Cultism, An Aberration To Human Dignity: Nigeria`s Experience.

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Abstract

Cultism which has come to stay in Nigeria, is spreading so fast because of its supposedly advantages. It has attracted both old and young; learned and illiterate; poor and rich; students and lecturers; male and female. It has no distinction between colours, tribes, political affiliations, social status. Pupils, students, undergraduates of Primary schools, students of Secondary schools, and under graduates of Tertiary Institutions respectively are members. It cuts across ethnic groups and professionals. Some have even continued to be members after leaving school. The menace of cultism is better imagined than experienced. It has brought chaotic and worrisome situations to people. Innocent people have been killed by the members; some died through stray bullets, while members were in constant fear because they may not know when their rival group would strike. Opting to disassociate with the members, was a herculean task, because the life of the person was at risk. The Methodologies were Historical and Phenomenological. These made it easy for the work in its beauty and form. In this paper, it was found that it has made people mad, maimed, lose their lives and livelihood, school drop outs, fugitives, and regrets in life. Neighbours were in fear. The same with the communities, both at the country side and school`s environment. Made could not sleep with their two eyes closed because the menace of cults. It was recommended that parents should monitor the movement of their children and wards; teach them the way of the Lord, and culprits should be jailed.

Keywords: Cultism, Aberration, Human, Dignity.

Introduction

The fear of cultism is the beginning of sane and peaceful living. This is because the mention of it sends fear to the spines and marrows of non members. The Confraternities as they are often called, operate in the day and in the night, armed with dangerous weapons to unleash mayhem to members and non members. It has been a terror to the community. The rate at which it spreads is at an alarming one. A situation that is worrisome and pathetic to patriotic and sane people. This menace needs a serious attention both from the government, communities, Non Government Organizations, and individuals. This is a phenomenon that has hydra-headed implications that if nothing is done, and done speedily, the nation will be chasing the wind when the damage has been done. Cultism is a wind that blows no one any good.

Members have a chain of commanding officers that are similar to militia groups. They have their code words, insignia with the weapons of their choice, and have their colours. There are various reasons why people enrol into it. Some are personal, while others are just for the sake of belonging to a dreaded group. Cultism is identified with axe, red beret, and matchet.

Origin of Cultism in Nigeria

Cultism in Nigeria began with the formation of the Pyrates Confraterniy, also known as the National Association of Seadogs, in 1952. This happened at the University College Ibadan, by Wole Soyinka and six other students. The initial aim of this group was to address issues of social injustice and inequality on Campus. However, with time, other groups emerged, this time, the modus operandi changed. They became violent and committing of crimes was rife. One of the groups of this nature is the Buccaneers.

CULTISM DAY

Here in Nigeria, the dates have been on 8th of July and August.

> Benjamin Hundeyin said, `The Lagos state Police Command hereby assures all Lagosians of its unwavering commitment to ensuring maximum security across the state on July 7, 2024-a day often characterized by mayhem, chaos and killings by different violent cult groups against each other in violent celebration of the day, and the day is marred with reprisal attacks-and counter attacks. (Christopher Orji. "7:7 cultism day: Police arrest 52, read riot act to hoteliers."5) and August 8. "Four people, including members of different cult groups, were killed at the Olunlade area area, Illorin, Kwara State, during the celebration of August 8 (8/8) cult activities in the state." (Layi Olanrewaju. "4 feared dead in Illorin cult clash." 4)

CULT GROUPS /CONFRATERNITIES.

MALES: These include but not limited to them: Black Axe, Eiye, Alora, Buccaneer, Aiye, Aye, Pirate, Black Skull, Aro Baggars, or German, or Akpa, Egede, green landers, Bobos, Iceland, Vikings, Seadogs, Mafia, Dedy no Debt, Thu-Thu, Red sea, Mgbamgba, Black Cat, The Fame, Snow Men, Fraternity of Friends, Black Cobra, Black Cobra of Ife, Cancry, Green Berrets, The Blood Spot, Scorpion,

FEMALES: They include: Black Bra, Red Bra, Daughters of Jezebel, White Angel, Damsel, Jezebel, Knights of the Aristos, Lady of Rose, Marine Girls, Pink Lady, Royal Queens, Sisterhood of Darkness, Supreme Blue Angles, Viqueens, Woman Brassier.

