

# SPECIAL feature

**S**OMETIME between daylight and dusk, Eki Edehor, a mere boy, became 'death.' It happened on a Tuesday evening, in New Oko-Oba, Agege, a Lagos suburb. Edehor, 19, tracked down a childhood friend, Dele, to their mutual crush's house. In the presence of the girl, Edehor pounced on

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Dele and bludgeoned him to coma with a steel rod. Then he carved the insignia of his cult, the Neo Black Movement a.k.a Black Axe, on Dele's chest with a hunting knife.

## Reign of cult gangs 4

# Living under the

# gun

● Lagos residents groan amid cult violence

Although Dele, who allegedly belongs to a rival cult, the Buccaneers, was not alone at the time of the assault, the crew of six that were with him at the time of the attack reportedly scampered off, far from the scene of mayhem.

Edehor was simply too much for them to handle; having failed to halt his strides with two deadly shots from a magnum, Dele's crew took to their heels, leaving their friend and 'brother' at the mercy of Edehor. The latter allegedly leapt off his victim after beating him to a pulp thinking he was dead. Then he sauntered off in bolt, defiant strides. His dastardly act earned him the Benin nickname: "Uwhu" meaning "Death" in English and "Iku" in Yoruba.

"We all watched in horror as he clubbed his friend in front of the tiny girl whose love they were both fighting for.

We thought Dele had died because he didn't move on the ground few minutes after Eki (Edehor) left him in a pool of blood. The girl and other spectators later rushed to get the victim's parents. They rushed him to a nearby hospital. Immediately he recovered, his mother, a widow, shipped him off to Benue to live with her sister," revealed, Sakiru Oderinde, a landlord in the neighbourhood.

In another incident, Raimi Asegbe, 26, was felled in a haze of dust and blood lust, on a Thursday evening in October 2015. Until his sad fate, Asegbe prowled the streets of Ilupeju with habitual grace. But as he picked his way through the Lagos neighbourhood, death kept pace at his heels with the savage intent of a beast.

Few minutes past 8pm, while worshippers at a nearby mosque completed *Ishai*, the Muslim evening prayer, five young men emerged from the shadows on motorcycles. At their arrival, they fired random shots into the air apparently to scare people. They were looking for Asegbe.

Immediately they sighted him on the road, they hit him with a metal object to weaken him. Asegbe, according to an eye witness, tried to run but he was overpowered. The gang of five descended upon him with consummate brutishness and skill; cruising with bizarre dexterity, the assailants, believed to be members of a notorious cult group, shot Asegbe at close range, killing him on the spot.

For about 20 minutes, the neighbourhood was terrified by the gory incident. Some residents said the assailants did not leave immediately after the incident. They allegedly threatened to kill more people. Asegbe reportedly belonged to a rival gang that invaded Kayode Street in Onipanu, Mushin two days earlier - on Tuesday October 28 to be precise - killing two persons from the opposing gang that killed him in a reprisal attack.

A resident, who saw him 30 minutes before he was killed, said: "I saw him with a lady and another man in Iseyin Street at 7:30pm. He stopped by at a house and played with some people for about 15 minutes before he left. He walked towards Oyewole Street but 30 minutes later, we heard gunshots. We initially did not know where the shots were fired but I later got a call from a friend, who lives on Ilupeju Road, telling me that Raimi had been killed by a five-man gang. We rushed to the scene and saw his lifeless body in pool of blood."

The incident that led to Asegbe's death could be traced to October 28, 2015. Then, two youths were allegedly killed



• A cross section of Awawa Boys on parade following their arrest by the police.