

Five communities sacked, churches, houses razed in renewed Benue communal crisis

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By Peter Duru – Makurdi

Five communities in Oju Local Government Area, LGA, of Benue state have been reportedly sacked by armed youths from neighbouring Gboda community in Konshisha LGA in a renewed communal crisis between the bordering communities.

It was gathered that the attackers invaded Ukpute, Ima, Ochoro, Ekinyo, and Agbada-Ichwo all located around the boundary between the two LGAs Sunday afternoon pulling down houses, churches and also razed property worth millions of naira.

Though the President of Igede National Youths Council, Comrade Andyson Egbodo, in his account had alleged that six persons were killed while several houses were reduced to rubbles in the affected communities, the Police Public Relations Officer, Deputy Superintendent, DSP, Catherine Anene debunked the claim.

“I can confirm that there were fresh crises in the areas Sunday evening but the police immediately brought it under control. I am also not aware that anybody was killed” Anene said.

According to the eyewitness in Oju LGA, the latest attack came a day after stakeholders from the two local governments had met at Tse Agbaragba, the Konshisha Local Government headquarters, for a peace meeting following the lingering conflicts between communities in the two areas.

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“The meeting was held at Tse Agbaragba on Saturday to find solutions to incessant attacks. Then, on Sunday at about 3:30pm, we saw some people storm our communities burning down houses, churches and chasing the people away.

“Although they didn’t kill anybody but they made sure that they destroyed all the houses in the affected communities,” he said.

Confirming the incident, the paramount of Konshisha LGA, Ter Ikyor Chief Jam Gbinde, , said “It is unfortunate that some persons from Konshisha would go and attack some communities in Oju LGA and displaced the people.

“I have called the district head of Gboda community and he has briefed me and I have also briefed the Tor Tiv and the local government chairman.

“The chairman told me that he had informed the mobile police in Makurdi and they have been drafted to the area.

“The Tor Tiv has also directed me to order the district head of Gboda to produce those attackers. We don’t want trouble, what we need is peace,” he said.