

# Bandits kill 3, abduct 24 in Zamfara

From Yusha'u A. Ibrahim

No fewer than three people have been reportedly killed and 24 others abducted following an attack by bandits on four communities in Shinkafi Local Government Area of Zamfara State.

A gang of bandits suspected to be foot-soldiers of the renowned bandits' leader, Bello Turji, attacked Shinkafi town, Jangeru, Shanawa and Birnin Yero villages, killing three people and abducting 24 others on Thursday.

Three people were killed and 9 others, among them four women, were kidnapped

in Shinkafi town during an operation that lasted for a few minutes, according to locals.

The bandits also attacked a mosque in Birnin-Yero village, abducting eight people and injuring many others.

According to an account on the incident, "The bandits stormed the village while the occupants were about to finish the 8pm prayer. They fired several gunshots into the air, scaring worshippers to run for their lives.

"The bandits succeeded in kidnapping eight people, while many others who ran into the bush sustained varying degrees of injury. We are lucky that no one lost his life

during the encounter."

Also, in Shanawa village, the bandits abducted four people, while in Jangeru, only a woman was abducted but later abandoned in the bush, a few kilometers away from the village.

A resident of the area said, "After abducting the woman, the bandits realised that she could not endure trekking to their destination, so they hit her head with a stick and she fainted.

"They abandoned her in the bush. The woman recovered around 3am and returned to the village. We were terrified by the attack because the terrorists came with guns and

fired several shots indiscriminately."

Weekend Trust learnt that the attack on Shanawa village is coming just a day after 12 residents of the community were released after payment of N12 million ransom.

Our correspondent further learnt that the bandits had issued a warning to two other villages in the local government - Kwari and Kurya - to either vacate their homes within three days or be sacked.

Efforts to get the reaction of the Zamfara state Police Commissioner, CP Muhammad Shehu Dalijan proved abortive as his phone could not be reached despite several attempts by this reporter.