

## kidnappers, bandits, kills 10 in Niger

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Youth vigilante group popularly known as 'Yan-sa-kai' said it on Saturday attacked kidnappers' den at Doguwar Guna forest near Pandogari in Rafi killing 10, recovered 17 motorcycles and 70 rustled cows.

The head of the group, Malam Sani Abdullahi Banmi told Daily Trust on phone on Tuesday that they decided to mobilise and attack the kidnappers and bandits inhabiting the vast forest reserves stretching from Alawa through Kongoma and Pandagori following series of attacks on communities in the areas.

Malam Banmi, who had been assisting the military and the police in several operations including espionage, intelligence gathering, arrest, location identification, said he mobilised about 500 vigilantes from Birinin Gwari, Udawa and Madawaki to carry out the operations.

He said his members spent three days in the forest during the operation, adding that they also recovered a generator, stabilizer and other items from the bandits.

He noted that his group could flush out kidnappers and other bandits terrorizing villagers in parts of Shiroror, Sarkin Pawa and Rafi local government areas of Niger State if the state government would empower them.

When asked whether security operatives were part of the operation, Malam Banmi said the vigilantes went in with the support of the traditional council and the Rafi local government leadership.

The District Head of Kongoma, Alhaji Idris Aliyu confirmed the operation, saying the traditional council and the leadership of Rafi local government area support it after series of attacks on communities and kidnap of many residents.

He acknowledged that the state government has been doing its best to rid the area of bandits but said it was obvious that government cannot do it alone.

“The operation was the outcome of meeting involving the traditional council and leadership of Rafi local government area as well as other stakeholders based on public outcry over series of attacks and kidnapping of residents,” he said.

When contacted the state police command public relation officer, ASP Mohammed Abubakar Dan-Inna also confirmed the incident but said it was a joint operation between the military, police and vigilantes.

Our correspondent recalls that gunmen had last Thursday kidnapped a Sharia Judge in the area barely three days after seven people were kidnapped and three others killed.