

Court remands men over killing of 5 people during cult clash

A Makurdi magistrates' court in Benue State on Wednesday ordered the remand of four men at the correctional centre, Makurdi, for allegedly killing five persons during a cult clash.

The defendants, Kator Yandev, Samuel Uchenna, Okpomi Ekara and Surajo Hafeez, all residents of Gboko LGA, are facing charges of criminal conspiracy, belonging to a secret cult group, culpable homicide and causing mischief by fire.

Other charges preferred against them include possession of weapons and acts of terrorism.

When the case was mentioned, the Magistrate, Mrs Roseline Iyorshe, did not take their plea for want of jurisdiction and adjourned the matter to April 6.

Earlier, the prosecutor, Insp Godwin Ato, told the court that the case was received at the State CID, Makurdi, on February 15, from Operation Zenda, the security Joint Task Force (JTF), via a signal.

He said the signal stated that as a result of incessant rival cult clashes in Gboko town, five persons: Benson Kyotsu, Sughter Ayila, Iororun Ikyemum and two others were killed on February 11, and many houses set ablaze.

Ato said that as a result of the killings, men of Operation Zenda raided the cultists' hideouts and arrested the suspects in connection with the crimes while others fled the scene.

He said that one axe, one cutlass and a locally made pistol with three live cartridges were recovered from the defendants at the time of arrest. (NAN)