

Eight killed, 18 injured in Bauchi crisis



Published 1 day ago on November 20, 2018

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Eight people have been reported killed while 18 others sustained various degrees of injury when religious crisis erupted on Sunday night at Lushi, Yelwa a suburb of Bauchi State.

Also, three houses were destroyed in the crisis which spilled over till yesterday morning. However, the state Police Command said only three people were killed while 18 others were injured. The state Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), DSP Kamal Datti Abubakar, said 75 suspects had been arrested in connection with the crisis.

He said the problem started following a misunderstanding at a birthday party at Kusu area of Sakani, which later spread to other parts of the area.

The cause of the crisis could not be ascertained at press time but there were unconfirmed reports that two men were fighting over the

affection of a woman at the party. The PPRO disclosed that two houses were set ablaze during the crisis. A resident told our correspondent that two groups of youths at Lushi threw stones at each other and set houses ablaze.

The house of a retired superintendent of police was also affected. He was barely four months in the house. It was learnt that one of those killed was a civil servant who worked at the Federal Secretariat, Bauchi. He had earlier moved his entire family to a safe location following the crisis in the area.

He was said to have returned to his house before irate youths killed him and set his house ablaze. The identity of the deceased was yet to be known at press time. Residents of Yelwa Kagadama Lushi, Kusu and High Tension areas said they heard gunshots from 11p.m. on Sunday till yesterday morning and several of them had to flee from their houses.

But the police spokesman said he could not confirm the gunshots report. Residents alleged that the police stormed the area and allegedly broke into houses and made arbitrary arrests. But PPRO, Abubakar, told journalists on the phone that 75 persons were arrested in connection with the crisis. He said the situation had been brought under control and that investigation was ongoing to get to the root of the crisis.

Abubakar promised that those involved would be brought to book. Bauchi has experienced some of the worst ethnic, religious and political crises which had claimed several lives and destroyed property worth billions of naira.

One of such was the 1991 crisis which stalled the National Sports Festival being hosted by the state at the time. The state also witnessed post-election violence in 2011 which claimed several lives,

among them 11 National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) members.
Another was Boko Haram clash with police on July 2009, which
claimed several lives.

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