

South West VOICE

OGUN STATE

By Daud Olatunji

IN just three days, men of Ogun State Police Command apprehended no fewer than 300 suspected cultists in various parts of the state.

The arrest was a fallout of the killings allegedly perpetrated by some suspected cultists during supremacy battle between two cult groups in the state.

For the past one week, residents of the state could not sleep with their two eyes closed due to the incessant clashes between the rival cult groups.

Their latest clash led to loss of lives and burning of vehicles and houses in Elegu, Ago-Odo, Iberekodo and Adatan areas of Abeokuta the state capital.

Pandemonium broke out in those areas of Abeokuta, when two rival cult groups clashed, leaving three persons including a newly engaged man dead.

The clash which started around 7am lasted for three hours as residents and shop owners hurriedly closed for the day and remained indoors for hours till normalcy returned.

At the end of clash which was said to have started at a pub house inside the MKO Abiola International Stadium, Kuto, Abeokuta last Friday three lives were lost.

It was gathered that, the cultists who, wore masks during the clash, severed the right hand of one Babatunde Alamutu and went away with the limb after they had mutilated the body.

Security operatives

In a bid to curtail the spread of bloodshed, security operatives including men of the Department of State Security, DSS, men of the Special Anti Robbery Squad, SARS and scores of police officers were led to the scene by the Abeokuta Area Commander, Presley Dodeh and the Divisional Police Officer of Adatan, Ogunjobi Tolani.

The Police Public Relations Officer in the state, Muyiwa Adejobi said; "Today around 7 am, the command was aware of a clash between some suspected cultists and we moved to the place but when we got there we saw a lifeless body of one Alamutu, 32 years old, in a pool of his blood."

"The command immediately swung into action, according to the Commissioner of Police's instruction that every police outfit in the State should be on their toes."

"The matter is now under the Department of Criminal



• Suspected cultist arrested in Ogun State

Investigation and Intelligence, Eleweraan Abeokuta, for discreet investigation.

"I can assure that we are going to get the killer of Alamutu and we will get the perpetrators. Yesterday in Igbesa, the command was able to arrest 84 suspected cultists and they will bring all of them to Eleweraan. We met them in the bush in Igbesa and they were arrested in the act. Again we arrested seven of them this morning in Ilaro".

While speaking on the arrest made so far three days after the incident, Adejobi said the command arrested over 300 suspects in connection with cultism.

Meanwhile, the State Police Command disclosed that it apprehended 22 suspected kidnappers, 58 suspected rapists and 58 cultists and

We also arrested 22 suspected kidnappers, 58 suspected rapist and 58 cultists. 1,182 suspects arrested for various offences during the period under review

Anxiety as cults mushroom in Ogun

• 300 cultists arrested in 3 days

1,182 suspects for various offences in the State within the first eight months in the year.

The Police Public Relations Officer in the state Muyiwa Adejobi gave the statistics of the suspected criminals arrested so far between January and July as 1182.

Adejobi further said that the command has recovered stolen property worth over N940 million.

Suspected robbers

He said: "Let me put it on record that so far we have been able to arrest 174 suspected armed robbers and in such cases during encounters 26 fell in the process."

"We have also recovered 80 arms and 255 ammunition of various calibre."

"We have also arrested 55 suspected cultists, 71 recovered vehicles and though most belong to the

neighbouring states which we got back, in an attempt to get through our borders."

"We also arrested 22 suspected kidnappers, 58 suspected rapists and 58 cultists. 1,182 suspects were arrested for various offences during the period under review."

When asked to comment on the alarming rate of crimes in the state, Adejobi said; "We can say that we have been able to subdue the activities of criminals who may want to disturb the peace of Ogun state because the commissioner deployed enough men to the affected parts of the State."

"We are still trying to put some things in place, like intelligence policing, incorporating all sectors in the communities' policing. Also to resuscitate the existing stakeholders in the State including traditionalists, traditional worshippers and others

because these ritual killers might end up in their sectors," he said.

The Police also paraded 20 suspected cultists from Aghara and Ijebu-Ode areas of the state.

It also paraded three suspects in connection with the killing of a citizen, during a bloody clash between two rival groups of hoodlums.

The Police disclosed that four car snatchers were arrested because of series of complaints by members of the public on their activities.

Snatched vehicles

Adejobi said the four notorious members of the gang paraded in connection with the crime were; Ahmed Ola (ring leader), Ozazuwa Odion (buyer), Abiodun Taiwo and Ifeanyi Oke.

Adejobi said 10 vehicles were recovered from the gang and that the vehicles were snatched from neighbouring states.

According to the PRO, all the suspects upon interrogation have confessed to the crime.

While speaking with newsmen, the ring leader of the car snatchers, Ahmed Ola said the nation's economic challenges forced him into the illicit business.

He said, "I met two members of the gang inside the cell when I was arrested for a crime and from there we formed this group. We have snatched so many vehicles and we have people that are buying them from us. We have fabricated master keys for different brand of cars."