

4 dead in Edo cult war, as robbers go on rampage in Benin

By Ozioruva Aliu

BENIN CITY — IN what looked like a renewed cult war in Benin City, four persons were reportedly killed between Wednesday and yesterday in several parts of the Edo State capital.

Meanwhile, robbers were on the rampage at the New Benin area beside Oguola Primary School, yesterday morning as they robbed a Point of Sale (PoS) operator and dispossessed several persons of their phones and other items including money.

One of the victims killed by the suspected rival cult members, Wednesday night, at a mechanic workshop located at Osasogie Street, was identified as Emmanuel Michael.

An eye witness told journalists, yesterday, that the gunmen shot sporadically into the air before going straight to their suspected target and killed him.

He said: "The gun-wielding men stormed the mechanic shop at about 6.20 pm Wednesday. Upon noticing that he was their target, the assailants immediately went straight to the said Emmanuel

Michael and fired several shots into his head, killing him on the spot.

"The situation forced the residents to flee the area while other shop owners closed for the day and fled. It took the intervention of the Edo State Joint Security team to restore normalcy in the area."

This came a few hours after an unidentified furniture maker was killed by gunmen at his Aragua Street workshop, off Wire Road also in the Edo State capital.

Two other persons were killed around Uwelu spare parts. One of the victims, a taxi driver, identified simply as David, was reportedly shot while waiting to tow his cab, while the identity of the second person is

still unknown.

A friend of the killed David told *Vanguard* yesterday: "He went to Uwelu to get spare parts for bottom plate of his car. I called Wednesday afternoon and he said he was making arrangements to fix the car.

"Later in the evening, his phone was no longer reachable till this morning (yesterday). When I called one of our friends, who went to find out and told me Dave was one of the two persons killed. He was shot in the head."

Contacted, the state Police Public Relations Officer, Chidi Nwabuzor, said he had not been briefed of the incidents but he would make an official response after getting the details.

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