

National

14 die as bandits, vigilantes clash in Niger

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Nigeria

[FILES] Bandits. Photo: BBC

Terrorists demand N210m for abducted Katsina youths

Eight armed bandits and six vigilante members lost their lives, on Tuesday, during a gun duel around Kundu axis near Zungeru in Wushishi Local Council of Niger State.

The incident occurred around 9:00p.m. after the community got hint of the suspected kidnapers' movement across Kundu towards Akere with a large number of rustled cattle.

The Guardian learnt that the vigilante operatives immediately went after the bandits, which led to the casualties on both sides.

Locals said that while the criminals were passing through their usual route, they also got wind, through their informants, of the vigilantes' plan to engage them; hence they prepared for a showdown.

Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) for Niger Command, DSP Wasiu Abiodun, could not be reached for reaction on the incident.

MEANWHILE, abductors of 21 youths in Faskari Local Council of Katsina State have contacted family members of their victims, demanding huge ransom.

The actual amount was not known at press time, but there were indications that the terrorists were demanding N10 million per victim, amounting to N210 million.

The youths were abducted around 3.00pm on Sunday while harvesting a farm near Kompani Mayardua Village.

A list made available by Katsina Police Command showed that the victims comprise 14 males and seven females aged between 16 and 21 years.

The Guardian learnt that the owner of the farmland resides in Funtua Local Council, and only visits the farmland occasionally. He had reportedly given the terrorists N1 million, so he could harvest his crops without let or hindrance.

When contacted, spokesman for the Katsina Police Command, SP Gambo Isah, confirmed the kidnap of 21 youths in the area.

He said: “The youths were kidnapped on Sunday in the afternoon, but the report of the incident got to the police at 7.40p.m. Those kidnapped were 21 in all. Since then, we have been making efforts to rescue them.”

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