

From Odita Sunday (Abuja)
and Bala Yahaya (Minna)

Bandits kill six soldiers, two vigilantes in Niger, civilians in Zamfara, Sokoto

Bago sympathises with army over killing of captain, five soldiers

BANDITS have killed six soldiers, including a captain, in an ambush.

Army spokesman, Maj-Gen Onyema Nwachukwu, said the troops fought gallantly and eliminated several terrorists too.

According to him, troops of 1 Division Nigerian Army deployed at Allawa and Erena, while on a fighting patrol to Karaga Village in Shiroro Local Council of Niger State, had an encounter in an ambush staged by terrorists on April 19, 2024.

He said: "Troops gallantly fought through the ambush and eliminated several of the terrorists as well as captured some of their equipment."

"Sadly, the troops suffered a temporary setback, as six personnel comprising two officers and four soldiers paid the supreme price. The General Officer Commanding (GOC) 1 Division and Commander

Operation Whirl Punch (OPWP)), Maj-Gen Landers Saraso, on behalf of the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), sympathised with the bereaved families and promised them that the unfortunate setback would be avenged by the troops."

The terrorists reportedly killed two vigilante operatives and abducted an army Captain in Karaga and Rumace communities in Shiroro.

The Guardian learned that the soldiers had left their camps at Allawa and Erena to respond to a distress call when the terrorists ambushed them at Roro village. The bandits were also said to have killed a hunter and two farmers as well as burnt houses, food banks and mo-

torcycles.

Similarly, bandits killed two peace negotiators, one woman and children in Gidan Sale, Isa Local Council of Sokoto State.

In a related development, at least three civilians were killed and three others injured after they were hit by stray bullets during a gun battle between troops of Operation Hadarin Daji (OPHD) and bandits, who attacked Tsafe Town, yesterday.

Intelligence sources told Zagazola Makama, a counter-terrorism expert around the Lake Chad region, that the bandits dressed in women's clothing, while others camouflaged in different attires before carrying out the attacks from different points.

MEANWHILE, Governor Mohammed Bago of Niger has sympathised with the Nigerian Army over the killing.

The governor, in a statement by his Chief Press Secretary (CPS), Bologi Ibrahim, described the incident as atrocious, provocative and unacceptable.

He expressed his deepest sympathy with security agencies, who are daily making sacrifices to ensure the safety of citizens, with most of them paying the supreme price.

The governor assured the Army and every other security agency that his administration would not rest on its oars in providing all the needed support towards halting the nefarious activities of bandits and other criminals