

Buhari Condemns Killing of 25 People in Taraba Communal Clash

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Omololu Ogunmade in Abuja

President Muhammadu Buhari last night condemned the latest ethnic violence in Taraba State, which left scores

Taraba State Police Command has confirmed that 25 persons were killed and several others injured in a clash between Shomo and Jole ethnic groups in Lau Local Government Area of the state.

Speaking in a telephone interview with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Jalingo yesterday, Public Relations Officer of the State Police Command, Mr. David Misal, said about 100 houses were burnt down during the clash which took place on Monday.

According to a statement by Senior Special Assistant to the President on Media and Publicity, Malam Garba Sheu while reacting to the incident, said: "I am deeply disturbed by the resort to violence over disagreements that should be resolved through dialogue."

Shehu also quoted the president as saying, "these frequent incidents of ethnic and communal violence are a reflection of poor leadership and the refusal to embrace dialogue as a means of conflict resolution."

He explained that "disagreements over lands or fishing ponds shouldn't be allowed to degenerate into violence that threatens life and prosperity."

According to him, the president said "violence has never settled any problem and, on the contrary, it makes s

He sympathised with victims of the violence and their families and appealed to leaders at all levels in Tarab initiative in order to forestall outbreaks of deadly violence by thugs.”

He added: “Life is so precious that leaders in the area should take urgent and decisive actions to halt this dis people.”

Although Taraba State police spokesperson could not immediately ascertain the cause of the conflict, reliable s said disagreement over the ownership of some ancestral fish ponds was the cause of the problem betw communities.

The police also confirmed that the conflict had since become an annual occurrence between Shomo and Jole fis

“The Commissioner of Police, Mr. Ahmed Azare, has stationed patrol teams on ground already and the situati under control,” he said.

NAN reported that conflicts between Shomo and Jole had been lingering for decades over claims and counter-cl the disputed fish ponds.

At a point, the government had to ban fishing activities in the disputed ponds for a period of 10 years, but the resumed conflicts as soon as the ban was lifted at the return of democracy.

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