

Renewed Cult War Claims Six Lives in Edo

April 16, 2020 4:11 am



Adibe Emenyonu in Benin City

Six persons were alleged to have lost their lives to suspected herdsmen and rival cult war in some parts of Edo State.

It was gathered that two farmers in Odighi, Ovia North East Local Government Area (ONELGA) were killed yesterday by suspected herdsmen.

The victims were said to have gone to their farms to source for food for their families when some armed men suspected to be herdsmen shot them to death.

An eye witness, Mr. Hilary Omoregie, an indigene of Odigbetue, said: "I am from Odigbetue, a neighbouring community to Odighi. I was going to my village this morning (yesterday) when I saw people gathered around two dead bodies. The two were farmers, one from Igbira farmer and the other an Urhobo man. They were said to have gone to their farms when they were ambushed and shot by suspected herdsmen. They have been troubling us and people don't go to farms again because of attacks like this one."

The corpses of the two persons have been evacuated by the police from Ekiadolor Police Division in ONELGA

In a related development, four persons were alleged to have been killed since Easter Sunday as a result of continued clash between members of Eiye and Black axe confraternities.

A young man was allegedly shot dead on Tuesday night at Ugbague Lane by suspected rival cult members.

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Similarly, another young man on Easter Sunday was allegedly trailed and shot dead while going to have his bath.

On Monday night, two persons were allegedly killed in Egor Local Government Area in two separate locations along Benin Technical College (BTC) Road and Universal junction along Medical Stores Road.

One of the victims was identified simply as 'Odion,' was alleged to have been shot dead at his auto mechanic workshop also on Benin Technical College (BTC) Road.

The identity of the other victim that was allegedly killed at Universal junction could not be ascertained.

It was learnt that the assailants stormed the workshop in a red coloured Toyota Camry car and shot their victims and immediately zoomed off, leaving them dead on the spot.

When contacted on telephone over the cult killings, the Edo State Police Commissioner, Mr. Lawal Jimeta, said he was yet to be briefed about the cult killings. Jimeta added that some persons have been arrested by the anti-cultism unit of the police.

He clarified that the two farmers were actually hunters who went to the bush the previous night and their bodies were discovered yesterday morning, adding that investigation has commenced on the incident.

Meanwhile, a frontline aspirant of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Edo State, Pastor Osagie Ize-Iyamu, has condemned the streak of attacks on farmers in rural communities across the state by herders.

Ize-Iyamu also expressed concern over the rising insecurity in the

state, which was characterised by coordinated attacks on persons of interests without adequate investigation or prosecution, proliferation of arms and attacks on rural dwellers in their farms.

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