

Nine feared killed in Osun, Benue,

Bola Bamigbola, John Charles and Tony Okafor

NINE persons are feared killed in rival cult clashes in Osun, Benue and Anambra states.

In Osogbo, the Osun State capital, three persons were feared killed on Sunday when rival cults engaged in deadly clashes in some parts of.

The victims were identified as Sogo Owonikoko, aka Marley; Daniel and one Afeez, popularly known as Eja.

According to sources, the killings started around 8am at Afe junction near the Obate community, when gunmen believed to be members



Deserted Kolawole Street, Osogbo

of Aye confraternity stormed the area on motorcycles and shot dead

Owonikoko.

The deceased was believed to be a

member of the rival Eye Confraternity. Around 8.30am on Kolawole Street, gunmen on motorcycles also shot dead Daniel, who was said to be visiting a friend.

The perpetrators reportedly fled after shooting the victim in the head.

Another suspected cultist, Afeez, was also allegedly hacked to death around Obalende area of the city by members of a cult.

Our correspondent observed during a visit to Kolawole and Afe junction areas that the streets were deserted as residents stayed in door for fear of reprisal by the rampaging groups.

A resident of Kolawole Street, who preferred anonymity, told PUNCH Metro that Daniel's corpse was later evacuated by the police.

When contacted, the spokesperson for the Osun State Police Command, Yemisi Opalola, said one person was reported dead.

Opalola stated, "One Nofist Owonikoko, a resident of Ita-Olokan, reported that her husband, Sogo, aka Marley, 44, suspected to be a member of the Eye Confraternity, was shot dead by members of the rival Aye Confraternity around 10am in the Obate area.

"Operatives deployed in the area evacuated the corpse of the deceased and deposited it in the morgue of the Osun State University Teaching Hospital, Osogbo. Investigation has commenced and we will continue to brief the public on our findings. But for now, normalcy has been restored."

Three killed in rival groups clash in Benue.

Similarly, three persons were reportedly killed in a cult-related fight in Odoba Otukpa, Ogbadibo Local Government Area of Benue State on

Anambra cult clashes

Saturday.

Sources in the community said a quarrel broke out at a birthday party hosted by one of the youths in the Odoba community.

One of the sources, who did not want to be named, said a young man from the neighbouring Obu Otukpa, who attended the party, was hacked to death.

It was gathered that a rival group embarked on a reprisal, which led to the death of two other victims from the Odoba community.

According to the source, one of the victims from Odoba was expected to bury his father this week.

When contacted, the Chairman of the Ogbadibo Local Government Council, Prince Samuel Onu, confirmed the incident, but said that it was a cult-related issue and that the Divisional Police Officer, Otukpa, was aware of it.

He stated, "It had nothing to do with a communal crisis; it was a clash between rival groups.

"The incident happened at a party on Saturday night and we have directed that the corpses be buried

immediately."

However, the state Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Catherine Anene, said she had yet to be briefed about the incident.

In a related development, a porter was reportedly killed on Sunday by a stray bullet allegedly fired by a soldier, who was said to be after some cultists.

The incident happened at the Eke Awka roundabout in the Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State.

Two other persons were reportedly killed in the same area on Sunday in a war between two rival cults.

The war was said to have started on Saturday in Awka with indiscriminate gunshots.

A source said, "Since Saturday, there have been shootouts in different parts of the state capital.

"One person was gunned down in the Eke Awka Market area of the town, while the others were killed in other parts of the capital city, including Ifite village".

"A porter was killed by a stray bullet said to be fired by a soldier, who

was chasing the cultists."

One of our correspondents sighted one of the victims in a pool of his own blood at the Eke Awka roundabout.

The Police Public Relation Officer in the state, Ikenga Tochukwu, confirmed the incident.

He said only two persons were killed, adding that the police were on top of the situation with a view to restoring normalcy in the area.

Soldiers arrive

Ada Wodu, Calabar

A 24-year-old suspected kidnapper has been arrested by troops of the 13 Brigade of the Nigerian Army attached to the Operation Akpakwu in Cross River State.

The suspect, identified as Kingsley Offiong, was arrested and handed over to the police for the alleged kidnap of 18-year-old James Ade and demand for ransom from the victim's family.

While parading the suspect at the headquarters of the 13 Brigade in Calabar, the Commander, Brig.

Court sentences, fines 80

Peter Dada, Akure

NO fewer than 80 persons were arrested for flouting the sanitation law during the monthly environmental sanitation held on Saturday in Ondo State.

The suspects, who were arrested in different parts of Akure, were said to have contravened the restriction order on human and vehicular

movement during the exercise.

Shortly after the exercise, the suspects were arraigned before the state magistrates' court sitting in Akure for the offence.

In his ruling, Magistrate Taiwo Lebi, found the accused persons guilty and sentenced some of them to a week of community service, while others were fined.

Speaking after monitoring the exercise, the General Manager, Ondo State Waste Management



Officials with some of the court order, Mrs Ayo Adeyemo, said the government would leave no

Policeman shoots truck driver dead in Plateau

Deji Lambo

FRIENDS and family members of a truck driver, Saddam Adam, are demanding justice after personnel of the Plateau State Police Command allegedly shot him dead at the Kuru checkpoint in Jos.

PUNCH Metro gathered that the news of Adam's death became public knowledge via a social media post by a Twitter user, @Hie_zinberg, who indicated that the truck driver's death last Thursday was unprovoked.

The post read, "This is Saddam Adam, a truck driver for BHN Logistics, Port Harcourt. He was shot dead, unprovoked, by a policeman of the @PoliceNG yesterday at Kuru Checkpoint in Jos, Plateau state according to several eyewitnesses. We demand justice for Saddam. @AmnestyNigeria @NtrcNigeria."

Pictures attached to the post showed Adam lying motionless on the seat of the truck, with blood stains on the floor.



Adam

However, in a terse response to the post, the police through their Twitter handle, @PoliceNG_CRU, indicated that the "complaint is hereby acknowledged and investigation has been initiated. Your tracking number is #CRU174657. Thank you for contacting NPF-CRU."

However, people reacting to the news of Adam's death, which was reposted on Instabloggia, condemned the policeman for taking the truck driver's life and plunging his family

into mourning.

Reacting to the victim's death, a Twitter user, @Adedam063048720, wrote, "The impunity continues...The entire @PoliceNG structure supports the killings of innocents citizens hence the persistence, we expect No Justice as usual, but the time will come, the day of reckoning is near. RIP Adam. God bless your soul."

One Abdulrahman, who also reacted to the post through his Twitter handle, @rayfzy, wrote, "Maybe its PTSD, each time I see a police man with gun I feel extremely unsafe... check am well almost every adult in this country suffers a depression about how bad this place called Nigeria is."

When contacted, the state Police Public Relations Officer, Ubah Ogaba, said "I have not got information about the incident yet, I will get more information and get back to you."

Ogaba had yet to get back to our correspondent as of the time of filing this report.