

I hid behind window, watched helplessly as herdsmen hacked my husband to death – Widow



Linus Oota, Lafia



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PEEPING through the window in a village settlement in Tse Agbande, Keana Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, 28 years old Agnes Apande watched in disbelief as herdsmen attacked and macheted her husband to death last Saturday.

The hapless widow said she was in her room watching a movie when her husband's attackers arrived their compound but she could not raise the alarm for fear that she could attract the attention of the killer herdsmen to herself and son.

The late Matthew Apande was reportedly murdered with machete cuts in his neck and other parts of his body as suspected killer herdsmen stormed their village in the night with guns and cutlasses.

Speaking with our correspondent, Agnes said that the suspected herdsmen numbering about nine had stormed the village on motorcycles at about 10pm and started shooting indiscriminately. She added that some of the killer herdsmen attacked her husband where he lay outside because of the intense heat and macheted him to death.

Agnes said: “We had bought a small generator to keep us busy any time we returned from the farm, because I like watching films.

“On that fateful day, I was in the room with my only son watching a film while my husband lay outside the house.

“They first started shooting. It was the sound of gunshots that made me to reduce the volume of the TV.

“I then opened the window slightly and saw them. They came on motorcycles. Some of them waited while others came down.

“One of them went straight to the generator switched it off. Then I saw them shoot my husband in the stomach, killing him instantly.

“They collected his handset and beamed torchlight around to see if there was someone else but I dodged and hid behind the door while my son was sleeping on the bed.

“I watched as they took his (husband’s) phone and torch. They spoke Fulfude, that was what made me to know that they were Fulani.

“I could not believe that I was seeing my husband’s body. I saw machete and axe cuts after his stomach was ripped open with bullets.

“In fact, they butchered him anyhow and dropped his body under a mango tree within the compound.

“They moved to the neighbouring village and also killed about five people there.”

Asked why she thought her husband and others in the village were attacked, she said a few days earlier, “my husband alongside other people had complained to some Fulani leaders after some cattle reportedly ate up the soya beans they were harvesting. I didn’t know that they would plan to attack them.”

She added: “Their cows ate up all the rice, cassava and yams we planted last season and we were left with nothing.

“Our only hope of survival before the rainy season when we would start all over again was the soya beans.

“We had hoped that we would sell the soya beans and buy foodstuffs that we would manage for the year, but the cows ate it up.

“My husband was angry because of the development, so he expressed his anger to the Fulani leaders who allowed their cattle to eat his soya beans.

“Little did he know that they would come after him.”

The widow expressed frustration that her husband’s killers were still using his mobile phone, appealing to security agencies to apprehend the culprits and bring them to book.

Even the most callous of monsters would pity Agnes’s condition as she sat dejectedly, staring into an empty space as if her stare could change the situation she was in and bring back her husband.

She would have no reason to concur if anyone had told her earlier in the year that she would soon become a widow, considering that her husband was very hale and hearty, carrying on his normal business without any fear or apprehension.

That was until the Fulani herdsmen invaded their community, killing her husband rendering her a widow.

Agnes said: “We want the herdsmen to be arrested. We want the government to help us. Our child is still very small. He is just one year old and there is nothing I have to train him.

“My husband’s death is a tough one to take because it has caused me much pain.

“He did not enjoy the fruits of his labour. He was already preparing for new season but they did not allow him to finish it.

“There is no day I don’t feel loneliness inside me. We buried him last weekend, and life has not been the same without him around me.

“Before death came knocking, we had good plans for the coming farming season, he gave me a life that can be described as a fairly okay. I’m mentally tortured when I realise he is no more.”

Agnes’s trauma is compounded by the gloomy prospect of raising their little boy all alone.

“I am a poor village woman,” she said, bursting into tears.

One of Agnes’s neighbours, 49-year-old Igbadoo Agune, who escape the attack because his house was not searched by the invaders, described Apande’s death as a shock. He said he was devastated by the sight of Apande’s lifeless body after the herdsmen had left.