COED CONFRATERNITIES:

Kegite Club, Reformed Ogboni, Big Five, Black Scorpion, Brotherhood of the Blood, Dreaded Friend of Frieds, Eagle Club, Eternal Fraternity Order of the Legion Consortium (aka Klan Konfraternity), Executioners, Fame, Fraternity of Friend, Green Circuit Association International, Gentlemen Clubs, Jurists, Icelander, Mbacho, Night Cadet, Neo Black Movement of Africa, Ogboni, The Outlaws, Red Sea Horse, Sea Cults, Second Son of Satan, Son men, Snow Men, Temple of Eden. Victor Charlie Boys, White Bishops.

ALLUREMENT OF CULTISM

What actually attract people to cultism?

The reasons are myriad.

One of the reasons is Unmet Needs or Desire: Especially now poverty is raging, unemployment is hitting hard on people. People are looking for how to survive in this hard

time. Cultism catches in this situation, promising love, care, sense of belonging, identity with the object. Such a person will feel welcomed by such caring and loving society. Cultism always exploits this vulnerability in man.

Promise of Influence: In life where there is insecurity; enemies within and outside. Demonic powers are manifesting in astronomical dimensions. One has to `protect` himself so that wicked people will not use him as sacrifice. This protection cultism usually promises to people. since man`s needs protection from evil people, what will one do? The answer is to find this protection where it is `provided`.

Not only protection. Those who seek for influence, power, authority, political appointments, and who may be passing difficult times. Find `succour` and `solace` in this place. It has been alleged that if one does not belong to any of the cults, may not political appointment, win government contracts. If it is in the Army Police, or any other associations, may not be promoted or given `juicy` position. The implication is that, if one wants to belong in social realm, he has to belong to where it is `happening`,

Veiled Recruitment Tactics: When the serpent tempted Eve, he did not tell her the consequences of her action if would eat the Forbidden Fruit. Eve ate and saw the real damage. She and her husband were driven away from the Garden of Eden.

The same, cult members hardly make those they want to recruit know the real positions of things. They present themselves as harmless people; genuine one who have good intention for the person. Sometimes they may even assist the person in one or the other; presenting themselves as angels of light. It is when one joins them that he will know the true colour of the group. By then, it will be too late for the person to recant.

Exclusivism: Like most organizations who are secretive in nature, who will not allow outside interference, cultism has this mentality. Most of the times, they do not allow their members to associate with other people outside the members. The fear is that if they are allowed to associate, these people may likely empower them with information that may open their eyes to the harm the group they belong.

Invitation to Events: These events are organized by them. Ignorant and innocent people are invited to celebrate with them. In these gatherings, they `sell` their ideologies and manifestoes. Naives and emotional ones may be attracted to join.

Friends/Colleagues: Many are members of various cults today because of the influence of their friends and colleagues. Bad communication is said to lead to corruption. This is true in this case.

Neglect of Parents of their Needs: When parents or guardians neglect their responsibilities to their children or wards, the tendency is for them to look for they will be `accommodated`. This vulnerability cult members will be exploited by these people, and give them what they are denied by people who supposed to provide for them.

Unemployment: It is often said that there is no food for a lazy man. When people, especially the youths, are unemployed, roaming the streets aimlessly because of our bad economy. Any person who promises them employment with the condition that they join any of these cults, will readily join in order to make soul and body be together. This is one of the major reasons that allure people to cultism.

Hard Drug: Somebody who is on hard drug can be influenced by anything. He does not reason normally. He is partially insane. In this condition, he accepts anything that comes in his way. Members of cults will brainwash such a person, and probably help him in his drug business, or consumption.

Bullying and Harassment: This usually happens in schools where the senior ones bully and harass the junior ones. It can also happen in the communities. Innocent people are `forced` to join cults through this way. They are being bullied and harassed. Sometimes their rights are being denied in order to make succumb to wishes and caprices of these members. Many today are members through this means.

Access to opposite sex: There is the promise to get the friend one wants, especially if the person proves `stubborn`, whether a male or female. With the influence of cult, such a `target` will be caught. It may also be for protection in school where students are being harassed, cult becomes a safe haven for such people.

Success in Examination: Many in the High Institutions allege that with the influence of cultism, one passes his or her examination successfully. Whether one reads or not, is out of the way. Or even attends classes. Many have joined cults because of this bait. Sometimes, a Lecturer who proves stubborn, and will not pass any cult member, is threatened by the group, so that, out of fear and loss of life, the lecturer will do the bidding of the group.

