

Bandits Kill 16, Abduct Scores In Taraba Communities

• Gunmen Kidnap Six Female Footballers In Delta/ Edo Boundary Town

From Charles Akpeji (Jalingo) and Monday Osayande, (Asaba)

THERE seems to be no end to the ongoing bloodletting in Taraba State, no thanks to suspected bandits and kidnappers.

The Guardian learnt that the bandits stormed some communities in their numbers, at the weekend, killed and whisked away several persons.

Communities invaded included Gidado and Garinkuka villages in Gunduma District of Mutum-Biyu Chieftdom in Gassol Local Council.

These attacks led to killings of no fewer than 16 persons.

The attackers arrived the communities on motorcycles, shot sporadically, a situation which the villagers claimed, led to the killings of

16 persons on the spot, while several others escaped with gunshot injuries

Confirming the killings and abduction, an employee of the council, Abdulrahman Lawal Chul, said the attackers invaded the communities at about 5.00p.m on Friday.

He said the number of casualties could increase, as many persons were left with various degrees of gunshot injuries.

Meanwhile, six female footballers were, on Friday, kidnapped by gunmen at about 6.15p.m. in Oronigbe community, a boundary between Delta and Edo states.

The kidnapped victims include Precious Agbajor, one Abraham, Nancy, Beatrice and the driver of their vehicle.

The Guardian learnt the foot-

ballers were abducted when they were returning from a football match competition played at Governor Ifeanyi Okowa's home town, Owa-Alero in Ika North-East Local Council.

A source said the case was reported at Oronigbe Police Division while the kidnappers had contacted the victims' families, demanding N5m ransom from each of them.

When contacted, the Police Public Relations Officer in Delta State, DSP Bright Edefe, who confirmed the incident, said it happened in Edo State.

Taraba attacks came barely a few weeks after bandits mounted checkpoints in the council, and abducted many persons.

It would be recalled that the same scenario occurred last week, in Bail Local Council,

where bandits killed no fewer than three persons, and took several persons away, including women.

The villagers attempted to repel the bandits and succeeded in killing two of the attackers. But, their efforts, however, seemed not to have been enough, following the absence of security operatives in the area.

The bandits were said to have operated for over two hours without the intervention of any of the security agents.

Meanwhile, the state Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Abdullahi Usman, said the command was not yet briefed on the incident. He promised to get across as soon as confirmation was made from the Divisional Police Officer (DPO) of the council.