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NEWS

Benue: Herdsmen ambush, kill soldier, injure two others in fresh attacks



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Ethnic leaders take case to international community

At least, one soldier was in the early hours of yesterday, killed, and two others badly wounded, when suspected armed Fulani herdsmen ambushed military personnel, who were on routine surveillance in Guma Local Government Area of Benue State.

This came as Governor Samuel Ortom has restated his call on people of the state to assist the security agencies to fight crime through intelligence gathering, while leaders of three main





Local inhabitants from the scene of the attack told Sunday Telegraph that the incident occurred in the early hours when the army personnel were patrolling the area on Gbajimba-Iyordye- Akaahena road and were suddenly ambushed by the armed herdsmen.

The militia herdsmen, who were said to be armed with sophisticated weapons, invaded the area in large numbers and on sighting the military men of 'Operation Whirl Stroke' (OPWS) in trucks, engaged them in a gun duel, resulting to the death of one of the soldiers and the injury of two others. Both the dead and wounded troops were conveyed to the Air Force Military Hospital in Makurdi, the state capital.

Sunday Telegraph learnt that what followed after the killing was heavy deployment of more troops and a combined team of security operatives including, Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) and Nigerian Air Force among other security agencies to forestall further attacks in the area.

Witness said two helicopters were seen hovering around the operation camp of the soldiers at LGEA Primary School, Mbabegha, where the 'Exercise Cat Race', which later transformed into OPWS, was launched before surging to the scene of the attack.



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unknown.

But Governor Ortom, who spoke at Chito, Ukum Local Government Area at the late burial of Pa David Ashaver, father of his former Special Adviser on Revenue and Taxation, Mr. Benjamin Ashaver, lamented the spate of criminality including assassinations and kidnapping in the area and blamed it on some wayward youths whom he said had become a clog in the wheel of development of their communities.

Meanwhile, the three main socio-cultural organisations in Benue State made up of the Mdzough U Tiv, the Idoma National Forum and Omi Ny'Igegde yesterday took the crisis rocking the state to the international community hoping they would be able to prevail on the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and other security agencies to halt the avalanche of attacks and destruction being visited on the state.



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