

# In fresh attacks, bandits kill dozens in Kaduna, Niger

From **Saxone Akhaine, Abdulganiyu Alabi** (Kaduna) and **Bala Yahaya** (Minna)

**T**HE gale of attacks by bandits, now classified as terrorists, in the Northwestern part of the country, especially Kaduna and Niger states, was sustained all weekend, leaving in its trail, bodies, arson and displacement of citizens.

In Southern Kaduna, the epicenter of persistent attacks by suspected Fulani militia, at least 10 persons were killed, while many houses were also set ablaze.

Atak Mawai community in Zaman Dabo Village in Zangon Kataf Council came under heavy gunfire by the attackers in the early hours of yesterday.

"Most of those killed were burned in their houses as the people were fast asleep at the time the gunmen struck," an eyewitness said.

Chairman, Zangon Kataf Local Council, Francis Angwa Sani, confirmed the attack. "For now, I cannot confirm the number of those killed. I am still waiting for the official report. When I receive the report, I will certainly get back to you," he said.

The state government, however, confirmed 11 persons dead, with many others injured. The Commissioner for Internal Security and Home Affairs, Samuel Aruwan, said, yesterday, that "security forces have reported to the Kaduna State government that Kurmin Masara general area of Zangon Kataf was attacked.

"Troops of the Nigerian Air Force Special Forces who responded to distress calls

- **Troops ambushed, 30 houses burnt in Zangon Kataf**
- **Gunmen continue raid on Niger communities after security forces were overpowered**

from the area also fell into an ambush as they mobilised to the scene of the attack." He explained that the troops cleared the ambush and reached the general area, along with officers of Operation Safe Haven (OPSH).

The victims that were killed were listed as Elizabeth Ayuba, Veronica Auta, Bege Daniel, Kephass Waje, Promise Jacob, Damaris Istifanus, Hauwa Joshua, Dogara Gambo, Lidia Ishaya, Michael Achi and Gabriel Michael.

Aruwan said: "Over 30 houses were burnt in the attack. The injured were evacuated for treatment. Search-and-rescue operations and pursuit of the attackers are in progress on different fronts.

"The state government will make public further details as soon as they are received from security forces. Governor Nasir el-Rufa'i, who has been in touch with the security forces and is receiving hourly briefings, expressed sadness at this report of the latest in a series of attacks in the area."

**2 ALSO, in Niger State, dozens of people have been killed, with many houses burnt in fresh attacks at Galadima-Kogo and Galkogo communities of Shiroro Local Council. Armed men were said to have launched the attacks after overpowering security operatives.**

Residents of the neighbouring Kuchi, Sabon Kabula, Kafana, Dangunu, Zazzaga and Chibani communities in Munya Local Council, fled their homes as attackers were

sighted yesterday morning.

This is coming a day after over 18 persons were killed, 40 injured and many others abducted when terrorists invaded the same Galadima-Kogo community on Saturday. The attack started around 5:00p.m. on Saturday and lasted for hours.

It was gathered that the terrorists had issued a four-day notice to the villagers prior to the attack. Several houses were razed and several cattle of the residents rustled during the attack.

The Niger State Police Command's Public Relations Officer, DSP Wasiu Abiodun, refused to comment on the development. But the Commissioner for Local Government, Chieftaincy Affairs and Internal Security, Emmanuel Umar, confirmed the attack to newsmen.

He said: "One of our Forward Operating Bases manned by our security personnel was overrun during the attack. But we are already reorganising to take the fight back to them. Already, there have been ongoing security operations in the area, both air and ground. We are doing our best."

The Chairman, Shiroro Local Council, Suleiman Dauda Chukuba, also confirmed that security men were overpowered by the bandits.

He said: "This is a tragedy that has just occurred on Saturday and I cannot really ascertain the number of casualties for now because the place stands as a no-go area as I am talking to you



First Vice President, Igbobi College Old Boys Association, ICOPA, Yomi Badejo Okusanya (left); Vice President of Nigeria, Prof. Yemi Osinbajo; Chairman, Ibru Organisation, Olorogun Oskar Ibru; Executive Director/Managing Director, Commercial Press, The Guardian, Tive David Alex-Ibru and President, Igbobi College Old Boys' Association (ICOPA), Olumuyiwa Kinoshi at the 90th anniversary and fundraising gala of their alma mater in Lagos ...at the weekend. PHOTO: FEMI ADEBESIN-KUTI

now. The only dead bodies that we have recovered were 11 but that is not the exact number of casualties."

He dismissed the rumour making rounds that the security operatives were withdrawn before the attacks. "It's not withdrawal of security operatives per se. The attackers were more in number and well armed with sophisticated weapons. So, when they launched the attack, they overpowered our security men because they came in hundreds with sophisticated weapons," he said.

It was gathered that the attackers who rode on motorcycles in their numbers, operated for hours unchallenged, moving from house to house.

Salis Mohammed Sabo, the spokesperson, Coalition of Shiroro Associations, said: "I personally counted 16 bodies

in Galkogo this morning (Sunday) and we are still searching. The vigilantes have taken the dead bodies of their members since yesterday. "Our people are still on the run, scampering for safety. The Special Hunters have deserted the community. Another information reaching us is that the bandits are being sighted moving towards the same community again."

In a statement signed by the Co-convenor of the Concerned Youth of Niger State, Sani Kokki, and made available to newsmen in Minna yesterday, the terrorists came into the village with motorcycles, shooting indiscriminately.

"Over a dozen of people were gruesomely killed and scores of others were as well injured through multiple gunshots.

"Yesterday afternoon, rampaging hydra-headed, ven-

omous, murderous, and heartless terrorists well-armed with assorted sophisticated and dangerous weapons stormed Galadima-Kogo in broad daylight and unleashed mayhem on any victims at sight, including unsuspecting innocent and unarmed members of the community.

"The terrorists believed to be elements of Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) stormed the community in their large numbers on motorcycles in a convoy and went straight to Security Outfit stationed in the town," the statement read.

Kokki blamed the attack on the withdrawal of security operatives from the community, adding that the terrorists must have been informed by their informants that the security personnel had been withdrawn.