

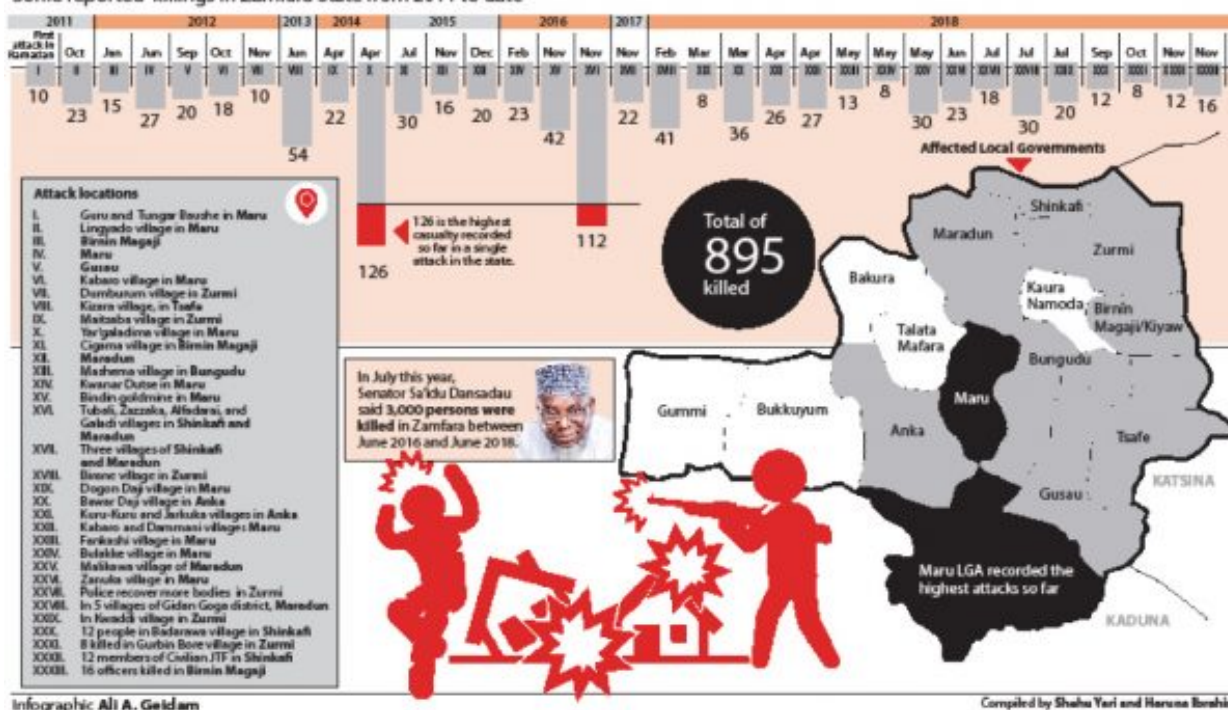
# Police open up on clash with bandits: How we lost 16 policemen, rescued 20 others in Zamfara

By Shehu Umar, Gusau | Published Date Dec 6, 2018 5:32 AM

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Some reported killings in Zamfara State from 2011 to date



The Zamfara State Police Command yesterday opened up on how it lost 16 policemen and rescued 20 others after a heavy clash with armed bandits in Birnin Magaji local government area of the state last Thursday.

The police force had on Friday said it killed 104 armed bandits, destroyed 50 of their hideouts and recovered 500 cattle and 79 sheep in operations in Birnin Magaji LG.

A D V E R T I S E M E N T

Daily Trust learnt that the slain policemen were part of the special intervention force comprising personnel from various squadrons across the country and deployed by the Inspector General of Police to carry out the operation in the state.

The spokesperson of Zamfara State Police Command, SP Muhammad Shehu, said in a statement that the Inspector General of Police Ibrahim Idris had directed the DIG Operations Joshak Habila to remain in the state.

A D V E R T I S E M E N T

He said the police intervention force under the DIG was making progress in their efforts to rout all armed bandits and other criminal elements in the state.

“In the search and rescue operation of the missing personnel after last Thursday’s onslaught on armed bandits, 20 personnel were rescued while 16 were found dead,” the statement said.

He said the Special Forces Personnel, Counter Terrorism Unit, Police Mobile Force, Federal SARS Personnel with three surveillance helicopters have strengthened the operations to rout the remnants of the armed bandits in their hideouts.

“The IGP is saddened with the death of the gallant officers whom he described as heroes of the Force; their demise is a great loss to the Nigeria Police Force and our dear nation, Nigeria. The supreme price they paid for the security and safety of the country will not be in vain

“The Inspector General of Police condoles with the families of the deceased policemen, he has also directed for befitting burials for the gallant officers and prompt processing and payments of the life insurance benefits and other entitlements to their families,” he said.

Daily Trust reports that the killings and kidnappings by bandits in Zamfara State and environs have forced residents to flee their homes while others restricted their movements especially in rural parts of the state.

## **Emir worries about worsening insecurity despite security deployment**

Worried by the insecurity, the Chairman of Zamfara State Council of Chiefs and Emir of Anka Alhaji Attahiru Muhammad Ahmad on Tuesday asked the federal government to provide rifles including AK 47 and pump action guns to them to deal with armed bandits as killings, kidnappings continued across the state unabated.

The emir spoke during the distribution of 850 motorbikes to the recently recruited Civilian Joint Task Force in the state.

In November, the state government had announced the recruitment of 8500 CJTF members to help security operatives in the operations against armed bandits and cattle rustlers in the state.

Each of the 17 emirate councils in the state had been directed to recruit 500 able bodied men and the CJTF members had already been screened and inaugurated.

The state government had been reluctant in involving the CJTF or local vigilantes in ongoing fight against armed bandits citing extra judicial executions of suspected criminals as reason.

But the emir said the armed bandits, cattle rustlers and kidnappers in the state are using AK47 rifles to attack and kill their people, therefore, the same type of

weapons should be provided to their people so that the criminals would be confronted head on.

“We are in serious trouble as a people, things are worsening by the day, the criminals have changed tactics and the authorities must change their tactics too. The security operatives should be despatched to the flash points,” he said.

The traditional ruler said the people of the state are in dilemma for the fact that despite the deployment of more security operatives, atrocities being committed by the armed men have not reduced.

“Farming and animal rearing that were hitherto the major occupations of the citizens of the state especially dwellers of the rural communities have now been abandoned as armed bandits have placed the state under siege,” he added.

The emir then begged residents to discontinue paying ransom to criminals whenever their family members was kidnapped adding that if the captive dies, he or she dies a martyr.

The state commissioner for local government and chieftaincy affairs Alhaji Bello Dankande Gamji had ruled out giving guns to civil populace, saying the constitution had spelt who is to hold guns and they appreciate the efforts of the traditional rulers in helping to restore peace to the state.

He said they had realized that no matter the number of security operatives deployed to the state, if the local vigilantes who know the terrain better than them are not engaged no meaningful progress would be made.

