

CP debunks death of 19 people in Anambra cult-related killings

From Osiberoha Osibe, Awka

• Embarks on manhunt of perpetrators

ANAMBRA State Commissioner of Police, Aderemi Adeoye, has refuted reports that 19 persons were killed in the last Black Easter cult clashes in Awka, the State capital.

Adeoye disclosed this during a summit organised by the Emeka Odogwu-led State Council of Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) to give account of his stewardship tagged "Finishing Strong". He assured that the Command would soon come out

with the actual number of deaths.

Represented by the Deputy Commissioner of Police in charge of the State Criminal Investigations Department (SCID), Akin Fakorede, the CP urged the media to cross-check the authenticity of their reports before going to press to avoid negative reactions.

Adeoye said the police have gone on the offensive against cultists and other criminal elements, stressing that the re-

cent cult-related killings is an isolated case, coming at the time the police have been on top of the game.

The Police boss explained that kidnapping is a heinous crime and a national security concern, and condemned the existing law against it, describing it as reactive and insufficient, necessitating an urgent review to make it proactive.

In the attacks, which have claimed 14 lives, mainly Awka youths and young adults, *The Guardian* gathered that two persons were shot dead at Aroma and Dine Park near Eke Awka Main Market respectively, while one life each was lost in Dike Street, Ukwudala Amikwo, Obunagu, Umuonaga, Umukwa villages and Amaenyi quarters respectively.

The four killings between Sunday and Tuesday occurred at Udeke Street, besides Parker's Joint and Eke Awka.

The Tuesday's killing of another popular youth convener at same Parker's joint where he lives has jolted residents and stakeholders who have called on government and security operatives to halt the dastardly act proactively.

But the CP noted that police

personnel have suffered heavy casualty in the discharge of their duties, contending that the task of policing should still be done regardless of the death scare.

He appreciated the existing cordial relationship between the State's Police Command and Journalists, stressing that the media have contributed significantly to the successes recorded by the Command under his watch.

Adeoye said the Command has also recently introduced some new proactive policing strategies and initiatives, and will sustain the raid against insecurity in the state.

In his remarks, spokesperson for the command, Ikenga Tochukwu, said since the arrival of CP Adeoye in July 2023, the state has witnessed reduction in crime rate, through proactive and preventive policing.

According to him, the command has destroyed insurgents' camps at Achalla, Ogbunka, Aguluezechukwu, Ogboji, among others.

He said that they rescued kidnap victims, recovered three Beretta pistols from cultists at Ogidi and Ekwulobia, among other arms as well as recovered ammunition at Awada, other insurgents' camps and locations.



CP Aderemi Adeoye