

Renewed cult clash claims six lives in Calabar

By Agosi Todo, Calabar
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• **Cross River govt threatens to prosecute civil servants flouting order on COVID-19**

A fresh cults clash has claimed no fewer than six suspected members of two cult groups in Calabar.

The face-off started on Saturday after the burial of Ene Akabom, a suspected former member of the dreaded Bakassi Strike Force, who was also a known cultist in the Idang-Ibesikpo-Ambo axis of Calabar South Local Council of the state.

A source said that members of Klanz and Axe who participated in the funeral ceremony of the late Akabom had an altercation, which led to exchange of gunshots.

The source said: "It was at this funeral that the rival gangs had altercation, which led to the resurgence of the clash.

"As we speak, six members of the rival groups have been killed as at Monday morning at different locations in Calabar.

"A barber was shot right inside his shop on Mbukpa Road when he was attending to customers at 7:00 p.m. yesterday. This led to stampede in the nearby popular market.

"Another was allegedly cut into pieces and carried in a sack bag to the victim's compound."

Meanwhile, the Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Irene Ugbo, however, confirmed the incident, noting that only two persons were killed.

In another development, Cross River State government has threatened to prosecute any civil servant that flouts precautionary measures on COVID-19 as work resumed yesterday.

The state governor, Ben Ayade, had last Sunday directed all civil servants to return to work.

Chairman of the state COVID-19 response team, Dr. Betta Edu, stated this yesterday in Calabar, adding that everybody entering the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) must wear their face-masks always.

Edu, who is the state's Commissioner for Health, said workers and members of the public who go out to pursue their daily living are expected to retire home at the end of work as a curfew put in place by the Federal Government would be implemented in the state, saying:

- "All MDAs must have a bucket and running water in front of their offices and all persons going in must wash their hands before entry.
- Hand sanitisers should be used by members of staff in their cars, offices and at conference rooms.
- Meetings of more than 20 persons are prohibited at all MDAs and MDAs are not



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allowed to hold public events or gatherings, as heads of such MDAs will be sanctioned following the law.

- Interstate and international borders remain shut, local vigilante and security agencies are requested to continue giving the usual support at these border locations.”

The health commissioner, who was a guest at Hit FM, said though the governor had earlier directed all civil servants on Grade Level 10 and above to resume work three weeks ago, he yesterday issued a directive that all workers in the state should resume work on May 4, 2020 to continue to sustain productivity and economy of the state.

