

Robbers kill, injure residents in Jigawa, mar Independence Day

From John Akubo, Dutse

EVEN though the Jigawa State did not mark the 51st independence anniversary with fanfare obviously for security reasons, bandits still made the period a nightmare for its residents.

Residents, who used the one-day public holiday declared by the Federal Government on Monday to shop at the popular weekly Shuwarin Market, had a sad encounter with bandits.

The hoodlums, who struck at the market, which is eight kilometres from Dutse, the state capital, killed one person and injured seven others.

The market serves as the hub of business activities for states in the North Central Zone.

The five-man armed gang

invaded the market in a commando style, shooting sporadically into the air and at their targets.

One of the victims, Muhammed Seidu, who is also a trader in the market, sustained wounds from gunshots alongside his two children, Hamisu Seidu and Haruna Seidu.

They were all hit with bullets in their home, which is adjacent to the market.

Witnesses said the robbers might have targeted Seidu because he is one of the most successful traders in the market.

The Guardian learnt that when the gang came to Seidu's compound, they greeted in the usual Islam way of "peace be on to this

house" apparently to make their targets believe that they were harmless but got no response.

One of the eyewitnesses said Seidu and his two sons, who were at that time returning from the market, sighted the hoodlums and suspected foul play because of their posturing, and attempted to escape on his motorcycle but were shot by the suspected robbers.

The three victims are now receiving treatment at the Dutse General Hospital. When *The Guardian* visited the hospital, doctors were working on Seidu and other victims to remove the bullets launched in their bodies by the bandits.

Another victim, Labasu

Nuhu, said he was at the market to repair his mobile phone when a bullet hit him while a vehicle overran his leg as a result of the ensuing pandemonium.

His case was critical to the extent that he was referred to the Specialist hospital. A nursing officer in the hospital said seven victims were brought there with injuries, adding that one of them died after losing so much blood.

Muhammed Iyah, whose daughter was hit by a bullet,

said the robbers wore flowing gowns (*babariga*) with one of them masked.

He said that it was in an attempt by the robbers to seize a motorcycle from the owner, who was seeking an escape route that his 14-year-old, Firdaus, who was the passenger, was shot on the arm.

The spokesperson of the Jigawa State Police Command Abdul Jinjinri confirmed the incident but said none of the suspected robbers had been arrested at press time.

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