

Herdsmen Attack Ondo Community, Kill Three, Burn Houses

From **Oluwaseun Akingboye, Akure**
FEAR has gripped residents of Melenge Village in Ose local council of Ondo State as suspected herdsmen attacked the community, setting some houses on fire and killing three persons.

The Guardian gathered that the attackers swooped on the village, an agrarian settlement along Elerinla and Arimogija, and one of the troubled spots in the Ose/Benin axis last Thursday night.

It was gathered that the herders were allegedly infuriated by the refusal of the residents to allow their cows to graze on their farmlands.

They reportedly mobilised themselves to attack the community and set their farms on fire.

According to sources in the area, the villagers took to their heels and scampered for safety when the marauders unleashed terror on them, destroying their properties and killing the victims that were yet to be identified as at press time.

The state Commander of Amotekun Corps, Chief Adeleye Adetunji, who confirmed the incident, recounted that his officers got hint of the incident while on routine patrol.

"Our men were informed that

some nearby villages in Melenge have been taken over by herdsmen while they burnt down some people's properties. We moved in with three patrol vehicles and took control of the situation in the village.

"On their way back, some men suspected to be herdsmen suddenly opened fire on our men in an unprovoked attack because Amotekun does not want to start shooting people. "We are trying to find out who they are; an adequate investigation is ongoing. We urge the people of the community to go back to their homes as peace has returned back to the village," he said.

Adetunji was, however, silent on the casualties recorded during the forceful invasion of the village by the bandits.

The Commissioner of Police, Oyeyemi Oyediran, who paid a visit to Melenge Camp for an on-the-spot assessment of the situation, described it as a case of arson and murder, vowing to bring the culprits to book.

According to the State Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), DSP Odunlami Funmilayo, the police boss met with the community members, encouraged them, allayed their fears and vowed to arrest and prosecute all those involved in the evil act accordingly.