

Bandits kill two soldiers, others in Benue ambush

23rd May 2025



| By John Charles

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Suspected bandits have killed four people, including two soldiers, in an attack on Ijaha Ikobi, a community in the Apa Local Government Area of Benue State.

A resident of the area who identified himself simply as Adakole told our correspondent that the assailants, believed to be armed herders, invaded the community on Wednesday and laid an ambush.

“The incident happened around 3:30 p.m. on Wednesday when residents began to hear sporadic gunshots within the village,” he said.

“Some soldiers who responded to a distress call ran into the ambush laid by the Fulani herdsman. Two of them were killed.”

Adakole gave the names of the two civilian victims as Ocheje Sani and Aduba Ogboyi.

He alleged that the attackers also carted away military weapons, including two AK-47 rifles and one submachine gun.

Confirming the incident, the Chairman of Apa Local Government Area, Adam Ogwola, told journalists via telephone on Thursday that the attack occurred in the early hours of Wednesday.

“I received a call about an attack in Ikobi community. Initially, I couldn’t reach anyone there. Later, I got confirmation that two soldiers had been killed,” Ogwola said.

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“This morning, the bodies of the two civilians were discovered.”

He noted that the situation in the area was relatively calm, and security had been reinforced with the deployment of more soldiers and police officers.

The chairman also confirmed that the civilian victims had been buried in accordance with local customs.

“Because of our people’s culture, we do not usually keep bodies of those who die in such tragic circumstances in the mortuary. We are in a period of hit-and-run attacks by herders. In such situations, burials typically happen within 24 hours,” he explained.

“The two civilians have been buried, while the bodies of the slain soldiers have been moved out of the community. I’m not sure if they were taken to the mortuary in Ugbokpo or Makurdi.”

Efforts to reach the acting Assistant Director, Army Public Relations, Operation Whirl Stroke, Captain Lawal Osabo, were unsuccessful as he did not respond to calls.

Similarly, calls to the spokesperson for the Benue State Police Command, Catherine Anene, went unanswered, and messages sent to her phone were not returned.