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5 killed, 20 houses burnt over land dispute in Benue

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By Spesh's World! on March 19, 2013 43 Views

five people were yesterday killed and about 25 houses burnt in a renewed land dispute between Mbagur and Mbawuar communities in Vandeikya local government area of Benue State.

Mbangur and Mbawuar are kindreds within Mbadede council ward of Vandeikya LGA, the home town of the special adviser to the Benue State governor on media and public Affairs, Dr Cletus Akwaya, as well as the former director of Federal Highways, Mr Jime Akaaka.

But it was learnt that the kindred head of Mbawuar community, Zaki Terkula Kuha and five tax collectors in the areas were yesterday arrested by the police for allegedly inducing the crisis.

The dispute, which began since yesterday, broke out when members of the Mbangur community had gone to farm on a portion of land which the rival Mbawuar community had claimed to be rightful owners of it. This is the third time the land dispute will occur.

The case on the disputed land had been dragged to an upper court in Makurdi and that judgment was delivered in favour of Mbangur community. But the situation reportedly infuriated the rival Mbawuar community and they violently protested the verdict because, according to them, the judgement was influenced by some top government functionaries from the area.

At Mbadede yesterday, primary and secondary schools as well churches and market places were closed down due to the crisis. But the council chairman of Vandeikya LGA, Mr. Benedict Kume, had quickly ordered the deployment of security operatives to maintain peace in the area.

Police public relations officer (PPRO) DSP Daniel Ezeala confirmed the incident but said that the command was yet to be officially briefed of any deaths. He added that men of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) and the Operation Zenda had since been detailed to the affected communities to maintain law and order.



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