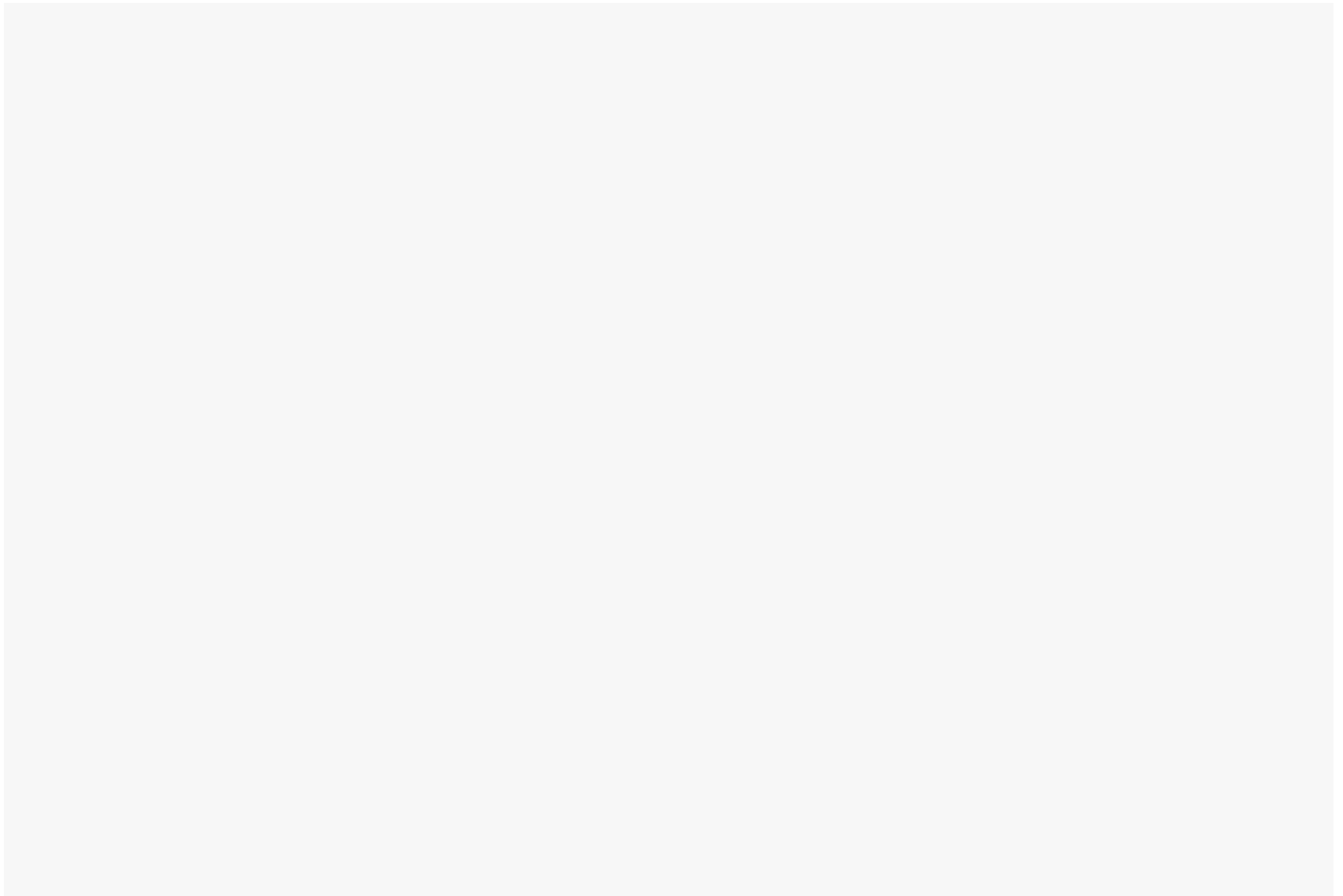


18 feared killed in Edo cult war

•Assistant Commissioner, two others shot

November 14, 2020



By Bisi Olaniyi, Southsouth Bureau Chief

The rival cult war in Benin and its environs in Edo State yesterday escalated with the killing of no fewer than 18 persons.

An Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP, name withheld), who is in charge of one of the two area commands in Benin, and two other policemen were shot in the exchange of bullets by members of Aye and Eiye cults.

The police officers are now in critical condition at the University of Benin Teaching Hospital (UBTH).

Several other people were similarly injured, some by stray bullets and others falling down while running for their lives.

Some of the casualties were innocent people.

The cultists, according to eye witnesses, freely used AK-47 rifles, machetes, battle axes and other dangerous weapon.

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The pandemonium sparked by the sporadic shooting forced banks, markets, offices and other business outlets to shut down hurriedly.

Residents stayed indoors and the streets were deserted.

The ACP and the two other policemen, according to witnesses, were shot in the early hours of yesterday on Murtala Muhammed Way, close to Third East Circular Road Junction in the Sokponba axis of Benin.

The three police officers were shot by the cultists, immediately they were sighted during rescue operation in the hot zone.

Cult activities also heightened in the Ekenwan, Siluko, Wire, Dumez, Texile Mill and New Benin axes, as well as Ogida, Ogbe and Ibivwe Quarters of the state capital.

With the police still recovering from the October 19 looting and razing of seven police stations in the state, soldiers were deployed in the troubled areas of Benin, especially Upper Sokponba, Idogbo and Three House Junction.

Hoodlums, who hijacked the #EndSARS protests in Benin, attacked the Maximum Correctional Centre (White House) on Sapele Road and the Medium Correctional Centre on Airport Road, both in Benin, and opened the jail house for 1,993 inmates, mostly cultists, to escape.

Some of them have resumed their criminal activities.

One of the leaders of the cult groups was buried yesterday, and moments after the interment, his supporters went on the rampage as a mark of respect to their departed leader.

Edo Commissioner of Police, Babatunde Kokumo, and the state's Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Chidi Nwabuzor, a Superintendent of Police (SP), did not respond to telephone calls from The Nation yesterday.



The advertisement features a smiling woman with red hair holding a fan of colorful banknotes. To her right is the text: **The SIMBA DEN** The Inverter Specialists, **Refer & Earn**, **Earn 5% On Each Inverter And Battery You Refer.***, **@ The Simba Den**, **T&C Apply, and **Available Brands: LUMINOUS Genus KSTAR**. The background is white with a blue and red gradient at the bottom.