

Ondo Cult Clash: Police arrest 19 suspects



Suspects Will Face the Full Weight of the Law, Vows Police Commissioner

By Dayo Johnson, Akure

Nineteen suspected cult members have been arrested following a deadly clash between rival cult groups in the ancient town of Owo, Ondo State. The death toll from the incident has reportedly risen from five to nine.

Among the victims are Fisayo Oladipupo, a chieftain of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC), and a mother and her child who were hit by stray bullets while fleeing the violence. The clash, which erupted around 2 a.m. on Monday, is believed to be linked to a long-standing feud between the rival groups.

Oladipupo, 56, a former youth leader and prominent member of the APC in the Owo Local Government Area, was reportedly shot at close range by assailants in what is suspected to be a reprisal attack over a decade-old dispute.

Four other victims were killed in the Eyinogbe, Ekusi, and Uselu areas of the community during the violence. Two suspected cult members also lost their lives in a shootout between the warring groups. Ondo State Police Commissioner Wilfred Afolabi, who visited Owo to assess the situation, confirmed the arrest of 19 suspects in connection with the clashes.

"We are in Owo this morning to monitor compliance with the curfew imposed by the state government. So far, normalcy has returned, and there is calm across the town," Afolabi said.

The police commissioner, however, noted discrepancies in the casualty figures, stating that only four deaths had been officially confirmed.

"For peace-loving residents, we assure them of a safe and conducive environment. But for those who disrupt the peace, we will track them down and ensure they face the full weight of the law," he vowed. The commissioner and his team visited troubled areas, including Eyin Ogbe, Ijebu Owo, and the Palace area, to ensure compliance with the curfew and restore order.

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The Ondo State Government imposed the curfew to curb further violence and prevent a resurgence of the clashes. The police have promised to intensify efforts to maintain peace in the affected areas and prosecute those found culpable.

As investigations continue, residents have been urged to remain vigilant and cooperate with law enforcement authorities to ensure lasting peace in the community.