



NIGERIAN Tribune

[Home](#) | [e-Tribune](#) | [About Us](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Print Advert Rates](#) | [Online Advert Rates](#)

advertisement

Front Page News

 Search

FIND IT HERE...

Bayelsa under siege of cultists

Written by Oluwale Ige, Yenagoa
Wednesday, September 7, 2011

TO an average Bayelsan, taking a walk on the streets of the state capital, Yenagoa, or any other town and community in the oil rich state, comes with a lot of risks and unexpected costly sacrifices. Organised crimes such as armed robbery or attacks on banks by hoodlums have faded away as a result of the steady patrols by the police and the activities of the special security outfit, code named "Operation Famou Tangbei".

Notwithstanding, the recent upsurge in cult violence in the state has succeeded in creating an atmosphere of insecurity among the people, even as tension builds up against the February 2012 governorship poll.

advertisement

It is quite worrisome and inexplicable that many cultist groups have thrived in the state despite the efforts of the security agencies to rid Bayelsa of criminals.

Investigations by the Nigerian Tribune revealed that supremacy tussle among these warring cult groups has shattered the seeming peace and tranquillity being enjoyed by the Ijaws as violent clashes during the day and night often culminate in pandemonium and loss of lives. Whenever such development occurs, residents at the scene of the clashes are made to go through horrors, with trepidation and psychological trauma of killings and maiming perpetrated by the cultists.

More worrisome is the startling discovery of cultist groups among pupils of secondary schools in the state, some of who were about three months ago, arrested by men of the Bayelsa State Police Command, during an initiation procedures on their new entrants.

Available statistics shows that no fewer than six persons had lost their lives to the mayhem between June and August 2011, just as 20 youths were arrested following the last cult clash, which occurred on 27th, August at Sagbama Local Government Area of the state.

Horrible skirmishes of about three Sundays, involving feuding cults groups would not be forgotten in a hurry by residents of Akemfa and Ekeki neighbourhoods, in Yenagoa Local Government area. On that particular day alone, three persons were shot dead around 10.30pm when rival groups engaged themselves in a fierce battle that lasted for almost an hour. Pedestrians, residents and shop owners within these areas trembled as sporadic gunshots rent the air, a chaotic development that forced some pubs located in the affected areas to hurriedly close their shops.

Commenting on the incident, the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) of the Bayelsa State Police Command, ASP Eguaveon Emopkae stated that, "it is true that three persons were shot dead in some areas, but we are on top of the situation."



HEADLINES

- ▶ News
- ▶ Sports

OP-ED

- ▶ Editorial
- ▶ Opinion
- ▶ Letters

FINANCE

- ▶ Inspirati
- ▶ Empowered for L.I.F.E
- ▶ Wealth Thru Agric

MORE LINKS

- ▶ Agriculture
- ▶ Arts & Review
- ▶ Education
- ▶ TeleInfo

HEALTH

- ▶ Your Health
- ▶ Natural Health
- ▶ Health News

RELIGION

- ▶ Islamic News
- ▶ Christian News

ENTERTAINMENT

- ▶ Weekend Starter
- ▶ Rhythms and Vibes

Continuing, he explained that "The Sunday killing was a cult related issue. It happened in Yenagoa Division. At Akemfa, one person was shot dead around 8.30am and there was also another killing around Ekeki in the night. But I can assure you that we are doing our best to make sure that the perpetrators of the dastardly acts are apprehended soonest."

No sooner than the security concern raised by the killing subsided, last week Monday, was characterised by another spilling of blood as battle between members of cult societies identified as Icelanders and Greenlanders left two persons suspected to be their members dead.

That latest violence, Nigerian Tribune authoritatively gathered, sparked off when adherents of the Icelanders group were attempting to carry out forceful initiation of some youths of Onopa area, Yenagoa, into their group. Subsequently, the refusal of few of them to be initiated attracted a kingpin of Greenlanders, a rival cult, thereby resulting in a gun duel, while axes, cutlasses and other dangerous weapons were freely used to attack each other in a free for all.

Timely intervention of the police prevented the violence from escalating, while they also succeeded in arresting 20 persons, alleged to have participated in the clash. The police PPRO hinted that victims of the cult war and those that sustained severe injuries had been taken to Patani General Hospital, in Delta State.

Surprisingly, a lady, who supplies members of the Icelanders cult with marijuana and other concoctions such as "monkey tail" was apprehended with a "Ghana Must Go" bag stuffed with dried Indian hemp.

However, the fear being expressed in some quarters now is the vulnerability of the cultists to the monetary enticement of desperate politicians, who may have perfected plans to use them in the forthcoming governorship election in the state.

Already, there are allegations that some top local government officials in Bayelsa have recruited a number of cultists to cow their political opponents and also use them to perpetrate electoral violence as preparations for the much awaited gubernatorial poll gathers momentum.

A social commentator, who spoke to the Nigerian Tribune under condition of anonymity, contended that "the menace of these cult groups must be halted as fast as possible by the law enforcement agencies if peace must reign in this state."

"We cannot continue to live with bated breath, owing to the inimical activities of cultists, whose attacks have constituted great threat to the peace and healthy co-existence among the people. Government should be alive to its responsibilities and do something concrete to eradicate cultism by providing job opportunities to a larger percentage of idle youths in this state. If they have something doing, that could guarantee them some means of livelihood, there will be no tendency for them to be lured into cultism. Unemployment has substantially fuelled the number of cultists in Bayelsa State and this is a fact that can be easily disputed if otherwise."

Meanwhile, gun wielding cultists, continued their attack, on Sunday night, in Yenagoa, as they gunned down another three persons, in a relaxation joint at Kpansia area, in Yenagoa Local Government.

Investigations by Nigerian Tribune indicated that the cultists, who stormed the pub around 8.30pm in a car, moved swiftly to where their targets were sitting and opened fire, killing instantly the victims before escaping after confirming that they were dead.

Among their latest victims was an undergraduate of a university in one of the South- South states.

FAMILY LINE	BUSINESS	MORE BUSINESS
▶ Heartcopy	▶ Business & Economy	▶ Oil & Gas
▶ Her Say	▶ Insurance	▶ Property & Environment
▶ Men's Round Table	▶ Brands & Marketing	▶ Aviation
▶ Strictly Femal	▶ Management	▶ Microfinance

