

20 feared dead as cultists clash in Sagamu

●Police confirm 8 deaths, 9 arrested ●It's beyond anti-cultism squad—Force PRO ●Gov Abiodun orders crackdown on cultists, imposes curfew

By James Ogunnaike

ABEOKUTA—RESIDENTS of Sagamu in Sagamu Local Government Area of Ogun State now live in fear, as no fewer than 20 young men, including three secondary school students, were reportedly killed as Eyiye and Aiye confraternities resumed their usual supremacy battle in the town.

It was gathered that the supremacy battle started last Friday. In gory videos and photos shared online by residents, some of the victims of the attacks were seen lying in the pool of their blood, with one of their hands cut off by the assailants.

To douse the tension in the area, a detachment of police was deployed to the troubled spots. A resident of Sagamu, who spoke on condition of anonymity, lamented that the town had been on the edge since last Friday as people go about in fear, so as not to be victims of stray bullets from the cultists. The source listed Agbowo behind Ewusi Palace, Makun, Ijagba, Ajaka, Isale, Oke and Sabo as centres of the mindless killings in the ancient town.

The source said: "Those boys started killing themselves since Friday. As we speak, they must have killed about 20 people but many of these victims were innocent."

"For instance, three secondary school students who had gone to cut their hair on Sunday, in preparation for resumption of schools yesterday (Monday), were gunned down around Sabo."

"The target was the owner of the barbing shop, but when he wasn't found there, the cultists decided to kill those who were found in the shop. About four people were also killed on Ode Remo road under the same circumstances."

"The target of the cultists was also not around when they came at midnight, but they killed the four people they met in his room. It is terrible and no one can really say this is why they are fighting."

"Everyone is tired of this unnecessary and useless bloodshed and that is why we desire that when these boys are caught, they should not be allowed back to town after three months."



From left, Mrs Modupe Ajayi, Executive Director, MARKETING EDGE Publications Ltd; Mr Udeme Ufot, Marketing Edge Advertising Legend award winner/Group Managing Director SO&U; his wife Dorothy Udeme Ufot SAN; Sir Steve Bamidele Omojor, Lifetime Achievement in Advertising award; Engr Dozie Mbanefor, Marketing Edge Leadership Award in OOH Advertising winner/Chairman of the Occasion and Mr John Ajayi, Publisher/CEO, Marketing Edge Publications Ltd, during the MARKETING EDGE 20th Anniversary and Awards 2023 held at the Podium Event Centre Lekki Lagos last weekend. Photo: Akeem Salau.

"The law should be harder on them and it is about time the Sagamu communities, with the support of the government, took more decisive actions over these criminals."

"It's a menace that is giving Sagamu a bad name. One thing I have also realised is that we now have so much of drugs in the town. You will always see these boys in different joints and corners with drugs."

"I think government should look towards that direction too because once you have taken drugs, you can do whatever you like."

It's beyond anti-cultism squad — FORCE PRO

Reacting to the killings on his X handle, the Nigeria Police Force Public Relations Officer, Muyiwa Adejobi, who said the situation was beyond the deployment of an anti-cultism squad, said all hands must be on deck to combat the menace.

Adejobi said: "Sagamu case goes beyond the mere anti-cultism squad. The elders know how to handle them. The politicians know what to do. I was in their midst in Sagamu between 2006 and 2008."

"But there was no single cult clash before I left in 2008. I worked then with the late Akarigbo, Oba Michael Sonariwo, and others."

Police confirm 8 dead,

9 arrested

However, Ogun police command, yesterday, confirmed the arrest of nine suspects, following the killing of about eight persons over the weekend in Sagamu as rival cult groups clashed.

Speaking on the crisis at a briefing in Abeokuta, CP Abiodun Alamutu revealed the remote cause of the clashes to be a land transaction that took place in the town.

Alamutu said: "A land was sold and some form of commission or settlement was paid to a cult group by the owner of the land. A rival cult group got to know about the payment and went after members of the other group in a bid to get a share of the

commission."

