

6 killed as herdsmen invade Benue, Adamawa communities

From Johnson Babajide and Tom Garba

TROOPS of **Operations Whirl Stroke**, in the early hours of Tuesday, killed four suspected herdsmen who invaded Agasha community in Guma Local Government Area of Benue State.

Two persons were also killed when suspected herdsmen attacked Gon and Bolki villages in Numan Local Government Area of Adamawa State.

During the attack in Benue, the herdsmen had killed two persons and shot an elderly woman in the community before soldiers, who were on patrol, pursued and killed four of them.

A resident of the commu-

nity who did not want his name in print told the **Nigerian Tribune** that the herdsmen stormed the community and attacked a house near a primary school where the two victims were killed.

The source said: "The herdsmen invaded Agasha at about 4:00 a.m. this morning (Tuesday), killed two men and shot an old woman in her house near LGEA Primary School.

"If not for the soldiers who were on patrol of the area, the herdsmen would have wreaked more havoc.

"As the herdsmen were unleashing terror on the community, we heard the vehicle of the troops, which perhaps made the herdsmen to flee,

while the soldiers pursued them into the bush.

"We later learnt that the soldiers were able to kill four of the herdsmen."

The Force Commander of **Operations Whirl Stroke**, Major-General Adeyemi Yekini, confirmed to the **Nigerian Tribune** that troops succeeded in killing four of the herdsmen.

Major-General Yekini said: "Some suspected armed herdsmen infiltrated Agasha in Guma Local Government Area of Benue State and killed two villagers overnight.

"Troops of **Operation Whirl Stroke** on patrol in the area immediately mobilised to the scene but the herdsmen had fled before their arrival.

"The troops subsequently tracked the assailants through some of the nearby communities overnight while other troops deployed at Tomatar, across the river, also in Guma LGA, blocked their escape route towards Nasarawa State.

"At about 6:00 a.m. this morning (Tuesday), troops had contact with the armed herdsmen at a make-shift camp close to the Benue River, during which four of the assailants were killed."

The Force Commander said two AK-47 rifles, four magazines and 65 rounds of 7.62mm ammunition were recovered from the bandits.

Major-General Yekini said that the troops did not sustain any casualty during

the operation, adding that "troops are currently on search-and-destroy operation in the general area."

In Adamawa, a source who is a vigilance group member from Nzumosu, Clement Adams, told the **Nigerian Tribune** that several houses were burnt while animals were rustled during the herdsmen's operation.

Adams said one of those killed was a mason on assignment to reconstruct one of the destroyed primary schools by the same herdsmen.

However, the state Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), DSP Suleiman Ngoruje, when contacted, said he was yet to be briefed on the development.