

Soldier, girlfriend arrested for aiding bandits in Zamfara

...as governor's aide faults reported killing of 40 people in community

A military officer and his girlfriend have been arrested in Zamfara State for allegedly aiding bandits with uniforms, ammunition and logistics.

The arrest of the soldier and his girlfriend was revealed by the Chief of Staff to the Government House, Gusau, Dr. Bashir Muhammad Maru, during a press briefing yesterday.

The arrest, according to him was made possible with community-driven intelligence network, adding that the state government was awaiting the action that would be taken by the military against one of their recalcitrant officers.

He reiterated the state governor's stance that the fight against banditry would not be successful until it is rid of saboteurs.

Maru lamented the story carried by some online media or-

Sani Muhammad SANI,
Gusau

ganisations on Thursday that bandits had attacked Ruwan Tofa village in Maru Local Government Area and abducted 60 people.

"A certain online newspaper went further to report that the bandits also killed 40 people in the said attack. Nothing could be further from the truth than this fabricated information," he said.

He explained that what actually happened was that a group of suspected armed bandits arrived Tungar Baushe last Tuesday seeking to fuel their motorcycles through acts of intimidation and coercion, "which they did and took along with them food, drugs, water, soft drinks,

and thereafter left without recording any casualty."

The Ruwan Tofa community prepared themselves for the defence of their territory and their people when the bandits were moving towards the village as information had spread out.

In the ensuing confrontation, he said, a large number of the suspected armed bandits were resisted and ambushed and many of them were killed while others escaped with various degrees of injuries.

According to Baru, two people from Ruwan Tofa sustained gunshot injuries and were recuperating in an undisclosed hospital.

However, the suspected armed bandits returned the following day and attacked

Tungar Baushe.

Authoritative sources said the bandits attacked the village and burnt down two vehicles loaded with grains and other valuables, but no life was lost.

Maru said unfortunately, the bandits abducted a number of persons, including women and children, but most of the abductees have since returned safely to their village.

He said that efforts were being made by the surveillance unit of the Zamfara State Police Command to ascertain the exact number of those that were still in captivity.

"It is therefore unfortunate that some media organisations, without proper investigation and confirmation, went ahead to published fabricated accounts dishd out to them by enemies

of peace in the state."

"Why did those who gave you the false information of 40 people killed by bandits, which in itself is blatant false, refused to give you the information on the bandits killed by sheer efforts of the resilient people of Ruwan Tofa, which in itself is the truth?" he asked.

Maru, while saluting the courage and patriotism of the individuals who came forward with information that led to the arrest of "these traitors" said the Zamfara State Government wished to call on all media organisations to properly investigate and authenticate their facts before rushing to the press.

He said the security situation in the state was fragile and could not afford to do with falsehood and fabrications.