"The situation degenerated into an attack and counter-attack which started from Wednesday last week and continued till Sunday, leading to the death of eight persons."

Speaking further, he revealed the arrest of some of the kingpins of the rival cult groups.

"About nine suspects have been arrested as we speak with evidences of their involvement in the killings. Two guns and some rounds of cartridges with evidences that they were recently fired were recovered from the suspects," he said.

Investigation into the killings, according to the Police boss, is still ongoing.

On her part, the state command spokesperson,

Omolola Odutola, listed those arrested to include Asaiye Omolaja, Azeez Nofiu, Mathew Adewale, and Bolaji Ogunkemaya.

Odutola said: "It is worth noting that Bolaji Ogunkemaya was found with the four deceased persons in the same room where the killings occurred. One individual, Wasiu, managed to escape before the authorities arrived."

"During the raid, Bolaji Ogunkemaya provided critical information, stating that their leader, known as Azubuike, aka 'better', had been arrested by the Area Commander a fortnight ago."

LG chairman restricts

UNGA78: FG, EU, UN, others highlight efforts to accelerate SDGs

By Juliet Umeh, with agency reports

LAGOS—THE Senior Special Assistant to the President on Sustainable Development Goals, SSAP-SDGs, Princess Adejoke Orelope-Adefulire, has joined leaders and experts from around the world to call for increased investments and alignments of resources from public, private, domestic, and other sources to accelerate progress on the delivery of 2030 Agenda.

Orelope-Adefulire made the call while speaking at a high-level event held at the

sustainable development and the commitment of development partners, particularly the United Nations, in advancing this global agenda.

She noted that Nigeria, in alignment with its national development priorities, had integrated the SDGs into key policy documents, including the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan, the Economic Sustainability Plan, the

National Poverty Reduction with Growth Strategy, and the National Development Plan.

Highlighting Nigeria's pioneering role, Princess Orelope-Adefulire noted that the country made history with the launch of her INFF Report at the UNGA last year.

She also emphasized that the INFF served as a vital planning tool to enhance sustainable development financing at the national

movement

Consequently, chairman of the local government area has imposed a restriction on the use of motorcycles in the area between 7pm and 6am daily as the government battles to restore peace to the troubled town.

Abiodun orders crack down on cultists

Meanwhile, Governor Dapo Abiodun has directed security agencies to rid Sagamu and its environs of cultists and cult-related activities.

Governor imposes 7pm to 6am curfew

The restriction of human and vehicular movement is from 7pm to 6am and assured residents of the town of the security of their lives and property.

Governor Abiodun, in a statement by his Chief Press Secretary, Lekan Adeniran, regretted the avoidable loss of innocent lives and wanton destruction of properties by the hoodlums.

The statement read: "As a responsible and responsive government, we are very sad with the resurgence of activities of criminal elements under different outlawed groups, raising unnecessary tension in the sleepy town of Sagamu and its environs."

"Let me categorically state that we are more than determined to put an end quickly to the nefarious activities of these hoodlums and enemies of our people; who are hellbent to truncate the peace of our land."

"Let these urchins be rest assured that the State will be too hot for them to operate as we are reevaluating the security architecture for greater surveillance and tactical operation."

levels, in line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

Princess Orelope-Adefulire also expressed Nigeria's intent to prioritize investments with multiplier effects on all the SDGs and strengthen partnerships with the United Nations Development system, the private sector, and non-state actors, with the aim of fostering a collaborative "whole of society" approach to implementing the INFF Roadmap in Nigeria.

Nigeria in revenue crisis with huge public debt — Adedeji, new FIRS boss

Continues from Page 5 administration assessed, and recovered another N4 trillion from the Nigerian National

surpassed his 10 per cent Tax-to-GDP target of four years, having achieves 10.86 per cent in two years.

He said the 18 per cent

could be surpassed.

In 2022, the FIRS set a revenue target of N10 trillion and collected N10.1 trillion within the period. Similarly, in 2023, it set a target of N12 trillion revenue and has