

Taraba: Five killed in renewed Jukun, Kuteb crisis

No fewer than five people were reportedly killed in a renewed wave of hostilities that broke out on Tuesday between the Jukun and Kuteb ethnic groups in the southern part of Taraba state.

The two neighbours found mainly in Takum local government area of the state have been at daggers drawn for over two decades resulting

Searchlight on Justice Ayoola

monster ravaging not only the public sector but also spreading its poisonous tentacles to the private sector. Every form of corruption, be it public or private, retards the growth of our economy."

**From: Fidelis Mac-Leva,
Jalingo**

in wanton killings and destruction of properties.

The fresh crisis which also left several people wounded and over ten compounds burnt to ashes was said to have erupted at Takum during the annual Kuteb cultural festival called Kuchicheb, which *Daily Trust* learnt has been on suspension since 2005.

Although details of the immediate cause of the renewed feud were sketchy at press time, *Daily Trust* checks show that it may not be unconnected with alleged attempt by the Jukuns to prevent the Kutebs from hosting the festival in Takum, the headquarters of Takum local government area.

A source who wouldn't want to be named, said the Jukuns felt that since their rivals [Kutebs] now have a local government and a development area council of their own, they should desist from hosting the festival in Takum.

This attempt, according to the source, was viewed by the Kutebs as an affront thereby leading to resistance and the eruption of fighting at the festival venue last Tuesday. Among those whose property and houses were destroyed during the incident are Mr. Sylvanus Giwa, the Senior Special Assistant on Media to Governor Danbaba Suntai and Dr. Philip Duwe, Coordinator, Taraba State Action Committee on AIDS, SACA.

Tension was said to be mounting over possible

reprisal attacks in Takum and other parts of the southern Taraba where the two rival ethnic groups are predominantly found, even as residents of the area were trooping to the army barracks in Takum for safety.

In a swift reaction to the development, Governor Danbaba Suntai quickly dispatched a delegation comprising his deputy, Sani Abubakar Danladi and his Special Adviser on Security, Mr. Charles Maijankai, to Takum to assess the situation.

The Taraba state Police Command Public Relations Officer, Solomon Issa, confirmed the outbreak of the crisis in Takum, but declined to give details, insisting that he must get clearance from his boss before doing so.