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## How 8 persons were crushed to death by tree branch

[Metro](#) Jul 22, 2010

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By **Peter Duru**, Makurdi

The people of Ikyobo village in Ushongo local government area of Benue State are still counting their losses and mourning their dead following the mysterious crashing of a large tree branch at the centre of village market square which claimed the lives of no fewer than eight persons while scores sustained varying degrees of injury.

The people are still to come to terms with the unfortunate incident which occurred on a market day at the peak of commercial activities which usually take place under the tree where traders display their wares for customers to make purchases.

Majority of the dead were poor peasant women who had taken their farm produce to the market for sales in order to eke a living.

But fate dealt a sad blow on them: They ended up meeting their untimely death from an unusual circumstance which has defied all logical explanations.



\*Remains of the tree whose branch fell and killed eight persons

It was indeed a gory sight as most of the dead were mangled beyond recognition while some were simply recognised by the clothes they had on before the unfortunate incident.

Today the people have continued to live in fear of the unknown because most of them believe that the incident could not be unconnected to witchcraft or the anger of the gods who decided to vent their rage on the people for yet-to-be identified reasons.

An eye witness, who spoke to Vanguard Metro on the issue, narrated how it all happened.

According to him, the unfortunate incident occurred at about 10am, on a market day, at a market square at the village when traders were busy displaying their wares for customers to make purchases.

He stated that those that were crushed by the falling tree branch had gathered under the tree and could not escape from the gigantic tree branch which came crashing down after a terrifying cracking noise that preceded its fall.

Our source disclosed that one of the villagers, Mr. Ayoo Awuapila lost his two wives and a relation in the disaster, adding that the man was in shock and is still mourning his dead.

He also intimated that an octogenarian, Mama Mbagwen Nenge sustained serious injury as a result of the disaster but that she responded to treatment at a local hospital in the village.

The eyewitness who explained that the large tree called Genge has over the years provided shade for traders in the community on market days, adding that it had also been a sit-out point for children and adults who gather underneath to play, chat or hold important discussions.

He noted that there was neither rainstorm nor wind which could have triggered the sudden collapse of the tree branch, adding that the development was still a mystery that was yet to be unraveled by the people of the community.

“The sad incident in the sleepy community, directly and indirectly affected many families in the village,” he said.

Vanguard Metro further gathered that the injured in the disaster were taken to hospitals in Lessel and Gboko, while the remains of the dead have been buried by their relatives.

While expressing shock at the tragedy that befell the community, another source who claimed to be a youth leader but refused to disclose his name, explained that the community had never witness such magnitude of disaster in the history of the state.

Attempts to speak to some of the affected families in the disaster were rebuffed due mainly to fear of the unknown as most of the people believe that there was something supernatural about the incident, hence were scared of discussing the issue in order not to further incur the wrath of the gods.

It is, therefore, evident that the people were overwhelmed by the disaster and now live in fear of the unknown. However, one Terpaseer Terkaa, who claimed to be an indigene of the community but resides in Lessel town, pointed out that the people must seek the face of God for spiritual help in order to cleanse the community of ungodly acts and evil powers.

According to him: "It is not in doubt that what happened at Ikyobo was not ordinary and I strongly believe that it is high time the people sought the face of the Almighty God to help them cleanse the land and restore hope to the helpless and succour to the bereaved.

"This is just beyond the ordinary, it is for the good of everyone that we all turn to God and invite him to take effective charge of our lives".

Ikyobo village is the home town of the late Aper Aku, the much revered first civilian governor of Benue State.

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[July 22, 2010 at 1:50 pm](#)

let the people of Benue State repent from worshipping of idol and witchcraft both in their home and abroad

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