

Eight feared killed in renewed Bayelsa cult war

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No fewer than eight persons suspected to be cultists have been feared killed in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State capital, following a renewed cult war between two cults – Greenlanders and Boboos.

The two groups, it was learnt, threatened more clashes in the coming days.

Some residents of Yenagoa metropolis, particularly those living on Eghide Road; Ebis Road, along Biogbolo; Obele, along Yenagoa; Sandfill, along Hospital Road; and Good News Street, in the Azikoro village area, had reportedly witnessed some killings.

While two boys were shot dead on Tuesday at the Sandfill area, two boys were left dead each at Good News Junction and Eghide Road on Wednesday.

One of the deceased, identified as *T. Juice*, a suspected member of the Greenlanders cult and an indigene of the Ogbia Local Government Area of the state, was shot dead at close range while eating at an open restaurant in the area.

The street, which is known as Egbide Street, but popularly called Punch Road, was thrown into pandemonium when three youths armed with assault weapons opened fire on their defenceless rivals.

1. *Juice* was reportedly shot in the head, but his unnamed friend, a target, escaped before they opened fire. Many residents, including journalists, scampered for safety.

The killers escaped thereafter through the OMPADEC Road. By the time six detachments of policemen arrived at the scene, a radio message to police patrol teams indicated that another shooting had taken place in the Elebele area with another dead body left behind.

Many residents of the state capital, who spoke on the incidents, blamed the judiciary and the Director of Public Prosecutions for alleged fraudulent advice and non-prosecution of arrested cultists.

Some claimed that the DPP was frustrating the men of the Nigeria Police Force in the area of diligent prosecution of arrested cultists in spite of the recent anti-cultism bill signed into law by Governor Seriake Dickson.

When contacted, the Police Public Relations Officer, Mr. Asinim Butswat, confirmed clashes by cult groups, but said three persons were killed.

He also said three persons had been arrested in connection with the cult killings.

Butswat, a Deputy Superintendent of Police, said, “Three persons have been reported dead in the past four days. It was cult clashes between rival cult groups.

“We have identified the ringleaders of some of the groups that clashed.

“We have so far arrested three persons in connection with the killings and we have intensified efforts to arrest other cult members.”