

# Bandits Regrouping Despite Military Assaults

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Bandits in the Northwest region of Nigeria appear to be regrouping launching attacks in Maradun and Zuru, both in Zamfara and also in Kankara LGA in Katsina over the last 3 days. LEADERSHIP Weekend learnt from a source in the Zamfara State Police Command that the last three days have difficult with several attacks in bandit prone areas.

Bandits also attacked and killed 6 soldiers, two of them officers in Shiroror LGA of Niger State, a North central state which shares borders with Kaduna and Kebbi, both states in the Northwest

Nigerian Army troops in collaboration with a team from the Department of State Services (DSS) foiled terrorists attack in Sokoto State, killing seven of the terrorists.

A statement by the Nigerian Army on its official X handle on Friday said troops responding to a distress call intercepted an armed terrorists' group on rampage to wreak havoc in Modachi general area of Isa local government area of Sokoto State.

The statement said troops in the joint operation killed seven of the terrorists and the recovered significant cache of arms.

The terrorists, who were in transit with several motorbikes, were engaged by the security forces, leading to the elimination of seven terrorists.

The troops also recovered seven AK-47 rifles, four motorbikes, two mobile phones, and four machetes. The Nigerian Army in the last three weeks killed 31 terrorists in the North West, recovered weapons and lost 7 soldiers in ambushes.

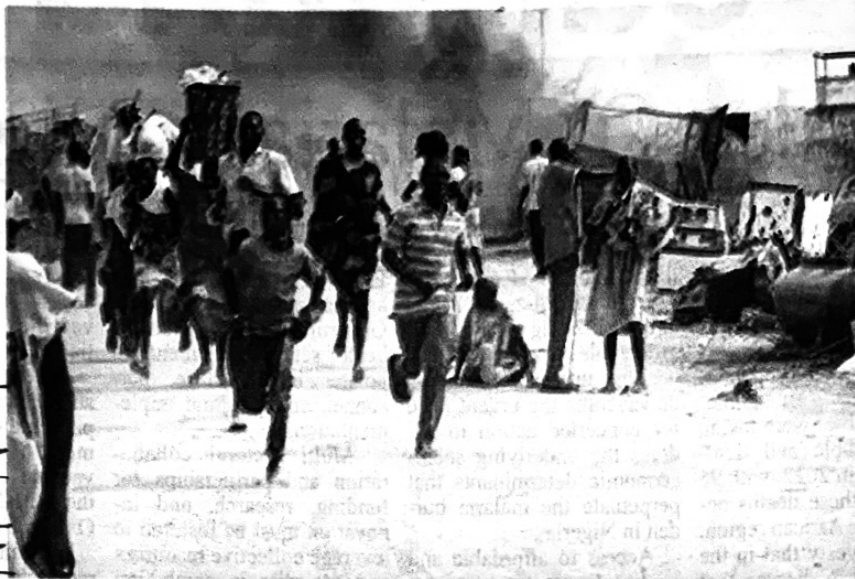
In the latest attack, bandits in Katsina reportedly killed an officer of the 17 Brigade, Nigerian Army, Major A.G Mohammed.

The late Mohammed was a member of Operation Hadarin Daji and the Commander overseeing military operations in the Vantumaki, Dan Ali and Kankara in the state.

The Nigerian Army successfully cleared bandits camps and recovered weapons in as part of ongoing counter insurgency efforts in the North West region.

Troops on 29 March 2024 killed 11 terrorists in Katsina and Zamfara states during raids on identified hideouts.

On 1 April 2024, troops in two separate offensive operations cleared terrorists road blockades



in Zamfara and Katsina States and recovered weapons.

The terrorists had mounted road blocks to kidnap passengers before they were foiled and neutralized.

The troops in Zamfara State, following a distress call on the blockade of Anka-Bagega road, rushed to location and engaged the terrorists who mounted to frustrate free movement of motorists and goods, as well as to abduct unsuspecting civilians.

Troops in another operation on the same day in Katsina state, cleared several insurgents' camps within Yar' Malamai and Hamfudin general areas in Faskari local government area.

Furthermore, troops on 4 April 2024 troops neutralized three terrorists in an ambush operation in Kaduna State. The terrorists were on transit to repair motorcycles before they met their Waterloo.

Troops had on 15 April 2024 killed 12 terrorists and captured 10 operational bikes during clearance operations in Maru local government area of Zamfara State.

Following troops ambush in Niger State on 19 April 2024, the Nigerian Army, confirming the death of 6 personnel comprising two officers and four soldiers vowed to avenge deaths.

The soldiers were ambushed while on a fighting patrol to Karaga Village in Shiroror local government area of Niger State.

More recently, troops on 24 April 2024 killed three terrorists, and foiled kidnap attempt, arrested two in Sokoto, Kaduna and Plateau states in separate operations.

In Sokoto State, troops following actionable intelligence

ambushed a notorious group of terrorists at a suspected crossing point around Sarma village in Tangaza local government area of Sokoto State.

In another operation, troops responding to a distress call foiled a kidnapping attempt along Kasu village road, Kafanchan District in Jema'a local government area of Kaduna State and arrested two suspected kidnapers

**Bandits Regrouping**  
Major A.G Mohammed was reportedly killed in an ambush on Thursday evening by bandits in the area and his corpse deposited at a hospital in Katsina.