INITIATION RITES

Every organization has its ways of enrolling or initiating new members. Some are easy and simple; while others like that of the cults, is not easy. Many have died in the process of initiation rites.

The initiations are very brutal. They involve beating from night until early hours of morning. This is done mostly in the night and forests. In these exercises, marks are given to the new members at any part of their bodies, to mark out as members.

According to Helen Oyibo, some of the rites include "Singing, dancing, drinking, blind-folding of the new initiates." (Helen Oyibo. "Nigeria`s Campus Cults: Buccanner, Black Axe and Other Feared Group.) The aim and goal of the brutal ritual is to make the initiates become fearless and to be brave. It is purge out weakness and then clothe them with bravery. But one thing that is noteworthy is that "The moment you go in there and come out, you are a different person", Roland, a newly initiated student told Helen Oyibo. (Helen Oyibo. "Nigeria`s Campus Cults)

URGLY FACES OF CULTISM.

The activities of cults are many that no one will be in position to recount them all. This is because, each day, a different activity will prop.

Generally, their activities are to cause mayhem on people, killings of themselves and law abiding citizens, injuries to innocent people, and making peace to be an essential commodity to people who are affected.

Suspension of a Monarch: The monarch was suspended because his sons` involvement in cultism. This happened in Bayelsa State. The governor had to suspend him. This probably was an innocent man, but the activities of the sons brought him low. "The monarch`s suspension is due to the traditional ruler`s inability to show leadership expected of his position in the fight against crime and cultism amid credible intelligence that two of his are involved in cult activities in the community." (Simon Utebor. "Diri suspends monarch over sons` alleged involvement in cultism." 5)

Fear Syndrome: Their activities have brought to communities, individuals, and families. In Bariga, Lagos State, feared gripped the people "when each cult group announced that it was preparing for a 7/7 programme, and warned residents to remain indoors at night." (Christopher Oji. "5 killed, others injured as rival cult group clash in Lagos." 5) Those in schools are also culprits in this scenario. These students openly threaten their teacher who were advising them to live good life. It fell on deaf ears. "These young boys and girls who are just teenagers [cultists] are not scared of their teachers. When you try to correct them, they threaten you openly." (Fred Itua. "Abuja schools under siege!" 19.)

The people of Yenagoa in Bayelsa State received also a share in this context. The Police arrested some cult members of Greenlanders and the Bobos. They were seen with dangerous weapons around Tombia area. Their activities "triggered panic in Tombia area and other parts of the state." (Femi Falaranmi. "1 killed in renewed cult clashes in Yenagoa." 5) Yet in another incidence, fear was sent to inhabitants of Rivers State. This time, in Ahoada East Local Government Area. It was the Greenland and the Iceland cult groups, seeking for supremacy. Their actions which included "gunfire increased tension in Ahoada East, as people around the troubled areas scampered for safety, while shop owners hurriedly closed business for the day." (Tony John. "3 killed in Rivers cult war." 5)

Cult activities also were responsible for the palpable fear in the lives of the people of Benue State. The killings of the innocent people in the state "thrown residents of Gboko into palpable fear as many shop owners kept their shops under lock, to forestall unseen circumstances." (Rose Ejembi. "Cult clashes claim 5 in Benue." 5)

Relocation of People: With the concomitant results of cultism, many have left their areas of residences to other areas for safety. It is only a tree that will see an axe coming to cut it, and it will stay. Man is not like that.

This time, the case was from Rivers State. The cult war broke between two rival cult group in Onne community in Eleme Local Government Area. "The cult war had threatened the peace

of the community, forcing residents to flee their homes fearing escalation of attacks." (Tony John. "3 killed in Rivers cult war, 3 arrested." 5) Added to the above was the one that happened in Delta State. This claimed six lives in Asaba where cults unleashed their mayhem on people. "Following the renewed cult war, several young men have been forced to temporarily relocate, pending when the attacks would abate." (Paul Osuyi. Renewed cult war claims 6 in Delta. 4.)

Death of Relations: Still in Rivers State, in an attempt to kill a rival cult member in reprisal attack, relations were killed when the targets were not found. One happened in Obele community in Emohua Local Government Area where "some of the person killed were believed to be blood relations to rival gunmen who came on reprisal mission over death [of] two persons earlier." (Tony John. "Cult war claims 5 lives in Rivers." 5) The other one was Bayelsa where also there was reprisal attack of cult members. The hunted cult member was not found, they killed indiscriminately. The report had it that one of the victims "was a younger brother to an alleged cultist, who paid with his dear life when he could not disclose his brother`s whereabouts." (Femi Falaranmi. "Cult clash claims 3 in Bayelsa." 4.)

