

# 9 killed as cultists clash on 7/7 day

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At least nine people were reportedly killed when cult gangs clashed while one of the many cult groups operating in Nigeria celebrated the 7/7 day.

Daily Trust could not independently verify the number of those killed but sources said nine were hacked down Sunday and Monday mostly in the southern part of the country even as police authorities sustained nationwide crackdown on suspected groups.

The 7/7 celebration is an annual event by cult groups involving secret initiation and supremacy battles.

① In Lagos, at least one person was killed and several others injured in a bloody war between rival cult gangs in the Ijanikin area on Sunday. Suspected members of the Neo-Black Movement (NBM), also known as Aiye or Black Axe, celebrated an anniversary, causing tension in many parts of the metropolis.

One person was allegedly killed at Cele bus stop in Ijanikin, while several others were injured in different areas of the state.

A source said the deceased, identified as Hitman, was killed a few metres away from Ijanikin police station around 8:45 PM on Sunday. The deceased was ambushed by rival cult gang members while on his way to join his group.

② In Abia, a former chairman (number 3 man) of Aye, identified as Nonso Ewuzie, was killed by a joint task force security team.

③ In Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Peter Ekpeowo was reportedly killed by alleged Aye members.

④ In Anambra, another Aye member, identified only as Apparatus, was allegedly killed by a rival group in Amikwo.

⑤ In Awka, Odinaka, allegedly belonging to Aye, was killed by a rival group.

⑥ In Imo, there was heightened security alert over Aye and Vikings cult clashes after one member of a rival group was shot dead at MCC road. Three suspected cultists were earlier shot dead around Imo State University. An advisory from the university advised students to stay away from any crowded gathering within IMSU premises. The state police command deployed a special squad to urban and rural areas to checkmate the activities of suspected cultists.

Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) ASP Henry Okoye disclosed that Commissioner of Police Aboki Danjuma ordered the deployment of officers to check cult activities.

In Kwara State, a joint patrol by the police command and members of the state community policy advisory council led to the detention of over 30 suspects arrested at some black spots, who were screened and later released.

Although the state police command said no arrests were made, the community policing initiative confirmed 30 were picked up.

Daily Trust observed increased police surveillance and deployment of officers at strategic places around the metropolis. Many motorists were subjected to searches, especially those with suspicious occupants.

At least two people were killed by rival gangs a few days before the festival, heightening tension in the state. Police spokeswoman Toun Ejire-Adeyemi told our correspondent on Monday evening that no arrests had been made thus far regarding the special operation, which started on Sunday and will continue through the week.