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## Family of 4, 4 others killed by herdsmen in Taraba

From Sylvanus Viashima, Jalingo

At least eight persons have been confirmed dead and several others severely injured by herdsmen, who attacked villages around Danacha in Gasol Local Government Area of Taraba State yesterday.

One of the victims, Chief Hembraor Baki, the traditional ruler of Angwan Hembraor, was killed alongside his wife and two children on their farm, while other four victims were killed in the neighbouring Dinya village, also on their farm.



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A witness, Mr. Benjamin Orakaa, who spoke to our correspondent from Danacha, said that the tension in the area was too much for the people to move in to ascertain the actual number of deaths.

Orakaa said: "Zaki Hembraor was with his wife and two children in the farm this morning when they were attacked and killed and four other persons were killed in another rice farm in Dinya, where they were also farming. Several persons have been rushed to Danacha with severe injuries.

"For now, the herdsmen are still there shooting everywhere and people have deserted their homes and everything to run for their dear lives. So, we cannot even go back there to know how many persons are dead. We have only recovered these four bodies so far."

Orakaa said that security operatives manning checkpoints in the area remained at their duty posts and other security vehicles were plying the highway but the shooting in the villages has continued unabated.

However, another witness, Mr. Terkimbi Tahav, who said he escaped death by the whiskers, told our correspondent on the phone that they were at the farm in Dinya village in Gassol LGA when nine Fulani gunmen riding on three motorcycles came and forced them out of the farm.

"One of them told us that the land we were farming on was sold to them by the village head of Kwararafa (Dekechin Kwararafa), Alhaji Isah. We were shocked and tried to resist their attempt to chase us out of our farm, but they started attacking us with cutlasses and we ran for our lives.

"It was when we were running for safety that we discovered four of our relations dead in their farm. They had killed them earlier before proceeding to attack us. It was only God that made it possible for some of us to be alive to tell our story," he said.

Chairman of Gassol LGA, Yahuza Yaya'u, confirmed the attack in the area but said no life was lost: "Nine people, mostly women, were badly injured and we are making efforts to take them to the hospital. The problem started in Dogon Ruwa and six women and three men were badly cut, at the point of death, but no life was lost."

The Taraba State Police Public Relations Officer, ASP David Misal, said he was yet to be briefed about the attack.

Last week, herdsmen sacked a seminary in Jalingo, where they shot a priest, in a continued attack on mostly farming communities across the state.

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