

Gunmen kill 41 in fresh Zamfara attack

— Contd from page 1

to the community market. They slit the throat of the driver and opened fire on the vehicle killing everyone onboard before setting it ablaze.

The bandits then proceeded to the community market, shooting indiscriminately.

The traders scammed for safety as the gunmen continued their assault unchallenged.

"They arrived on many motorbikes intercepting and killing people who were coming or going out of the village. About 41 people were shot dead within a short period of time," a resident, Hussaini Abdu, said.

Abdu also said that a commercial motorbike rider conveying a woman and her three children was killed and the motorbike burnt, adding that the whereabouts of the woman and her children was still unknown.

However, the state police command spokesman, DSP Muhammad Shehu, said the raids came after hunters and local vigilantes mobilized and launched an attack on the bandits when they heard that the hoodlums were preparing to attack their community.

He said instead of the residents giving the information to security operatives for counter measure, they decided to confront the gunmen.

"You know Birane is a very remote community. I can't tell you the actual figure of casualties till after the Deputy Commissioner, Operations, of the command comes back.

"He and other officers are there to assess the situation and provide additional security measures," the PPRO added.

Zamfara attacks

The first deadly armed bandits' attack in the state was in October 2011 when 23 people were killed at Lingyado village in Maru Local Government Area of the state. This marked the beginning of the series of attacks on villages in the state.

Major attacks with dates and casualties in Zamfara State

Dates	Killed
Oct. 2011	23
Jan 2012	15
Jun 2012	27
Sep 2012	20
Oct 2012	18
Nov 2012	10
Jun 2013	54
Apr 2014	148
Jul 2015	30
Nov 2015	16
Dec 2015	20
Feb 2016	23
Nov 2016	154
Nov 2017	22
Feb 2018	41

Compiled by Shehu Umar

In January 2012, 15 traders were burnt to death in Birnin Magaji Local Government Area of the state. The bandits intercepted and killed them onboard their truck before cremating the corpses.

In June 2012, 27 people were shot dead in Dangulbi in Maru LGA, while in September 2012, 20 were killed in Gusau LGA.

In October 2012, 18 people were shot dead in Kabaro village in Maru LGA and in November, 10 vigilante members were shot dead in Dumburum village in Zurmi LGA. The bandits also slashed the private parts of their victims before fleeing.

In June 2013, 54 people were massacred at Kizara village, in Tsafe LGA and 22 others shot dead at Maitsaba village in Zurmi LGA.

In April 2014, 126 people were killed in Yargaladima village in Maru LGA. The highest casualty recorded so far in a single attack in the state. Yargaladima is a village located 20 kilometres south of Dansadau town.

July 2015 witnessed the gunning down of 30 people in Cigama village in Birnin Magaji LGA while in November 2015, 16 people were killed in Maradun LGA and in December 2015, 20 slaughtered at Mashema village in Bungudu LGA.

In February 2016, 23 were shot dead at Kwanar Dutse in Maru LGA and in November 2016, 42 were shot dead at Bindin Goldmine in Maru LGA.

November 2016 saw the massacre of 112 people at Tubali, Zazzaka, Alfadarai, and Galadi villages in Shinkafi and Maradun LGAs.

On November 18, 2017, suspected armed bandits attacked three villages in Shinkafi LGA, killing at least 22 people.

It was reported that dozens of gunmen arrived on motorbikes firing at residents. They raided and torched the villages of Tungar Kahau, Mallamawa and Gidan Anna communities.

Disturbed by the wanton destruction of lives and property, the political and military leaderships in December 2016, engaged the armed bandits and cattle rustlers in the state in talks.

Earlier, the deputy governor of the state, Alhaji Ibrahim Wakkala Muhammad, had led top military and police officers to Gobirawa Chali village in the troubled Dansadau district of Maru LGA of the state to dialogue with the armed bandits.

The main target at the peace meeting was a notorious cattle rustling kingpin known as Buharin Daji.

There was relative peace afterwards but the agreement collapsed barely one year after it was reached as the bandits resumed their heinous acts.

Why peace deal with bandits collapsed in Zamfara - Sen. Dansadau

A former senator representing Zamfara Central, Saidu Dansadau, has said that the recent upsurge in armed banditry in the state was caused by the bandits who had earlier fled the state but returned after the peace deal was reached.

Speaking with Daily Trust recently, Senator Dansadau said they advised the state government on the need to keep the fleeing armed bandits at a distance because the agreement did not include in the peace pact them but that they were ignored.

"We decided to go and meet those who fled to Adamawa, Taraba and Kwara states but the government just allowed them to come back and they are partly responsible for the recent attacks.

"We advised that oath should be administered

to those who agreed to lay down arms and they should be rehabilitated but it fell on deaf ears of the authorities.

"We foresaw that the deal would collapse if care is not taken and strict and reliable measures not adopted. This is because a person who could have a lot of stolen cows and guns at his command cannot be asked to stop cattle rustling and go unrehabilitated.

"They should have been put on the right track of empowerment, but nothing was done to that effect," he added.

The former senator further explained that the leaders of the armed bandits "had hundreds or even thousands of rustled cows but left their boys with nothing which was why they decided to continue their way and remain unrepentant."

Dansadau said for any conflict resolution move to succeed, all stakeholders must be involved and a high level of commitment must be displayed by all the stakeholders.

He then urged the people and those in government to look inward and think outside the box in order to find a lasting solution to the longstanding crisis.

Over 5,000 women and under-aged girls have been raped by bandits terrorizing Zamfara State, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Petroleum (Downstream), Senator Kabir Garba Marafa (APC, Zamfara) said Wednesday.

Marafa, who spoke during the day's plenary session, quoted the chairman of Zamfara State council of chiefs, Alhaji Attahiru Ahmad, as giving the figure during a meeting of the council of chiefs in Kaduna last week.

The lawmaker quoted the emir as saying the bandits raped and molested women across the state.

"The emir said despite the level of insecurity, Zamfara seems to be sidelined because we don't have strong voices. In fact, he said about 5,000 women have been raped by the bandits," he added.

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