

# Five die as cultists clash during Oro festival in Ikorodu

By **Odita Sunday**

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The annual Oro cultural festival held in the Ikorodu area of Lagos State at the weekend turned bloody as suspected members of rival cult gangs engaged themselves in a shootout.

Five members of the secret cult groups died in the festival while several others sustained bullet and machete wounds after members of the gang engaged themselves with guns, cutlasses, and bottles.

Eyewitnesses alleged that members of Aiye took advantage of the festival to attack members of a rival gang, Eiye. The eyewitnesses said the first attack took place around the Imota area of Ikorodu, while Eiye members went on a reprisal at Owutu area of Ikorodu.

The witnesses alleged that the first death was recorded at Imota when members of Aiye hacked down a suspected member of Eiye. It was gathered that the killing of one Taofeek, a suspected member of Eiye, who was on his way to Agric bus stop in Ikorodu, sparked off the reprisal attack at Imota.

An eyewitness, Kamoru Tayelolu, told newsmen that the war started on Saturday night and spilled over to Sunday. But by the time police restored normalcy in the area, about five persons had lost their lives at Imota, near Ikorodu.

He said this followed a clash between Aiye and Eiye cult groups in the community.

“Members of Aiye seized the opportunity of the annual Oro festival to strike. Retaliation was then staged by the Eiye group.

“The attack and counter-attack led to heightened fears in imota and its environs as many scampered for safety. Imota and adjoining communities including Adamo, Araromi, Isiu, Emuren, Igode have been under siege in the last three years,” he added.

Ahead of this year’s Oro festival, non-indigenes of Ikorodu had been advised to stay off the area between Saturday, August 24 and Tuesday, August 27, as a result of the annual “eluku” festival. The advice was given by Abdul-Kabir Shotobi, the Ayangburen of Ikorodu kingdom. The notice said the festival would hold all through the night on the said dates.

