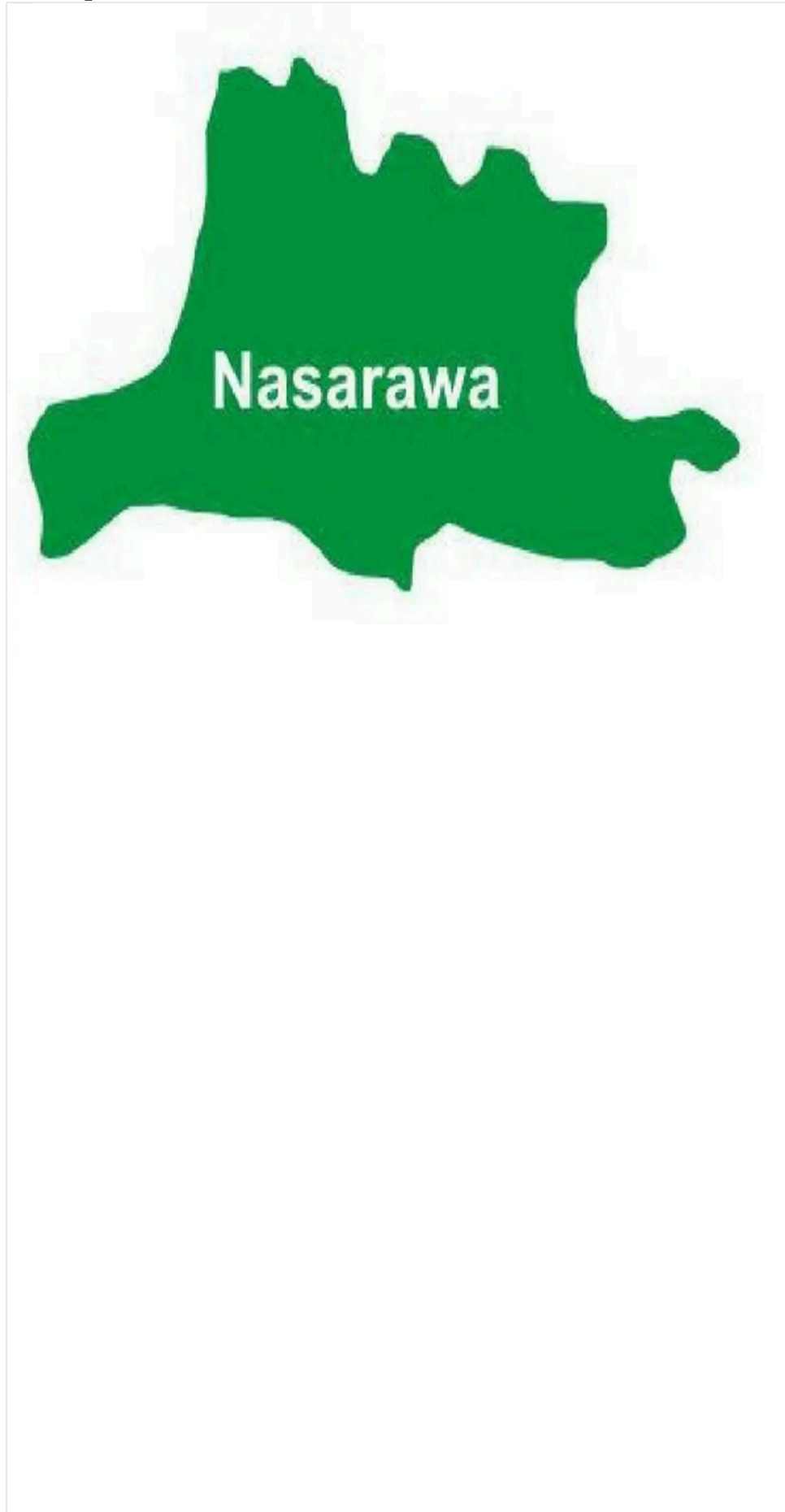


Nasarawa communal clash: 11 dead, houses razed, many displaced



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Lawmaker, Tiv community condemn attacks, call for calm
By Abel Daniel

Lafia—Not fewer than 11 persons have been killed in communal conflict between the indigenous people of Alago and Tiv people of Keana in Keana Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.

President of Mzough U Tiv, MUT, Nasarawa State chapter, Philip Nongu, who confirmed this to journalists, alleged that no fewer than 11 Tiv persons, including students of the Federal Girls College, Keana, were killed, noting that students were trapped in their hostels.

Eye witnesses said the crisis was ignited by a land dispute between the Alago and Tiv at the Benue/Nasarawa border community.

One of the witnesses told newsmen that four people were killed, two from Alago and two from Tiv and many houses burnt down with many wounded.

Senior Special Assistant to Governor Abdullahi Sule on Public Affairs, Peter Ahemba, who confirmed the crisis, said only one person has been confirmed dead and four wounded.

Ahemba noted that the crisis started from Benue/Nasarawa border community and later escalated into Keana, leading to the death of one person and many wounded.

Ahemba said the situation had been brought under control with the security operatives deployed in the area.

Ahemba called for calm among the warring parties, saying killing and destruction do not provide solutions.

He urged the people not to resort to reprisal attack but allow peace to reign.

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Meanwhile, the Tiv community in Nasarawa State, under the umbrella of Tiv Development Association, TIDA, has condemned the violent clash between some Tiv people of the neighbouring Benue State and Alago people of Keana, which destroyed lives and property. President of the association, Simeon Apusu, who spoke with newsmen shortly after an emergency State Executive Council meeting of the association in Lafia, Tuesday, regretted that the situation has led to the displacement of hundreds of Tiv farmers in Keana town and those of Obosidoma and other nearby Tiv villages in the area. He noted that the resort to violence in conflict situations was counter productive, hence, dialogue must be encouraged as the best means of resolving disagreement amongst communities.

Apusu appealed to the state and federal governments to hasten the ongoing boundary demarcation process between Nasarawa and Benue states to provide a permanent solution to the incessant land dispute between farmers at the border areas of the two states. Also, member representing Keana constituency in the Nasarawa State House of Assembly, Mohammed Omadefu, has called for calm among his people over the recent killing of farmers in his constituency.

Omadefu said: "I condemn in totality the lingering killings of innocent Keana sons, who are genuine farmers and want to earn a living but were shot to death in their farms, yesterday. "This act of carnage is worrisome and stands condemned, especially at this farming period and when government is putting up all necessary measures towards sustainable peace and development in the state."

Omadefu while commiserating with the families of those who lost loved ones and or affected by the incident said security agencies were on top of the situation to fetch out the perpetrators.



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