

# Saturday **NEWS**

## Land dispute claims 8 lives in Benue

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**A**t least eight persons were feared dead while scores sustained varying degrees of injury in a fresh outbreak of a bloody communal clash between Olohi and Okpudu-Okpoga communities in Okpokwu local government area of Benue state.

Saturday Vanguard gathered from an eyewitness that the crisis which broke out late Thursday night left several houses razed while hundreds of persons have fled their homes for fear of being killed.

According to the source, the conflict erupted when armed youths from Olohi community allegedly

invaded Okpudu-Okpoga following a lingering dispute over a huge parcel of farmland.

He said, "both communities have been locked in a protracted dispute over a huge parcel of farmland and the crisis had lingered for a very long time.

"Unfortunately the situation seemed to have gotten out of hand and youths from Olohi last night allegedly invaded Okpudu-Okpoga shooting sporadically, though they met a stiff resistance from the locals who also tried to defend themselves.

"At the moment the situation on ground is still very unclear but from what we heard about eight persons may have been killed though several persons are still missing and unaccounted for

while many, including women and children have fled their homes in search of a safe haven."

When contacted, the Police Public Relations Officer, PPRO, Assistant Superintendent, ASP, Moses Yamu who confirmed the incident said the Police had recorded three deaths in the crisis.

Yamu said, "from available records one person was killed on the spot, another died on the way to hospital while the body of an old man was later recovered at the scene of the crisis.

"No arrests have been made as I speak with you but the Police is currently investigating the matter and we have also moved into the area to maintain the peace."