Absence of Peace: When there is fear, life is not safe. There is apprehension here and there, the implication is that there will be no peace in the environment. This was exactly what happened in the areas these cults were operating. Tony John reported that because of clash of supremacy among the cults in Rivers State, "it was gathered, had threatened the peace of the community." (Tony John. "3 killed in Rivers cult war, 3 arrested." 5)

Again, in Rivers State, the Governor charged the Traditional Rulers of the importance of peace, having experienced the threat to peace in the state. Tony John also reported the case. According to him, the governor Nyesom Wike said: "The first responsibility [of a traditional ruler] is the maintenance of peace and security. Peace is priceless; safety is paramount. Investors or tourists will only come to places considered safe and secure. Progress can only take place in a stable environment." (Tony John. "Wike charges traditional rulers to eradicate cultism." 15.)

Harassment and Beating: A cultist Bakare Saheed with other cultists from Osogbo, Oshun State, came to somebody`s farm, and were cutting the person`s trees. The owner questioned why the action from the cultists, he was beaten and was of death. The victim said that "Ewe [the leader of the cultists] came to his farm along with other cultists fully armed with dangerous weapons, beat him up mercilessly, while threatening to shoot him with a gun and ordered him to leave his farm. He had no choice due to his safety but to leave the farm or be killed." (Lateef Dada. "We shot cult rival dead in 2020, suspect tells police." 4)

No Freedom of Movement: Freedom of movement is one of the fundamental rights of a citizen, unless this freedom threatens the wellbeing of others. But in this case, the citizens did not threaten anybody because of their movement, yet the cultists restricted their movement, thus violating their right of movement. People were warned to stay indoors because of the celebration of the cults. Of course, if any should disobey such order, the person has got death certificate. This took place in Lagos where cult groups, each announced her 2023 Cult programmes on July 7th. Report had that "each cult group announced that it was preparing

for a 7/7 programme, and warned residents to remain indoors at night." (Christopher Oji. 5 killed, others injured as rival cult groups clash in Lagos." 5.)

Shooting: One of their weapons of their warfare is gun. They use it to threaten and harass people. In order to have their way in their negative activities, they shoot sporadically, indiscriminately. People will be scared. Nobody knows how many people have been killed through strayed bullets. Examples abound where these had happened.

As reported above, the cult groups who were on supremacy battle, shot sporadically which resulted injuring passersby, while many who were returning took cover. (Christopher Oji. 5 killed, others. 5) Yet in another development, this time in Kwara State. The rival cultists fought to supremacy around Abayawo and Gambari communities. Residents ran helter-skelter while the cultists shot sporadically. One Samad was killed in the process of cross fire. (Odogwu Obinna. "1 killed in Kwara cult clash." 4) Another case of strayed bullet came from Illorin where, in the course of pursuing the cultists` target, the bullets of the cultists hit three people who died at the spot. Layi Olanrewaju said that: "a cult group trailed a man to joint spot. The target who regularly patronises the joint, took to his heels to escape from the area, but they fired on him. The bullet fired by the cult members hit two people, including the son of the local gin seller. (Layi Olanrewaju. "4 feared dead in Illorin cult clash."4)

Attempted Murder: A member of Alora secret cult, Yusuf Baoku was accused of attempted murder of one Ajayi David and assault of one Tiamiyu Adesola. This was disclosed by the Spokesman of Osun State Police Command, Yemisi Opalola. (Lateef Dada. "I was footballer in Dubai before I joined cultism-Suspect." 5)

Burglary/Stealing: The cult members are also involved in stealing. One of the reasons is to get money to pay for their levies in order to maintain their membership. A burglary case happened that involved a cult member who was involved in the stealing at St. Francis Hostel in Esa-oke in Osogbo. His name is Adeniyi Adesina, a 28-year member of the Aye Confraternity. (Lateef Dada. "I was footballer." 5) The next is looting of shops. According to Fred Itua, they engage themselves in this action "without making any effort to conceal their faces." (Fred Itua. "Abuja schools under siege!" 19) This will tell one how serious the situation is. Acting with impunity.

