

# Three killed in Lagos masquerader festival clash

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File Copy: Lagos State command's Police Public Relations Officer, CSP Benjamin Hundeyin

Dayo Oyewo and Uthman Salami

At least three persons were brutally murdered during a masquerader festival that began on Sunday in the Lagos Island area of Lagos State.

While the exact cause of the killings remains unclear, reports indicated that the victims were killed during the festival, who are also believed to belong to various cult groups in Lagos State involved in a supremacy battle.

A resident of the community who craved anonymity due to the sensitive nature of the incident, narrated on Wednesday that the situation descended into chaos shortly after the festival ended.

“We had just finished the festival when a fight broke out among some boys. They started throwing bottles at one another while also wielding some dangerous weapons. Nobody could even wait to calm the situation other than to run for cover,” the resident narrated.

Videos of the violence, obtained by PUNCH Metro on Wednesday, showed heavy gunfire as suspected cultists chased one another along Lagos Street.

In one of the clips, at least five gunshots were heard, while no fewer than 10 assailants were seen gang-beating a victim.

Another resident who identified himself simply as Kazeem said the clash lasted for hours, causing panic among residents.

“The fight started in the evening and continued till midnight. Some of us could not sleep due to the intensity of the violence and loud noise from their voices and the destruction,” he said.

Naija Confra, an account known for showcasing cult-related violence in Nigeria, further highlighted the chaos.

It stated, “We received reports of a clash in Lagos Island that has been going on since Sunday, following a masquerade festival. The fight involved street gangs whose members are mostly cultists.”

In response to the clashes, the Lagos State Police Command, in a statement on Tuesday, announced tightened security across Lekki, Ajah, and surrounding areas, including Ogombo and Elemoro.

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The measures, according to the command, were aimed at safeguarding life and property, as well as protecting public investments.

The statement, signed by the command spokesperson, Benjamin Hundehin, said the Lagos State Police Command has redeployed some Divisional Police Officers in the affected areas to monitor and prevent crime and criminalities in the area and also improve on the operational efficiency in such situations.

“To further reinforce the security, the Eko Strike Force, a specialized intervention unit, has been deployed to Lekki and Ajah to address all forms of crime and criminality in the Lekki area and its environs.

“The Lagos State Police Command calls on residents to cooperate fully with the intervention team to ensure the success of the operations and maintain safety and security for all.”

Hundeyin further disclosed that the command had launched a discreet investigation into the killings.

“The command wishes to inform the public that it has commenced a discreet investigation into the unfortunate incident that occurred on Sunday in Lekki Phase 1, where an inter-cult clash resulted in the death of three cultists.

“The clash occurred at a security duty post in an uninhabited open land space around Wole Olateju Street, involving members of rival cult groups at about 0500hrs. The Commissioner of Police, Lagos State Command, CP Olohundare Jimoh, personally mobilised to the scene with joint police teams to attend to the situation and ensure swift action.

“The recently established Anti-Cultism Team and other Tactical teams under the Elemoro Area Command were immediately deployed to Lekki Phase 1, and several arrests of suspects linked to the crime were made in connection with the incident.”

According to Hundeyin, raids were carried out on several criminal hideouts in Lekki, leading to the arrest of 23 suspects.

Those arrested include: Frank Okpara (27), Friday Ebuka (27), Babatunde Mufutau (24), Suleiman Muri (25), Olamide Malik (24), Nwaka Lucky (34), Raphael Ashim (30), Wasiu Kareem (33), Sadiq Olabisi (40), Ibrahim Abdul (22), Ibrahim Aminu (37), Nasiru Musa (27), Friday Nwafor (51), Ahmed Fatai (26), Aro Abiola a.k.a. Zino (25), Tijani Shehu a.k.a. Abana (26), Gift Igedi (31), Ugochukwu Chike (30), Ridwan Alex (37), Happiness Otigbo (27), Abiodun Adegun (37), Adedayo Adeoti (27), and Afeez Ahmed (31).