

4 killed during 8/8 cult celebration in Kwara

By Demola Akinyemi

ILORIN—FOUR persons, including members of different cult groups, were reportedly shot dead at Olunlade area, Ilorin, Kwara State capital during the traditional celebration of August 8 (8/8) cult activities, Monday night.

It was gathered that residents of the area experienced sleepless night due to the sporadic gunshots that rent the area while the celebration lasted when members of various cult groups attacked themselves in a gun duel.

Residents of the area claimed no fewer than four persons were killed by different cult groups in a reprisal attack in an interview with journalists.

But, the spokesman of Kwara State Police Command, Ajayi Okasanmi, who confirmed the development, said only two deaths were recorded during the celebration.

He said: "Only two persons were killed in the 8/8 celebration by the cult groups and not four as being peddled around by some people. One person died at the spot of the crisis at Olunlade while the other was reported to have died later in the hospital."

On the likely cause of the crisis, the PPRO said: "You know that yesterday (Monday) was August 8 and the different cult groups were celebrating the day in many places in the town. We don't know what might have triggered the crisis among the cult members at Olunlade, but we gathered that the crisis might not be unconnected with rivalry among the cult groups."

"We gathered from an intelligence report that crisis broke out and the rival cult members started shooting sporadically to attack each other."

Okasanmi said the situation has been brought under control, adding that calmness had returned to the area.

However, a worker in a government establishment in the area told journalists that the crisis started Monday night at a local gin joint near Bovas Petrol station at Olunlade.

According to the worker, some members of a cult group trailed a man to the spot, but the target took to his heels and they opened fire on him.

"The bullet fired by the cult members hit two persons including the son of the local gin seller. They continued to chase their target and later got him and shot him in the head," he said.

Another person, who identified himself simply as Abdulmojeed, said two persons were killed by the cult members while two others sustained bullet wounds.