Killings: Part of their activities includes killings. Not only of their members, but innocent citizens, and law abiding ones. Lateef Dada reports that Oladele Pamilerin, when he was arrested by the Police, "confessed to being a member of the Eiye Confraternity at Ilesa town, and also involved in the killings in the town. Not one, but killings. (Lateef Dada. "I was footballer in Dubai." 5). In the way, "A suspected cultist, Samson Olukitibi (28), was apprehended in connection with a case of murder of one late Segun Agbadayi, at a mall shopping complex." (Lateef Dada. "I was footballer in Dubai." 5).

On May 10, 2025, two persons were killed at Mile 3, Diobu, Port Harcourt by suspected cultists. (Tony John. 2 killed in Rivers. 4) In Asaba, Delta State, six persons were killed in renewed cult clashes. (Paul Osuyi. "Renewed cult war claims 6 in Delta." 4) It was not over yet. Five persons were killed in Agbarho community in Ughelli North L.G.A. (Akinyemi &

Jimitota Onoyume. "Cult war claims 5 in Agborho community." 6) "In Orhuworun community in Udu Local Government Area, two people were massacred." (Iheanacho Nwosu. "checking cultism in Nigeria." 11). Yet, in another case, "Four persons were feared killed at Ogwashi-uku in Aniocha South Local Government Area of Delta State when rival cult groups invade the scene of the community`s annual festival known as Ine." (Paul Osuyi. "4 dead as suspected cultists invade community." 4.

There is this story of another death, no thanks to the cultists. It happened in Kwara State, Surelere area of Illorin. The death of a cult member was because of clash of supremacy between the cults. (Akinyemi & Jimitota Onoyume. "Cult war claims 5 in Agborho community." 6) Another story from the same state had it that a tricycle operator, simply addressed as Samad was killed in a cult clash. His left eye and left hand were removed. (Layi Olanrewaju. "1 killed in kwara cult clash."4) The next gory story place at Olunlade area of the state. Four people, including cult members were killed during the celebration of August 8 (8) cult activities in that state. (Layi Olanrewaju. "4 feared dead in Illorin." 4)

In Yenagoa Bayelsa, two people were killed including others who were injured at Erepa Road. The people killed Auwal Bashir and Paul Marcus. (Femi Falaranmi. "Cultists in shooting spree, kill 2, injured 5 in Bayelsa." 5) Also included were Donaldson Mison, Addy Mulan and Greenboy Dudella. These were at igbogene, a suburb of Yenagoa, during cult clash. (Femi falaranmi. "Cult clash claims 3 in bayelsa". 4.)

At Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State, the cultists stroked. This time, five person were found dead. The victims were traced to their homes, and were murdered. (Tony John. Cult war. 5) Another one happened at Eleme Local Government in the same State. Three people were killed this time. The clash that brought the death of the persons was one that involved two rival cult groups in Onne community. (Tony John. "3 killed in Rivers cult war." 5) Included also will be this that happened at East-West road section of Ahoada East Local Government Area where "Three suspected cultists were killed in a gun duel in a supremacy battle between suspected Greenland and Iceland cult groups." (Tony John. "3 killed in Rivers cult war." 5)

In Osobgo, Osun State, two were killed by cult members. The victims were Tafa and Yinka. (Lateef Dada. "We shot cult rival dead in 2020." 4)

Lagos State was not exempted in spree of killings. Early July in 2023, five members of the community were hacked down by three rival cult groups. The scene was at Bariga. (Christopher Oji. "5 killed, others injured as rival cult." 5) Furthermore, one cult member was also killed by rival cult group. He was ambushed by a rival group when he was walking with his girl friend when he met his waterloo. (Dayo Oyewo. "One killed in Lagos cult attack." 5.) The tentacles spread to Ogun State where about 20 people were killed because of cult activity. Those killed included secondary school students. (Iheanacho Nwosu. "checking cultism in Nigeria." 11).

In another development, about 20 mourners were killed, and the corpse was shot many times before it was mutilated. Cultists stormed at the funeral ceremony and did the unthinkable. (Iheanacho Nwosu. "Checking cultism in Nigeria." 11).

