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How Ekiti, Osun're battling cultism

By Rotimi Ojomoyela & Shina Abubakar

Cult-related activities in Ekiti and Osun states have put the two states into the limelight in recent times, perhaps for the wrong reason.

The first reported case of killing by the suspected cult members occurred on the 13th of January 2021 at about 8:30 pm at Iworoko-Ekiti, a community located at the outskirts of Ado-Ekiti, between members of Black Axe and Eiye confraternity where two members of the suspected cult groups were killed.

They lost their lives in a free-for-all-clash that lasted for about two hours.

A week later, the Ekiti State Police Command paraded five members of the suspected cult groups claimed to have been arrested in connection with the clash, they were later arraigned in the court.

The second in the year occurred on the 20th of March, 2021 between suspected members of Aiye and Eiye confraternity at about 5:00 pm in a bush inside the main campus of Ekiti State University, EKSU.

Though no life was lost in the clash, some students of the institution sustained injuries, while scampering for safety during the shoot-out by the suspected cultists.

It was learned that members of the Eiye confraternity had arrived at the venue on a fateful day to hold their meeting and initiate some new members. While the other group called Scorpion, (said to be unpopular on the campus of the institution) were passing by to hold their meeting in a nearby bush.

The move, which later led to an argument between the two rival groups, was later put under control following the arrival of the police and officials of the cadet of the institution to the area.

A few days later, the police confirmed the arrest of five suspects believed to be members of the Black Axe confraternity.

The suspects were Adeyeye Adeyemi, 29, Adeyemi Tobi, 25, Moyosore Onajobi, 22, Dickson

Godwin, 23, and Olowosaye Martins, 21.

The suspects, who were students of the Ekiti State University, were arrested in around the campus of the institution while holding meetings.

Similarly, on the 18th of April 2021, in Ikere-Ekiti, the administrative headquarters of Ikere-Ekiti Local Government, six persons were said to have died in a bloody clash between suspected members of Afee and Eiye confraternity in the town.

The bloody clash, which threw the town into mourning, occurred during a wedding ceremony at Odo-Oja area of the town.

It was learned that an indigene of the town, who is also a notable member of Eiye confraternity, known as Oju Ale, had come into the town from Port Harcourt to attend the wedding ceremony.

Cultists on the rampage in Ekiti

He was said to have arrived at the scene of the celebration in the company of his girlfriend, who is also a member of a female cult group, popularly known as Jezebel.

Trouble started when Oju Ale arrived at the scene with his girlfriend and they were hailed with accolades by members of his group.

The move was said not to have gone down well with other cult groups present at the ceremony.

It, however, led to a fracas and exchange of gun fire among members of the suspected cult groups.

Oju Ale was said to have been gunned down on the spot.

The move, which made his members go on rampage in search of members of other cult groups in the town to revenge the death of their member, who is said to be a leader of the Eiye confraternity in the town.

At the end of the rampage which lasted for about two hours, six persons were said to have been confirmed dead by the police, while their bodies were deposited in the morgue of Ekiti State Specialist Hospital in Ikere-Ekiti.

Reacting to the killings, the traditional ruler of the town, the Ogoga of Ikere-Ekiti, Oba Adejimi Adu, threatened to rain curses on cultists in the town if they failed in another seven days to renounce their membership of cult groups.

Similarly, on the 19th of May, 2021, another cult clash occurred in the town which claimed the lives of two persons.

It was learned that on that day, some group of boys, who are members of Eiye confraternity, had gathered at a relaxation centre

located at Odo-Oja, when some group of boys suddenly emerged on a motorbike and started shooting sporadically.

This led to the death of two persons.

In Osun, 11 killed in cult clashes

The situation is also giving residents of Osun State sleepless nights.

The incessant cult killings in Osun State have become a source of worry for indigenes and residents of the state, especially at a time other social vices are on the rise like kidnapping and thugery.

In the last five months, about 11 persons have been killed in various cult clashes in some parts of the state, while 20 suspected cultists were arrested and paraded by the state Police Command.

On January 5, three persons were killed in rival cult clashes in the state.

They are, Azeez Tajudeen in Osogbo, Abbeb Abifarin in Eiiqbo and Basiru Saheed at Sabo area in Osogbo.

