

# 8 die as cult war rages in Benin

By Simon Ebegbulem

**B**ENIN—EIGHT persons have been killed in the past four days in different parts of Benin City in a renewed war among rival cult groups in the state.

Two Benin-based local actors, Mr Eghauyi Ogheide, a.k.a *Ukeke*, and Eghosa Idehen, also known as *Erejiro*, were also shot dead Tuesday by suspected assassins. The Police Public Relations Officer in the state, ASP Peter Ogboi, said, however, that the police was investigating the actual cause of death.

The Senior Special Assistant to Governor Adams Oshiomhole on Arts, Culture and Tourism, Mr Orobosa Omo-Ojo, described the brutal murder of the artists as shocking, lamenting that "the artiste community will surely miss them dearly."

Meanwhile, the Edo state Police command has beefed up security in all parts of the city. *Vanguard* was reliably informed that over two thousand detectives have been deployed in all parts of the city to monitor the activities of the rampaging cultists.

The killings, *Vanguard* learnt, started last Monday in different parts of the city. Corpses were found at GRA, Dawson road and Upper Mission. The Police spokesman in the state, ASP Ogboi, who expressed concern over the situation,

said the police in the state was doing all it could to bring the situation under control.

According to him, "I cannot tell you all we have been doing to stop this dastardly act. But all I can say is that we are on it. We have made some arrests and we are clamping down on cultists. We are equally looking at those who were arrested but were charged to court in the past. We are also going to hold meetings with community leaders and other stakeholders because these people committing this havoc are from one community or the other.

"So we are on top of the situation. We have

increased surveillance everywhere. So we are not sleeping because this madness must stop," he asserted.

Lamenting the killing of the two artists, Omo-Ojo stated that "as an artist, I appreciate the dark clouds that have befallen our land. Certainly, the deceased artists were leading lights of our rich artistic and cultural heritage that has made us proud as a people. No doubt, the artist community will miss them dearly, so also the entire people of Edo State both home and abroad whose hearts they daily filled with laughter and humour in their off moments."

## Policeman, woman shot dead in P-Harcourt

By George Onah

**P**ORT HARCOURT—A MOBILE policeman and a female staff of one of the major telecommunications companies were shot dead yesterday in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

The killings bring to seven the number of policemen killed within six days in three separate robberies in the city.

Witnesses told *Vanguard* that at "about 8.20 am, a Golf car painted in Rivers State taxi colour blocked a white

Honda bus with police registration number 1493 SPY, beside Texaco Filling station at Artillery junction.

"Suddenly, shooting started and there was pandemonium. All we heard was real gunfire and we saw them dragging down the shot policeman from the bus.

Confirming the incident, Police PRO, Rita Inoma-Abbey, said "gunmen attacked a bus along 1st Artillery area conveying large quantities of recharge cards worth millions of naira, heading for Eleme."