

5 feared killed as 2 Kwara communities renew hostilities •Govt imposes curfew

By Demola Akinyemi

ABOUT five persons were feared dead in a gun battle between the residents of Offa and Erinle in Kwara State, while two buildings were reportedly torched in a renewed hostilities, yesterday.

To halt the crisis, Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq has imposed a 6 pm to 8 am curfew on residents of both communities.

It was gathered that the latest crisis was ignited by members of

Road Transport Employers Association of Nigeria, RTEAN in Offa, who allegedly planned to commence the construction of an office on the buffer zone demarcated by the state government, Wednesday, but was resisted by their Erinle counterparts.

Several interventions of the Area Police Command and other security agencies to quell the crisis failed as the transporters ignored all peaceful interventions and stood their grounds.

By 230pm, yesterday, there was

reported exchange of gunshots by the warring communities, while thick smoke engulfed the troubled zone before the state government announced the curfew.

Kwara State government has ordered the immediate deployment of policemen, soldiers, and officers of NCSCD to the troubled areas at press time.

Chief Press Secretary to the governor, Rafiu Ajakaye, in the statement said the curfew will be in force between 6 p.m. and 8 a.m in Offa and Erinle until further

notice.

According to the statement, "This follows the renewed hostilities between some groups of persons from the two communities on Thursday.

"Security agencies have been deployed to enforce the curfew. While security forces on ground are to maintain peace, military reinforcement from Sobi Barracks and the Mobile Police Force from Ilorin has been deployed immediately.

"All residents are hereby directed to withdraw from the streets of Offa and Erinle and all contested areas immediately. Residents are to stay indoors until the curfew is reviewed."

Man unleashes dogs on police team in Lagos