Three suspected cultists were also killed in three different areas of Osogbo on March 28 including Aleez Eja at Obalende, Sogb Owonikoko, at Alie junction and one Daniel at Kolawole. Residents

of the communities fled their homes for fear of becoming victims of retaliatory attacks.

Before the March 28 killings, another cult clash around Sango Ori-Oke area in Osogbo led to the death of one Kazeem Yinka, a bricklayer.

Also, one Lekan Babalola of John McKay area was killed during a gun duel by a rival cult group at Asoje area of the state capital on Friday, May, 21 around 2:30 pm.

A retaliatory attack on Saturday the following day around 1:00 am at Oluode compound led to the death of Jelili Tajudeen, who was alleged to have killed Lekan earlier on Friday.

Lekan was not just killed, his mother, who sought to defend him, was also shot by the assailants.

Osun Govt moves to stem the tide

Speaking on the development, the state Amotekun Corps Commandant, Brig. Gen. Bashir Adewinmbi (ret'd) said apart from security solutions, the state government has concluded plans to embark on sensitisation against cultism among youths in the state.

Adewinmbi said: "The Amotekun Corps is collaborating with other security agencies to stem the tide of the cult killings in the state. Besides, the state government is also looking into other possible means of controlling the menace."

"However, government efforts would not be enough to tackle the menace. Parents, religious leaders, teachers and the press must also help in stemming the tide."

Also, the Special Adviser to the Governor on Security, Abiodun Ige said the state government is also collaborating with other security agencies to control and terminate incessant cult clashes in the state.

NDE trains 136 unemployed youths in Ondo

By Dayo Johnson

AKURE—THE National Directorate of Employment, NDE, said it has trained no fewer than 136 unemployed youths across Ondo State.

They were trained in both the Advanced National Open Apprenticeship Scheme, ANOAS and Modern Agricultural Practice.

Director-General of the NDE, Mallam Abubakar Fikpo said this in Akure at the Orientation of the 2021 ANOAS and the Orientation of the participants in the Rural Employment Promotion Department.

Fikpo noted that the objective of the ANOAS was to acquaint the participants with modern methods of service delivery in specific trades and sharpen their skills using advanced methods and technology available in industries and corporate outfits.

He added that the B-NOAS graduates are proficient enough to compete favourably in the business world.

This, according to him, "is necessary to up-skill them and equip them with a higher level of competence through the ANOAS."

The DG said that 36 trainees were involved; two from each of the council areas and spread among five skills sets namely: tailoring, confectionary, make-up, event planning and shoemaking.

Also, the Rural Employment Promotion Department of the state NDE has trained 100 unemployed persons in the area of crop production, livestock management, food processing, preservation, storage, Agro services and mechanisation.

APC primaries: 3 aspirants back Sosimi for Somolu LG boss

By Dapo Akinrele

LAGOS—AHEAD of Saturday's primary elections of the All Progressives Congress, APC, to elect candidates that will fly the party's flag for the local government elections, three out of the five aspirants vying for the Chairmanship position in Somolu Local Government Area, yesterday, endorsed the incumbent Vice Chairman of the council, Mr. Bowale Sosimi.

With the recent development in the local government, Sosimi will slug it out with his principal, Abdul Hamed Salawu, who is the incumbent council chairman.

Taiwo Adesanya, who spoke on behalf of the two other aspirants, Wasiu Mustapha and Adeniyi Ogunade, said that they decided to endorse Sosimi because of their conviction in his ability to deliver on the APC manifesto.

Adesanya, who is currently the Secretary to the Local Government, SLG, said: "This is in a bid to foster peace, unity and progress of our local government. The interest of our people is very germane to us and that is why we have agreed with the leadership of APC to come together as one to contest the forthcoming election against the opposition to deliver the

community for the good of our people."

In his acceptance speech at the event, which was held at the Constituency office of the Ademorin Kuye, the Federal lawmaker representing Somolu Federal Constituency, Sosimi expressed appreciation to the three aspirants.

He said: "I have no choice than to deliver on the manifesto of our party, the APC. The THEME agenda of the Lagos State government is very germane and we just have to key in. I want to assure all of you that I will not disappoint you and I will deliver because this is a call to service."