

# Command arrests 86 suspected Lagos cultists, one killed

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Some of the suspected cultists



Traffic robbery suspects

## • Traffic robbers nabbed

### ***Etim Ekpimah and Deji Lambo***

The Lagos State Police Command says it has arrested 86 suspected cultists for allegedly terrorising residents of Adamo, Imota and Ijede communities in the Ikorodu area.

This is just as one person was shot dead and many were injured during a cult clash at the Benson area of Ikorodu on Sunday around 6.45am.

*PUNCH Metro* had reported that the Special Strike Force on Social Miscreants introduced by the state Commissioner of Police, Hakeem Odumosu, had arrested 65 suspected cultists to rid the Ikorodu area of criminal elements terrorising residents of the various communities.

The Police Public Relations Officer in the state, Bala Elkana, said in a statement on Sunday that during a follow-up operation by personnel of the command, 21 more suspected cultists were arrested, adding that they would be charged.

Elkana stated, "On Saturday, January 25, 2020, around 6am, acting on credible intelligence, the Special Strike Force on Social Miscreants established by the Commissioner of Police, Lagos State, Hakeem Odumosu, arrested 21 suspected cultists in the Adamo community, Imota.

"The suspects, who belong to two rival cults, the *Aiye* and *Eiye* confraternities, mobilised from the Emure and Adamo communities to unleash terror on residents of Adamo and environs. The arrest was carried out in a joint operation with operatives from the Imota Police Station, the Rapid Response Squad, the Special Anti-Robbery Squad and the Area 'N' Command. This is a follow-up to the operation carried out at Ijede, where 65 suspected cultists were arrested.

"Eleven assorted pistols of different calibres with a large quantity of ammunition were recovered from the suspects. The suspects confessed to be responsible for a series of violent attacks, murder and armed robbery incidents recorded in the Ikorodu area of Lagos State.

"The suspects will be charged. The Commissioner of Police further reaffirmed the commitment of the command to addressing the menace of cultism and youth gangsterism in the state."

At the Benson area, the police were said to have arrived at the scene promptly and shot repeatedly in the air to scare the cultists and prevent further killings.

A resident, who identified himself simply as Olugbenga, said his household was awakened by the commotion caused by the cultists and gunshots.

He stated, "We were still in bed when we heard people running and shouting that cultists had taken over the area and were pursuing them. And before my family could conjecture what was happening, we heard several gunshots.

"There was commotion everywhere; people did not know where to run to; even those, who were going to churches, were seen running in different directions and looking for where to hide.

"If not for the quick arrival of the police, many people would have been killed or wounded, and many shops would have been looted."

Olugbenga said the clash was between members of the *Eiye* and *Aiye* confraternities engage in supremacy fight.

Another resident, identified simply as Temitope, told *PUNCH Metro* that cult clashes in Ikorodu were becoming too frequent.

She stated that if she had money, she would quit her parents' place and relocate to another area of Lagos.

“The cultists are cruel and mean; those people I saw today don’t respect other people’s right to life,” she stated.

In another development, three suspects, Hassan Lekan, 19; Owolabi Seyi, 18; and Ismailia Ibrahim, 19, have been arrested by men of the state police command for robbing unsuspecting members of the public of their valuables.

Elkana said the suspects were arrested by the anti-traffic robbery patrol team deployed in the Ipaja area, adding that the suspects would be charged.

He said, “On Saturday, January 19, 2020, around 5.30pm, following sustained monitoring, police operatives deployed in the Ipaja area on anti-traffic robbery patrol (motorcycle patrol) by the CP, Hakeem Odumosu, arrested three traffic robbery suspects, Hassan Lekan, 19; Owolabi Seyi, 18; and Ismailia Ibrahim, 19.

“The suspects specialise in snatching handbags, phones and money from unsuspecting members of the public. They mostly operate between 4am and 7am. Items recovered from them included the phones and bags they snatched from three different victims. The suspects have been charged.”