

out.

arrest. He added that gang.

to get the loans.

on getting the bank officials."

Afeez Hanafi

**R**ESIDENTS of Ajoegbemi in the Somolu Local Government Area, Lagos State, say the community has been in palpable fear since last Sunday when three persons were killed in a clash between rival cults - Eye and Aiye.

The residents, who spoke with *PUNCH Metro*, said the incident had affected the peace in the community as most people had to stay indoors from 9pm.

Our correspondent learnt that the deceased persons were clubbed to death on Awoseyin, Odunlade and Agunbiade streets inward Onipanu bus stop on the fateful day.

It was gathered that members of Aiye fraternity

had gone on the rampage to avenge the death of a member's brother, Azeez Akinwumi, a tennis player, who was killed by some Eye cult members.

A resident of Agunbiade Street, Peju Afolabi, said one of the hoodlums was killed, adding that it took a combined team of policemen from Alade, Pedro and Onipanu divisions to stop the violence.

She said, "I was attending to a customer around 1.30pm on that day when I saw some youths chasing a guy. I rushed into my shop and locked myself in. They eventually caught the guy and slit his throat. It was policemen that later came to pick his corpse. I learnt the guy was not a resident."

Another resident, who identified himself only as

Dipo, said he saw two lifeless bodies in a pool of blood on his way home from Onipanu.

He said, "I was at Onipanu with a friend when I observed there was confusion on Agunbiade Street. I took an alternative route to Anifowoshe Street where I live. On my way home, I noticed that everywhere was deserted. There was a corpse on Awoseyin Street and I saw another one just before Odunlade Street. I learnt that it was a clash between Eye and Aiye cult members.

"I later learnt that it was the death of Azeez (Akinwumi) who was a brother of an Aiye member that caused the chaos. We have been living in fear and we can't stay outside

beyond 9pm again."

It was gathered that some traders in the community lost their goods to the fracas while scampering to safety.

A resident, Kehinde Mubi, however, lamented that policemen, who raided the neighbourhood after the clash, arrested innocent persons.

The Chairman, Ajoegbemi Community Development Association, Mr. Tunji Awokoya, said some of the miscreants worked for politicians and that people were afraid to identify them for fear of being hunted.

He said, "The community had been peaceful for several months until this incident occurred. It is politicians that are using these hoodlums. Some people told me three

persons died; some said it was four. For how long will this continue?

"Some residents know these hoodlums but they are afraid to disclose their identities. The executive secretary of Somolu Local Government has a role to play in curbing this violence."

The Lagos State Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Joe Offor, confirmed the deadly attack, adding that several others were injured.

He said, "The fight was between Eye and Aiye groups. Deaths were recorded but we cannot ascertain the number for now. People that were injured have been taken to hospitals and some arrests have been made. Investigation is ongoing."

## Three die in Lagos cult clash