

Five Killed, Seven Houses Burnt Over Land Dispute

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No fewer than five persons have been confirmed dead and seven houses burnt by irate youths in Osile Village of Ogbunike in Oyi local government area of Anambra State, following the lingering land dispute in the area.

Also the monarch of Ogbunike town, Igwe John Umenyiora, has been arrested following his alleged involvement in the land dispute while several policemen sent to quell the civil unrest injured by the rampaging youths.

Reports has it that the people of Osile under the umbrella of Osile welfare league had accused Umenyiora of instigating the youths to cause trouble in the community due

to the refusal of the monarch to return the illegally acquired plots of land belonging to the village.

It was equally gathered that Umenyiora had gone ahead to register more acres of land despite efforts by some prominent members of the community to make him see reasons for the return.

Vice chancellor of Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, Prof Ilochi Okafor (SAN), who is an indigene of Ogbunike was said to have intervened in the matter while Umenyiora was away, only for a fresh mayhem to ensue after the monarch returned.

Confirming the report, the state Commissioner of Police, Mr Haruna John, told reporters that the commands had beefed up security in Ogbunike and was also doing everything

possible to put the crisis under check.

Haruna further said that some policemen sent to quell the crisis were attacked by the rampaging youths, which led to the redeployment of more policemen.

"One of those killed by the youths had his hands and legs tied by the youths before he was killed. We have sent more of our men to the town in order to ensure that the crisis is quelled and I assure the people of Ogbunike that the command is equal to the task in controlling any form of violence in the area", he said.

In two separate petitions to the Anambra State government signed by Mr Uche Okoye and Ikwuka Ibemesi among others, they alleged that Umenyiora applied to Osile Village on the land issue in 1977;