

15 policemen, 10 bandits killed in Zamfara, Niger attacks

From Shehu Umar (Gusau) & Romoke W. Ahmad (Minna)

Fifteen policemen and 10 bandits were killed in different gun duels between the police and armed men at different locations in Zamfara and Niger States.

1 Daily Trust gathered that 13 policemen were killed during a bandits' attack on a police formation in Zamfara State, while three civilians were shot dead by the same gang.

2 Two policemen were also killed while repelling an attack on a community in Niger State. The police, however, killed 10 of the attackers, residents told Daily Trust.

Both incidents occurred yesterday.

The Zamfara attack occurred Sunday afternoon at Kurar Mota community, Bungudu Local Government Area of the state.

A statement by a media aide of Governor Bello Matawalle, Yusuf Idris Gusau, confirmed the killings. He said seven the governor had visited seven other policemen wounded during the encounter.

Residents told our correspondent that the armed men had earlier attempted to invade Magami, a community located 50km south of Gusau, the state capital, but were repelled by soldiers stationed in the settlement.

Magami and its neighbouring villages had had repeated attacks from different bandit groups.

"They withdrew after they were overpowered by the soldiers there.

They then rode to a community along Magami-Dankurmi-Dangulbi road killed one person and torched four shops.

"Thereafter, they swiftly move to Kurar Mota community and attacked the police formation near the township clinic. The armed criminals then dashed into the forest.

"The slain officers and the injured ones were conveyed to Gusau on a convoy of police vehicles this afternoon. I saw several police vehicles moving towards the area," a resident identified as Kabir Dansada told Daily Trust.

The spokesman for the state police command, SP Muhammad Shehu did not respond to a request for comment on the latest incident.

He promised to get back to our reporter but did not do so as of the time of filing this report.

10 bandits killed as police repel attack on Niger community

At least, 10 bandits were killed as operatives of the Nigeria Police Force, Niger State Command repelled an attack on Kundu, a community in the Rafi Local Government Area of the state yesterday.

The state Governor, Abubakar Sani, Bello visited the community on Sunday to sympathise with the police officers and appreciate them for their sacrifice.

Bello reiterated the commitment of the state government to helping the force in securing the state.

"I would like to congratulate you for the fine job you are doing and I'm assuring you that whatever you need to discharge your duties more effectively, we will provide it.



■ Some of the Zamfara villagers released by Turji yesterday

Photo: Yusuf Anka

"Please, I want you to be frank with you and I will do everything within my power to ensure that you people get what you need," he said. He also disclosed that the state government had made arrangements for some equipment in combating insecurity, adding that the equipment would arrive soon and be handed to the police in the state.

The governor also visited a military checkpoint at Zungeru cemetery. The governor was accompanied on the visit by the Brigade Commander, Brigadier General Ademola Adedjoja and the State Commissioner of Police, Adamu Usman.

Turji's father back as bandits' leader released hostages

A leader of bandits in Zamfara State, Turji, has released villagers held hostage after they were abducted by his men over the weekend, in a rampage to draw

attention to his father's arrest by security forces.

Daily Trust had, on Saturday, exclusively reported the mass abduction by Turji, which occurred some two weeks after the arrest of his father in Kazaure, Jigawa State. The father was said to have relocated to Jigawa State after he failed to dissuade his son from his criminal ways.

He was arrested following a tip-off by an informant from a rival gang who told security forces that the father was trading in cattle stolen by the son's gang.

In attacks on villagers such as Kware, Kurya, Badarawa, Keta and Maberaya gunmen abducted many residents and rustled a number of cattle.

Informed sources told Daily Trust that Turji also received his father from mediators on Sunday afternoon.

A source told Daily Trust

that Turji agreed to release the abductees as part of a wider mediation process initiated by the federal government as an alternative resolution strategy to tackle rural banditry.

"He released the villagers unconditionally because of the pleas by mediators who are bringing key bandits to the table with the government," a security source who is part of the new process, said.

In an audio clip obtained by Daily Trust, on Sunday, Turji was heard promising to release all the people and animals taken by his men once his father was brought back to him.

"Let them give you my father. Once you brought him to Bayan Ruwa, I assure you every one of the abductees and all the animals in my custody will be released," he told the caller who is a prominent community leader in Shinkafi.

Testing, isolation centres shut in states despite imminent COVID-19 third wave