

Cult members kill father of two in Lagos

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•Oworonshoki, area

Afeez Hanafi

Some hoodlums suspected to be cult members have killed a commercial motorcyclist identified only as Lukman at the Odo Eran area of Oworonshoki, a Lagos suburb.

Lukman, a father of two, was passing along Odo Eran on Monday when he was ambushed by the cult members, who hacked him to death.

Saturday PUNCH learnt that the incident was in furtherance of renewed hostility between rival cult groups terrorising the community.

The victim had, on sighting the hoodlums that day, attempted to evade the attack but ran into a gutter with the motorcycle in the process.

The assailants reportedly descended on him with cutlasses, leaving him for dead.

Operatives from the Oworonshoki Police Division were said to have removed his corpse and deposited it in a mortuary.

Some residents, who spoke to our correspondent, said the recent clashes had caused panic in the neighbourhood as they could no longer stay outside their houses beyond 10:00pm for fear of being caught up in the attacks.

One resident, who gave his name only as Bola, said, “Cult members have been fomenting trouble in the community these days. Just last month, a man was killed at Mayaki. Lukman should be about 30 years old. He was an artisan and rode *okada* in the evening.

“He told some people that Monday morning that he was just released on bail by the Anti-Cultism police unit. I learnt he was married with two children.

“The cult members don’t kill anybody; they usually attack one another in the evening. They cash in on the clashes to rob passersby of their valuables. We can no longer relax outside our houses beyond 10:00pm. Shop owners now close early for fear of being attacked.”

Another resident, who begged not to be named, said the hoodlums that attacked Lukman were about 12 and were all youths.

He said, “The police need to take proactive measures to stop these cult guys. People are living in fear and if nothing is done to check these hoodlums, some residents may be forced to relocate.”

The Lagos State Police Public Relations Officer, SP Chike Oti, confirmed the incident, adding that the motorcyclist was killed by a rival cult group.

He said the command had launched a massive manhunt for the hoodlums with over 500 suspected cult members arrested in the last five months.

He said, “The man that died was a well-known member of a cult that has been terrorising the area. He had been on the police wanted list. He was killed by a rival cult group. We are still investigating to find out and arrest the group that carried out the killing.

“We have Anti-Cultism unit close to Oworonshoki that frustrates these cult members from disturbing the peace of an area. The CP is also going round the state holding town hall meetings and talking to traditional rulers and other stakeholders to influence these youths to renounce cultism.”