

# Bandits levy Niger communities N5m monthly

From **Bala Yahaya** (Minna) and **Isa Abdulsalami Ahovi** (Jos)

**B**ANDITS have levied some communities in Shiroro Council of Niger State N5 million monthly to avoid being attacked.

Against the usual kidnapping for ransom, the audacious bandits reportedly demanded N5 million from Iburo, Gandu, Dnasa, Pyegbere, Dnasapa, Jhazhayidna, Goffan A and B, Chukuba and Galapy communities to be spared from attacks.

A source in Shiroro told *The Guardian* that the bandits through an intermediary (name withheld), who resides in Kusu community, had earlier met with the

## Kill two in fresh Plateau attack

communities where they were informed to contribute N5 million at the end of every month, if they wanted to stay in their villages peacefully.

The source explained that the communities were able to raise N3 million from individual contributions and sales of farm produce for the month of December, but the bandits warned them of the consequences of not completing the payment.

When asked if the matter had been reported to the police, the source said: "If we report, nothing will be done about it. We had severally reported some attacks to

security operatives and the government, but nobody come to our rescue."

Residents of these communities, especially women and children, are beginning to move out for fear of being attacked, as the possibility of raising the N5 million by end of the month appeared impossible.

**M**EANWHILE, two young men have been shot dead by rampaging bandits in Riyom Council of Plateau State.

The incident, which reportedly took place on Sunday about 8p.m., was after months of respite in the area.

It was learnt that the bandits had ambushed Joseph Davou and Jerry Bitrus, who were returning from a valedictory prayer for one of the pastors in Rim community, on Hoss/Rim road and shot them dead.

A source in the community disclosed that the gunmen, who had laid siege to the road, opened fire on their victims who were riding on a motorcycle, killing them instantly.

Other road-users were said to have scampered for safety.

A bereaved father, Davou Dantyang, disclosed that his 28-year-old son, Joseph, and his friend, Jerry, 32, were on their motorcycle when the gunmen shot at them.