluwa.

“It was resolved that there should be cessation of hostilities; to pave way for peace. But, it is so sad to note that after the meeting, killings are still going on.

“I received a report that rampaging Jukun youths invaded Vaase and vandalized a lot of property, killing people.

“Maybe the resolutions have not been properly communicated to them. I also met with the Tiv youths and told them not to take the law into their hands,” Hembra stated.

The security adviser said he is already discussing the matter with the police, who he said, are already making arrangements to deploy men to the area when new attack occurred.

He, however, noted that normalcy has been restored in Kente community even as he appealed to the youths from the two communities to embrace peace; in the interest of development.