

41 houses destroyed in communal clash, monarch arrested

By Emmanuel Ajibulu

AWKA—A total of 41 houses have been confirmed burnt or destroyed in Osile Village of Ogbunike town, in Oyi Local Government Area of Anambra State, following the renewed attack by the youths of the village on selected members of the community over disagreement on communal land.

The crisis which has entered its second week has seen the death of at least five persons and several others, including policemen seriously wounded.

The traditional ruler of the

Ogbunike, John Umenyiora, a first class king, has been arrested and is currently under police custody in Awka. But unconfirmed reports said that he has been moved to Abuja.

Vanguard learnt that nine more suspects were arrested yesterday with pump action guns and some bullets, bringing to about 20, the number of persons so far arrested in connection with the crisis.

Over 200 mobile police men have been drafted to maintain peace in the village and the surrounding town. The crisis was said to have escalated when the armed youths allegedly attacked the police

men drafted to maintain peace, wounding some of them.

Police authorities in Awka confirmed the number of burnt and destroyed houses in the action which was described as “devastating, wanton and reckless”.

An indigene of the town who deployed the action of the youths said that, “the fabrics of the society has been destroyed and it will take a generation for that fabrics to be rebuilt because brothers rose against brothers, cousins rose against cousins and there is now high level of bitterness which will take time to go”.