Anambra state was not spared in this scenario. In Awka the state capital, four persons were killed in a war between two cult groups. This one came few days after a bloody cult war remove many lives from the face of the earth. This time, at Okija community, Ihiala local government area. (Odogwu Obinna. "Suspected cult war claims 4 in Anambra." 5)

The cults` nefarious activities visited Osun state. It was in the area of Osogbo where "a group of suspected cultists hacked a 17-year-old boy named Olalekan to death." (Toba Adedeji. "Cult group kills teenager in Osogbo." 6) It also took place in Benue State, where at least five persons were killed by suspected cultists in Gboko and Makurdi. This happened when two cult groups had to settle their differences. When the `dust` had settled down, the outcome was the death of the victims. (Rose Ejembi. "Cult clashes claim 5 in Benue." 5)

Stabbing of a father: A son stabbed his father in order to kill him because, according to him, he was instructed by his cult group-Vikings. This is the stage this thing has reached. There is no more fear and respect for parents. Cult members are now the people who guide our morals. (Man arrested for stabbing father after cult group, Vikings ordered him to do so.)

On Campus, the list of those killed is endless. In 2002, 14 students were killed in UNN. In 2019 at Kogi State University, 13 were killed. At Rivers State University in 2006, 5 lost their lives. Equally, at ABSU IN 2016, 2 lost their lives. Two students lost their lives in 2002 at University of Jos, while one lost his life at Institute of Technology Enugu in 1997. (Helen Oyibo. "Nigeria`s Campus Cults: Buccanner.) The above figures were a tip in the ice berg. These excluded those who were injured in these their activities-Thousands. Some of them, irreversible. What of the economic wastages these have caused the affected. Some paid huge some of money in the course of recovery. To some, their dependants are suffering because of the injuries. Their children are no longer going to school because of lack of finance, or because they take care of their handicapped parents or siblings.

Curfew in Ogun State: Their activities spread like cancer, in all areas of life. It was because of their clashes that made the state to curfew in Sagamu from 7pm and 6am. (Iheanacho Nwosu. "Checking cultism in Nigeria." 11) This they do with dangerous weapons to destroy or maim those who oppose them, putting fears into the masses.

Threat to advisers: To show how dead their conscience is to sane and moral life, those who advise them to toll the path of good life, and be good citizens are threatened. In other words, they lords to themselves, and outlaws. They are not afraid of their parents, teachers, and even the security agents. This information was given by Fred Itua. "When you try to correct them, they threaten you openly." (Fred Itua. "Abuja schools under siege!" 19***)***

Kidnapping/Raping: It is no longer news that cultists kidnap and rape their victims. In fact, this is one of the reasons some of them join cults. They kidnap and demand for ransom in order to get money to pay their dues. They also involve in raping in order to be promoted to

another level in their order. "Two suspected cultists identified as Precious (aka Pere) and Chidiebere (aka B2K), on Wednesday, kidnapped a 14-year-old girl, at about 10am, and took her to an apartment in a three storey building located at National Street, Mile 3 Diobu, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, where they gang-raped the teenager." (Tony John. "Cultists abduct, gang-rape girl, 14 in Rivers." 5)

Imprisonment: Most of cult members have been imprisoned because of their involvement in cultism and cult activities. These are people who are in their prime years, who could be leaders and industrialists tomorrow. They cut their potentials through cultism. "An Ogun Special Anti-Cultism Court sitting in Abeokuta, sentenced a 35-year-old man, Timileyin Afolayan, to 10 years in prison for belonging to a secret cult group." (Christopher Oji, Joe OBUKATA Ogbodu. "Man bags 10 years for belonging to secret cult." 4)

Involvement of others: Cult members have relatives. It has been seen above where relatives were killed in the course of cult activities. This time around, families were involved who did not join them in their activities, but because they belonged to them. These people were arrested with evidences of the weapons of cultists which they kept at home. Thus, those who were doing their `legitimate` businesses were dragged into cult activities. "Some of the arrested suspects include the wife of the leader of Aye Confraternity in Igbokuta, Gbamila Iyabo, arrested with one pump action rifle loaded with eight rounds of cartridges and Salisu Islamiyat, wife of the leader of Aye Confraternity in Emure, arrested with a locally-made pistol with some live cartridges. (Esther Onyegbula. "Wives of suspected cultists, armed robbers arrested in Ikorodu, Ibeju-Lekki." 7)

Spiritual inclination: Would one say that involvement in cultism has no spiritual implication? Or, would one say that members are free and not in bondage? The answer is emphatic yes. It has spiritual manipulation. There is a power beyond their control that makes them kill and commit atrocities without remorse. Some kill their parents, siblings, friends, and relatives in the bid to obey their `master` the devil. This has "spiritual undertones, and being orchestrated from the marine world with occultic implications." (Paul Osuyi. "`Snake bite` in Delta schools: The real story." 14.)

