

FEATURED

Command nabs four as Lagos cult clashes claim 14 in three days

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• *Okada riders attack LAGESC officials*

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The Lagos State Police Command said it had arrested four persons in connection with cult clashes in the Obun-Ale, Ireshe, Ladega, Itunpate, Kokoro-Abu and Adamo areas of Ikorodu between suspected members of the *Aiye* and *Eiye* confraternities.

PUNCH Metro gathered that clashes started on Sunday, with 14 persons feared dead as of Tuesday.

An eyewitness, Farouk Aderibigbe, told one of our correspondents that the clash started when suspected members of the *Aiye* Confraternity shot dead four persons, including an innocent motorcyclist, identified simply as Pastor, around Ireshe and Obun-Ale on Sunday.

He said, “Cultists have scattered everywhere in Ikorodu; members of the *Eiye* and *Aiye* groups have started clashing again and a lot of people, including innocent residents, have been killed. Around 7pm on Sunday, members of the *Aiye* Confraternity stormed the Obun-Ale area and shot three *Eiye* cultists dead; two others, who were also shot in the neck, were rushed to the Ikorodu General Hospital, but we don’t know if they survived.

“Also in the night, a motorcyclist’s dead body was seen opposite Oriwu Merchant, along the Ireshe Road. The victim’s motorcycle was found beside him. We gathered that the cultists, who invaded Obun-Ale, were fleeing on motorcycles when one of their motorcycles stopped abruptly. Pastor was riding his motorcycle to a destination in the area when the cultists waylaid him and shot him dead.”

Another eyewitness, Oke Fakunle, said during a reprisal on Monday, suspected members of the *Eiye* Confraternity allegedly shot two rival members dead, adding that a yet-to-be-identified businessman was also killed while resisting the cultists from looting his shop.

He said, “Around 11am on Monday, members of the *Eiye* Confraternity retaliated by shooting an *Aiye* member, Ola, to death at his barbershop on Idera Street in Itunpate. Around 1pm, they proceeded to the Kokoro-Abu area, where they apprehended another rival member, stripped him naked and shot him in the head in broad daylight. Not done, the *Eiye* members later went to the Ladega area and shot a businessman dead during an attempt to rob him at his shop.”

PUNCH Metro gathered that the clashes took another dimension on Tuesday, when seven persons, who were said to be innocent, were shot dead by suspected members of the *Aiye* Confraternity, who invaded the Adamo area of Ikorodu.

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An eyewitness said, “Around 2pm, the *Aiye* cultists suddenly stormed the Mojoda-Aro area of Adamo and started shooting at innocent persons. They shot more than seven persons to death and I saw their corpses. Some of the victims were businessmen and women, who were protecting their shops from being looted. We have called the *Onyabo* Vigilante Group, but it refused to intervene despite the tension everywhere.

“A lot of people are mourning in Adamo as I speak with you and many have deserted their homes and some cannot open their shops. Everywhere is deserted; residents are scared of going out and a lot of people, who went to work this morning (Tuesday), are unaware of what has happened in Adamo.”

However, a source in the *Onyabo* Vigilante Group said, “The reason why *Onyabo* refused to intervene is because the local government is not paying us. One of our boys sustained a bullet wound while attempting to apprehend cultists and the Chairman, Ikorodu Local Government, Wasiu Adeshina, was notified, but he refused to help us. The monarch has called us and we told him that we are not working.”

When contacted, Adeshina said, “Every month, there is a cheque that we issue to the *Onyabo* Vigilante Group to assist the outfit in cases like this. But when this case happened on Sunday and I learnt about it, I quickly called the DPO to go into action and the police are on top of the situation.”

When contacted, the state Police Public Relations Officer, Muyiwa Adejobi, said, “There was a clash between cultists and our division in Imota intervened to restore normalcy in the affected areas.

“We have arrested four suspects and we are going after other fleeing members of the groups. We are not aware of any death as we have yet to recover any corpse.”

Similarly, pandemonium broke out in the Marwa area of Lekki Phase 1 on Tuesday after commercial motorcyclists clashed with the personnel of the Lagos State Environmental Sanitation Corps.

It was gathered that the LAGESC personnel stormed the area around noon and seized the goods of some street traders.

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One of our correspondents learnt that the action infuriated some of the motorcyclists, who mobilised and attacked the officers.

An eyewitness, who spoke on condition of anonymity, told *PUNCH Metro* that policemen from the Maroko Police Station came to rescue the officers.

He said, “The officers came and started seizing the goods of the people selling by the roadside in the area. The motorcyclists started attacking the officers by throwing stones and using planks to smash their vehicles.

“The motorcyclists went to mobilise themselves and in no time everywhere became rowdy with people running for their lives, but because of the number of the motorcyclists, the officers retreated and policemen from the Maroko Police Station came to rescue the officers and some motorcyclists were arrested.”

Adejobi confirmed the incident and stated that four suspects were arrested.

“It is true. They attacked the LAGESC officials while on duty. Four of the motorcyclists were arrested and they have been handed over to the task force with their motorcycles for prosecution,” he said.

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