

Police storm suspected cultists' hideout, kill 21

Chukwudi Akasike, Port Harcourt

AT least 21 suspected cult members were killed by operatives of the Rivers State Anti-Robbery Squad in Egi community of Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area.

A source from the community explained that the incident happened in the wee hours of Thursday in a forest located between Egi and Egburu.

It was gathered that security operatives, who got wind of the hideout of the cultists, stormed the forest and opened fire on them.

The team that stormed the bush was said to have left the corpses of the suspected cultists in the bush while permitting the deceased relatives to get their bodies there.

It will be recalled that Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni had in recent times been the centre of most cult-related killings, with scores of people losing their lives before and during the 2015 elections.

Another source, who preferred not to be mentioned, told *Saturday PUNCH* that three suspected cult members were arrested by the police on Friday morning in the area.

However, the State Police Public Relations Officer, Mr. Ahmad Muhammad, who was contacted to confirm the report, said he was not aware of the incidents.

Meanwhile, ahead of today's (Saturday) local government election, the State Police Command has announced the restriction of movement from 10pm on Friday to 6am on Saturday.

A statement signed by the State Police Public Relations Officer, Mr. Ahmad Mohammad, also said that the restriction of movement would continue from 9am to 6pm on Saturday.

Mohammad explained that the restriction of movement was declared by the police command to pave the way for a smooth council poll in the state on Saturday (today).

He said, "The Rivers State Police Command wishes to inform the general public that ahead of the Rivers State Local Government election that is scheduled to hold on Saturday, May 23, 2015, it has ordered a restriction of movement of vehicles across the state between 10pm on Friday, May 22, 2015 till 6am on Saturday May 23, 2015 in the first lap, and finally between 9am and 6pm on Saturday, May 23, 2015.

"The restriction is aimed at ensuring peace and serenity across the state before, during and after the local government election."

But the Peoples Democratic Party in the state said the Nigeria Police acted overzealously by imposing a 'curfew' in the state on account of the 'illegal' local

government election.

The state PDP in a statement signed by the Special Adviser, Media to its chairman, Mr. Jerry Needam, said the All Progressives Congress-led government in the state was purportedly conducting the council

election.

He said, "The police cannot be crying more than the bereaved as there is no security threat or any breach of public order that will justify the imposition of a curfew in Rivers State at this time.

"Even during the last

general elections with heightened competition and tension at that time, the police did not impose a curfew, wondering why the curfew at a more robust peace period and coming at a time the court stripped the election of legitimacy.

"It amounts to double standards for the police to aid illegality because they are a defendant as well as the INEC in the suit where the Federal High Court judge ordered parties to maintain status quo regarding the release of voter registers."

"To conduct an election without the voter register, the main ingredient of legitimacy in the election, is a slap to the court. The police should be law enforcers and not law breakers," the statement added.

Firm advises Nigerians on hypertension prevention

Jesusegun Alagbe

As Nigeria joined the world to mark this year's World Hypertension Day, which took place during the week, a manufacturer of medical equipment for health monitoring and therapy,

Tecno lifts pupils with scholarship

A smartphone manufacturer, Tecno, has concluded plans to give N100, 000 scholarship each to three pupils from public schools in Lagos State in recognition of the roles children play in the society.

The four selected public schools are Ijaiye Okokoro Primary School, Tonia Primary School, Ebenezer Primary School and Meiran Memorial School.

The firm also planned to assist the selected schools with instructional materials as part of its initiatives to invest

Omron, has advised Nigerians on moderating salt intake and monitoring their blood pressure regularly.

To commemorate the day, an associate professor at the College of Medicine, University of Lagos, Dr. Amam Mbakwem, had said that every

Nigerian should be at alert because the number of people with hypertension is increasing daily.

She also said that more black people have hypertension than the whites because the blacks tend to take too much salt.

She said, "We tend to consume more salt because of our climate. We sweat a lot and so we require more salt to balance up. But once too much salt is in the system, it triggers high blood pressure.

"Hypertension is one subject

every Nigerian should be aware of because the numbers are increasing in our nation. About fifteen to twenty years ago, the statistics was about 11 per cent of Nigerian adults that had hypertension. These days, we are looking at figures over 30 per cent."

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