They are also involved in harassing lecturers for good grades. Their lives are equally at risk because of the illegal substances they drink and consume. All these have health issues. Those who would not join them, sometimes are being bullied and threatened. Many students miss lectures because of the activities of cults. This has made many to lose focus in their studies. Many, because of this, stayed longer in the school than necessary. Many stay late in the night, not because of academic activities, but because, either they went for initiation rites, or cult activities. This makes them to feel sleepy while lectures are on. They are `security` conscious. This is because there is the tendency at any time that there may be violent clashes between rival group or groups, which may lead to sudden death. Their nefarious activities are too numerous to mention.

Conclusion

Cultism is a whirl wind that blows no one good in all ramifications. Lives are lost, people live in fear, some relocated because of cult activities. Some also have lost their businesses and jobs.

Families are tagged cult families, making people not to associate with them. Members are involved in drug trafficking, blood-drinking, human sacrifices, demon related activities, armed robbery. This is not a time people should stand aloof. It is a fight, not kiddies` gloves, or sweet deodorant, but with all hands being on the desk to eradicate this menace before it destroys us. Let us join together and killed this before it kills us.

Recommendations

Avoid bad friends: Bad fellowship corrupts good character. If one should have a friend, it should not be the one that will lead the person to commit evil, or lead him astray. Such friend should be avoided like AIDS.

Parties: It is dangerous to attend any party one does not know the organizers, or much about it. Such parties are organized to lure people into cultism through food, drink, and speeches.

Gifts: Some of gifts cult members give `freely` to people, incantations have been said over them. Any casual person who receives, automatically has been initiated in that cult without knowing. People should be careful of the type of gift they receive, especially from someone who suddenly develops `love` for people and starts being Father Christmas.

Dressing: The type of one`s dressing, sometimes, attracts cult members to him/her. It is often say that one is addressed the way he/she is dressed. Those dress well are not likely to attract cult members. They are not their targets.

Enlightenment programmes: Churches, Mosques, government, NGOs should mount enlightenment programmes to enlighten people about the evils of cultism. Many may not known about cultism. Some see it as a way to be feared in the community, while others may have seen it as a way of protection. Such programmes will expose the negative impacts of this aberration.

Sharing of intelligence: This is mainly not only the security agencies, but communities, individuals. Any information that will help to nib this at the bud, should be shared among these people so that these people will be nabbed. Any suspicious movement should be reported immediately.

Punishment: One of the problems in Nigeria is that, the law is like a cob web. It catches small flies, but big birds break it and flies away. It is the recommendation of this paper that, any person involved in cultism should face the wrath of the law no matter whose ox is gored. This will serve as a deterrent to others who will want to be members. But if the law is selective in its operation, the evil continues.

Sponsors: Some cult activities are sponsored by powerful politicians and members of the public. When such people are exposed, the law should take its cause; no sacred cow in this case.

Parents/Guardians: These people should be up to their responsibilities as regard to their children. Some are oblivion of what their children do, the company they keep, where they go.

Hoteliers: They should screen and monitor the people who hire their facilities, and activities they are engaged. They should not only be interested in finance. The sanity of the society should also be their concern, because some of these cult activities are being hatched in their facilities.

Security posts: When there is clash between rival cult groups, lives and property are destroyed by these people. If security posts are built near the people, the rate of destruction will be minimized because security agents will intervene quickly.

Native doctors: Most of the members operate with charms prepared by the native doctors to make them invincible. Most times, the charms work, both the security agents and innocent citizens lose their lives and property. Such native doctors should be arrested and prosecuted.

Arrest of parents/landlords: Is it not possible that parents know that their children belong to cults and they keep mute? Is not possible that landlords know that their tenants belong practise cultism and they are indifferent? When such is the situation, such culprits should be arrested and prosecuted also.

Anti-cultism laws: Government should enact anti-cultism laws to guide our Judiciary. This should not only be enacted, but also be implemented to the letter.

Recovery of arms: Cult members operate with arms most of the times. The arms should be recovered from them, and not to `fall` into their hands again. Those who supply them and make these illegal arms, should be fished out and the long arm of the law should catch them.

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