

X 6 Killed In Benin In Renewed Cult War

BY PATRICK OCHOGA, Benin City

No fewer than six individuals were feared killed in parts of Benin City within the last three days in clashes between members of rival cults believed to be the Eiye and Aiye (Black Axe) confraternities.

The cult war was said to have started near Oba Market over issues of ticketing between members of a task force alleged to have been engaged by the state government and another group in the same area believed to have been engaged by the Oredo Council.

Both groups are said to have belonged to rival cults.

One of the dead, it was gathered, had just rounded off his Master's Degree programme from the University of Benin, while a community leader from Iyowha area, near the Nigerian Institute for Oil Palm Research (NIFOR), has reported that six persons were missing in the area.

In another development, suspected hoodlums attacked a reporter with The Nation newspaper in the state, Ben Ogbemudia, along Eke Street, near St Saviour, Upper Sokponba Road, Benin City.

According to Ogbemudia, on Monday evening, at about 7.30 pm, he had parked his car along the street where he had gone to see his family before the New Year's Eve activities.

In no time, his suspected assailants, comprising three men whom he identified as Emwanta, Adult and Osaretin, roared to a stop in a Nissan marked Edo DGE 382 AA, and attacked him, inflicting deep machete cuts on the upper arm of his left hand.

He was later rushed to a private clinic where the cut were stitched and later reported the incident at the St Saviour Police Station.

When contacted yesterday, the Edo State police public relations officer (PPRO), DSP Moses Eguavoen, said that he was expecting a brief from the district police officers in the affected areas.

The artist