

Soldiers kill six bandits in Kaduna

• 17 arrested in Katsina

• Two rescued

THE troops of "Operation Thunder Strike" and "Operation Harbin Kuna III" have killed five suspected bandits and arrested four others during two separate operations in Chikun and Igabi Local Government Areas of Kaduna State.

① In another operation, soldiers also arrested 17 bandits in Katsina and killed one of them during a clearance operation, the Army announced yesterday.

In all, the soldiers killed six bandits and arrested 17 others in the two states.

Deputy Director, Army Public Relations, 1 Division, Nigerian Army Colonel Ezindu Idima, in a statement issued in Kaduna yesterday, said the troops also rescued two kidnap victims.

② The Army Division's spokesman said: "Troops of Operation 'Harbin Kuna III' have dislodged bandits' camp in Daggu village of Igabi Local Government, following credible information and during the operation, two bandits were neutralised and one was apprehended while others escaped with gunshot wounds."

"Troops also rescued two kidnapped victims, Mallam Yakubu Hamidu and Alhaji Isa Saidu, from the bandits' den around Makarfi Farm junction in Igabi LGAs, where two motorcycles belonging to the criminals were also destroyed during an exchange of fire."

He noted that the residents of Daggu village hailed the Army for destroying hideouts of the bandits, who have been terrorising villages in the area.

③ Similarly, in another operation by troops of

From AbdulGafar Alabelewe, Kaduna, Blessing Olaiya, Abuja and Sani Muhammad Sani, Gusau

"Operation Thunder Strike" around Kubuso, Kuso and Kakumi general area in Chikun Local Government Area, Idima said: "Following the operation, three bandits were neutralised, three were arrested and two kidnapped victims were also freed."

"Items recovered from the bandits include one AK47 riffle, a single barrel rifle, one Dane gun and 28 rounds of special ammunition, two motorcycles, one camouflage uniform, two ATM cards, a Techno Phone, one Airtel Sim card and empty cases of 5 x 7.62mm special ammunition."

In another statement by Assistant Director Army Public Relations, Lt Mohammed Isa Yahaya, said the troops recovered arms and ammunition from the bandits in Katsina.

He added that the bandits have been terrorising Katsina communities and also engaged in cattle rustling in the area.

Lt Yahaya said: "Troops of 'Harbin Kuna III' have successfully conducted a joint operation with troops of 'Operation Hadarin Daji' and personnel of the Nigerian police to clear bandits and other reported cases of robbery, cattle rustling and kidnappings in Katsina State."

"The clearance operation, which is aimed at destroying all bandits' camps in Katsina State, has yielded tremendous results."

"In the course of the

operation, troops conducted a cordon and search exercise while acting on credible intelligence reports at Yar Santa village in Kankara Local Government Area and its environ.

"At the peak of the exercise, one Mr. Monday Chikwunka, 36 years old, an indigene of Delta State, alongside 16 other bandits specialising in rustling cows, killing and kidnapping of citizens were intercepted."

"Preliminary interrogation and confessional statements by the suspects revealed that the gang was responsible for most criminal activities in the state and its localities."

"The ring leader (Monday Chikwunka) also served as medical aide of these criminals by providing medical assistance to the wounded bandits who sustained gunshot wounds and their families."

He confessed treating the pregnant wife of one of the most notorious bandits, Dogo Nahalli, who is still at large.

The suspects have been handed over to the appropriate security agency for further investigation and prosecution.

In a similar development, troops while on clearance operations, encountered a group of fleeing bandits and neutralised one of the criminals, who tried to escape.

Many camps belonging to the bandits were destroyed.

The troops recovered from the scene two AK 47 rifle, four AK 47 Magazines and 10 rounds of 7.62 mm. Others are six locally made Dane guns, one revolver pistol, one locally-made revolver rifle, 20 handsets and two motorcycles.