

Bandits killed many captives in Zamfara - Survivors

From Abubakar Auwal, Sokoto

up to 50.

Armed bandits led by a notorious kingpin, Kachalla Bello, also known as Dansadiya, have reportedly killed many captives in Zamfara State.

The victims, who hailed from Yamutsawa and Banga villages in Kauran Namoda Local Government Area, were among more than 80 residents abducted during separate attacks on the two communities recently.

However, survivors said the number of people killed could be

Residents confirmed to Daily Trust on Sunday that 50 people were abducted from Banga alone, and only 18 survived.

Among the dead were three infants born in captivity to women who had been held for weeks, they added.

Similarly, 20 out of the 33 people kidnapped from Yamutsawa also died while in captivity, residents said.

The victims were mostly youths aged between 17 and 20, with only four adult men and four women reportedly among them.

"It was a horrible situation. They were taken at different times and kept for a long time in terrible conditions," a community member familiar with the incident told Daily Trust.

Survivors narrated disturbing accounts of their ordeal, claiming that Dansadiya forced some captives to kill others at gunpoint.

"The worst part is that he made them kill each other. This is what the survivors told us. It was psychological torture, beyond anything we have heard before," said a resident, who spoke on condition of anonymity for safety

reasons.

Dansadiya is described by locals as more ruthless than even the most feared bandits in the state, such as Turji.

They said he is notorious for demanding exorbitant ransoms, yet still executing victims even after payments are made.

"There are many instances where he collected ransom and still demanded more. Even then, people were killed," another resident said.

The worsening insecurity in the area has been partly attributed to poor coordination

between residents and security forces, further complicated by communication barriers.

"The army operational commander posted to this area doesn't understand the local language. This makes it difficult to report threats. And when distress calls are made, there's often no quick response," the source added.

Efforts to get a reaction from the Zamfara State Police Command were unsuccessful, as the spokesman, DSP Yazid Abubakar, did not respond to phone calls as of press time last night.