

200 killed in Benue, Taraba border clashes

By Peter Duru

MAKURDI — IT has been revealed that over 200 lives have been lost in the Benue/Taraba states boarder clashes in the last two months which has necessitated an agreement at the weekend to set up a joint security patrol team of police and the military personnel to operate along the boarder of the two states; with a view to checking all cases of boarder clashes which have become a common feature of the neighbouring states.

This was part of the decision taken after a high powered peace meeting presided over by Governors Gabriel Suswam and Dambaba Suntai, at Gawa boarder settlement in Katsina-Ala, Local Government, between the Tiv people of Benue

State and the Kuteb people of Taraba State.

In their separate speeches at the meeting, the two Governors disclosed that the decision to have the joint security team already has the blessing of the presidency and therefore it would be allowed to operate freely in the two states, and arrest anybody causing crisis in the area no matter his social status.

The Governors lamented a situation where few individuals would fuel crisis between the communities that ends up being hijacked by miscreants and criminals to unleash havoc and terror on the people, adding that hence forth government would arrest community leaders who fail to produce the criminals and perpetrators

of such evil acts.

They maintained that the people of the two states have co-existed for a long time with common problems of underdevelopment and expressed the need for peaceful co-existence to enable the states' leadership provide them with the dividends of democracy.

Leaders of the two communities who spoke at the occasion attributed the crisis to disagreements over economic trees which was later hijacked by criminals to unleash terror on the people, adding that they would now live in peace especially with the setting up of a committee made up of persons from the two states to get to the root cause of the crisis and identify those involved.