**LEADERSHIP** Weekend learnt that the commander was ambushed at Malali village in Kankara local government area, where he was called to provide reinforcement to repel an attack on the village.

A source said, Malali, along Zangon Pawwa road has been completely taken over by bandits security agents are always asking for reinforcement from the Maraban Dan'Ali camp, whenever there is an attack.

"This time around, they asked for his reinforcement and he came using a Hilux vehicle, instead of the Armoured Personnel Carrier (APC), perhaps the APCs were not available at the time. Unfortunately his assailants waylaid his vehicle and shot him in the head."

Another source who is resident of the area, also disclosed that there was heavy gun battle with the bandits before the military retrieved the corpse of the major from the scene, resulting to some injuries of some personnel.

Katsina State, especially the front line local governments have been under serious attacks in recent times, since the state government launched the Community Watch Corps (CWC) to curtail the bandits in the prone local government areas.

**Bandits Invade Maradun, Kill 2 Residents. Abduct 30**

Bandits invaded the town in the early hours of Friday, killing two persons and abducting about 30 others.

Maradun is the headquarters of Maradun local government area of Zamfara State and is also the hometown of Nigeria's Minister of State for Defence, Bello Matawalle.

Reports indicated that the bandits attacked the town at about 2:00am and it lasted for about two hours, shooting sporadically and ransacking residents' houses.

**LEADERSHIP** Weekend gathered that, although the actual number of the abducted persons was yet to be ascertained at press time, the figure was, however, put around 30, including women children and adults given the number of homes affected.

A traditional ruler, whose house was ransacked by the bandits, expressed dismay over the high level of insecurity in the town.

"I heard the bandits breaking my entrance door, coming towards my inner room, I managed to hide while my wives and children followed another passage and ran away to hide somewhere," he said.

The traditional ruler, who doesn't want his name in print, expressed concern over the rampant attacks on the town, saying even last week Friday, a

similar attack was carried out on the town, where cattle and sheep were rustled by the bandits.

A resident of the town, Hassan Ibrahim, lamented that the attack was terrible as bandits were stationed at different locations with sophisticated weapons.

"When I heard their movement close to my door, I crossed over to a nearby wall and ran for my dear life and luckily escaped but overheard them saying that we have all hidden," he added.

He stressed the need for the Minister of State for Defence, who is the immediate-past governor of Zamfara State, to intervene in the security situation of his country home to avert further attacks.

**Emir of Zurmi Returns To Palace**

The situation in Zurmi, the headquarters of Zurmi local government area in Zamfara state was relatively calm, as emir Bello Sulaiman returned to his palace following a late Wednesday night attack on his place.

It was the second time bandits would make an attempt to kidnap him.

The emir on Wednesday night fled to Gusau for safety as bandits attempted to kidnap him.

The Bandits stormed his palace and opened fire on the gate in order to gain access to the palace.

The security agents averted the attempt and rushed the monarch to Gusau for his safety.

**LEADERSHIP** Weekend however, learnt that the monarch had on Friday returned to his domain.

A source from the town who narrated the episode to our correspondent, under the condition of anonymity said, "the bandits stormed the town at about 11:00 pm on Wednesday, shooting sporadically.

The attack however, was not confirmed by the Zamfara state police command as calls and text messages sent to the command spokesman, ASP Yazid Abubakar, was neither answered or replied as at the time of filing this report.

A source within the police command, who does not have the mandate to speak on behalf of the command hinted that, "between Wednesday and Friday, there were heavy attacks in bandit-prone areas across the state.

"Maybe the command will organize a proper press briefing after collating authentic reports from concerned Divisional Police Officers, DPOs," the source hinted in confidence.

The source from Zurmi said, when the bandits could not succeed in abducting the emir, they destroyed one of the transformers and a telecoms mast network booster.

"The bandits also attacked the house of a former Military Administrator of Nasarawa state, Colonel Bala Mande (rtd), and killed three people, who were kidnapped during the incident.

"The bandits spent more than two hours operating in the town."

## Tinubu Appoints CEOs For NESREA, NDRBDA

BY JONATHAN NDA-ISAIAH

President Bola Tinubu has approved the appointment of Dr. Innocent Bariate Barikar as the Director-General of the National Environmental Standards and Regulation Enforcement Agency

(NESREA).

The President has also approved the appointment of Prince Ebitimi Ambbare as the Managing Director/CEO of the Niger Delta River Basin Development Authority (NDRBDA).

According to a statement by

presidential spokesman, Ajuri Ngalele on Friday, Dr. Barikar is an academic and politician.

He was a member of the Rivers State House of Assembly from 2011 to 2015, while Prince Ambbare is a retired naval officer and former commissioner in Bayelsa State.

"The president expects that the new heads of these important agencies will discharge their duties with utmost fidelity to the nation and unfailing adherence to the highest standards of professionalism, accountability, and excellent service to the people of Nigeria," he said.

"The bandits also attacked the house of a former Military Administrator of Nasarawa state, Colonel Bala Mande (rtd), and killed three people, who were kidnapped during the incident.