

Herdsmen killed my brother one month after wedding – Plateau farmer

Emmanuel Ishaku, a 39-year-old farmer from Plateau State, tells TEMITOPE ADETUNJI how his younger brother, Amos, who recently got married, was allegedly killed by armed herdsmen on his farm in the Bokkos Local Government Area of the state on October 28, 2023

WHAT is your relationship with the deceased?

My name is Emmanuel Ishaku, and I am from Plateau State. I am the elder brother of the late Amos Ishaku.

How old was he?

He was just 35 years old when he was brutally killed by herdsmen on October 28, 2023, while working on his farm in the Bokkos Local Government Area of Plateau State. The farm is situated about 100 metres away from his house.

How did you hear about the incident?

Shockingly, I was a firsthand witness to the horrifying incident because I am also a farmer and we ran a farm business together. I was there that day.

Can you explain what happened?

On that fateful day, I was with him, alongside his best friend, and other workers when a group of six armed herdsmen invaded the farm and began shooting indiscriminately. It was around 7:30pm, and Amos just harvested his maize that day and was waiting for a pickup truck to collect the harvested crop. The vehicle arrived, but unfortunately, it developed a fault around the farm.

While we were trying to fix it, the herdsmen appeared out of nowhere and opened fire. Two people, including my brother, were injured, but Amos succumbed to his injuries and passed away on the spot. I was able to escape by crawling to dodge the bullets, and the herdsmen fled upon hearing the approaching footsteps of people.

How many were you on the farm?

We were seven; they (armed herdsmen) attacked six; only Amos died, while some were injured. Witnessing my brother's death has left me in a state of profound anguish and sorrow that defies adequate description. The depth of grief I'm grappling with is beyond mere words, making it an indescribably heart-wrenching ordeal. Even as time passes, I find it incredibly challenging to reconcile with the

harsh reality of his departure. My emotional state is one of shattered pieces and brokenness, and it's a tormenting struggle to accept the harsh reality, especially given the joyous occasion of his recent marriage just a month ago.

How is his wife coping?

I'm certain that it's tough for her. Losing a husband is a very painful thing, and it will require a lot of strength and support from God for her to cope with this situation. She had only been married to him for a month, and now he's gone, which makes it even more heartbreaking. I, too, have been finding it incredibly hard. It's a significant loss what we're both going through.

Had there been a similar incident in the community?

Unfortunately, this wasn't an isolated incident. We have been experiencing such challenges with herdsmen repeatedly entering our community and causing harm. Sometimes, they destroy our farms, steal crops, and generally treat us poorly. It's worth noting that less than a week ago, they horrifically decapitated a woman in a nearby village, leaving us all deeply disturbed and fearful for our safety.

Are there security agents in your community?

While there are some security agents in our village, their numbers are inadequate. We only have one security checkpoint, which is insufficient to address the growing security concerns and protect our community effectively.

What kind of person was your late brother?

My brother, Amos Ishaku, was a remarkable individual. He was the penultimate child of a family of six and served as a pillar of our family. He was hardworking, kind, intelligent, and a successful businessman. Despite being his elder brother, I often referred to him as the pillar of our house. Since we lost our father a few years ago, he took on the responsibility of caring for our mother, and demonstrating his commitment to family.



•The deceased



•Emmanuel

Coming to terms with the fact that my brother is no longer with us is an ongoing struggle that I face every day. The weight of his absence is a constant presence in my life, and it's a difficult reality to bear. Nonetheless, I recognise that fixating on the past won't reverse what has happened. While the pain in my heart is immeasurable, I understand that I must chart a path forward, even as I grapple with the reality of his absence. It's a process of acknowledging that he is no longer a part of our lives, but the memory of him will forever remain in our hearts.

My late brother, was a remarkable individual whose memory is deeply cherished. His dedication to family, his warm and welcoming nature, his kindness and generosity, his passion for farming, his integrity, and his commitment to community development are all aspects of his life that I will always remember and hold dear. His legacy continues to inspire us to be better individuals and to carry forward the values he held dear.

Was his killing reported to the police?

Yes, we have reported the incident to the police, and we were informed that they were actively investigating the matter.

Have your brother's remains been buried?

Due to the situation when he passed away, we had to bury him the day after it happened. Keeping his body in the mortuary wouldn't have made sense. We are resolute in our commitment to seeking justice for the tragic and senseless killing of my beloved brother. It is our firm belief that we must not allow those responsible for this heinous act to evade justice. To achieve this, we fervently appeal to both the government and the wider community for their indispensable support and intervention in pursuing justice.

The unjust and untimely loss of my brother has left an indelible mark on our family, as well as on the broader community. His life was cut short for no apparent reason, and this deeply unjust act calls for an unwavering commitment to ensure that those responsible are held accountable for their actions.