

# Two soldiers, tapper, farmer killed in 'herdsmen' attacks

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## *Osagie Otabor, Bénin*

GUNMEN suspected to be herdsmen have struck again in Plateau State one month after separate attacks left many dead in several communities in the state.

On Sunday the assailants attacked Sector Five of the Special Task Force, Operation Save Haven (OPSH), killing two soldiers and injuring one at X-Land in Barkin Ladi Local Government area of the state.

An eyewitness in the area, who preferred anonymity, told News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) that the soldiers who were angered by the incident gave the community two days to fish out the attackers.

The eyewitness further said the enraged soldiers raided the area and burnt down many houses.

The burnt houses largely belonged to the Fulani settlers in the community, it was gathered, and the army also made some arrests during the raid.

"On Sunday, gunmen attacked soldiers of the Sector Five, killed two personnel and ran into the houses of Fulani settlers living here in X-Land," the source said.

"Soldiers had a meeting with the Fulanis and told them to provide the culprits but they failed to, and on Tuesday soldiers raided the community.

"They burnt down many houses, over 100 and arrested some persons."

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Spokesperson of the task force, Maj. Ibrahim Shittu offered no information on the incident beyond a text message, which said: "I have seen your text, will get back to you on it, please".

Police spokesman Obah Ogaba, confirmed the incident.

"It is true that gunmen ambushed security personnel of sector five, opened fire on them, killed two soldiers and injured one," he said.

"The issue of burnt houses is not the key matter, but soldiers are attacked and two were killed and this is the major concern here," he said.

In Edo State, a palm wine tapper and a farmer, Onne Owoh and Samuel Imonkhai were also killed by suspected herdsmen at Owan village in Ovia North East Local Government Area of the state.

Owoh and Imonkhai were separately killed on Wednesday.

The attackers shot Owoh dead where he was tapping his palm while Imonkhai was hacked to death.

Residents of Owan community and others like Agbanikaka, Uhiere, Odiguetie and Odighi have appealed to Governor Godwin Obaseki and security agencies to stop incessant and unprovoked killings.

The Odionwere of Owan community, Pa Ifiabor Michael, said the communities have have been besieged by suspected herdsmen who have ravaged farmlands and killed many inhabitants.

Pa Micheal said eight persons have been killed across these communities since February, 2020. Police spokesman Chidi Nwabuzor could not be reached for comments.

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