

Soldiers kill scores of bandits in Niger communities



- ***Troops kill fleeing terrorists from Zamfara***
- ***From Justina Asishana, Minna and Abdullahi Abdurahman, Gusau***

Hundreds of bandits have been killed at Udara-Chifu village in **Rijau Local Government Area** of the state by soldiers attached to Warari military camp.

Sources said the bandits had written letters to the community that they would be attacking them on Monday, putting everyone under fear and tension as several people had to relocate from Mariga, Rijau and other communities to safer places to prevent being victims of the attack.

The soldiers were informed about the notice of attack, and they mobilised with support from soldiers from Zuru barracks. On Tuesday, the soldiers surrounded the villages dressed in civil outfits as they were informed that the bandits may attack wearing camouflage disguising as soldiers.

According to a source close to Rijau, the bandits who tried to invade communities around Warari and Bangi-Mariga axis were attacked from the air and on ground, as all their escape routes were blocked. The operation was said to have lasted for four hours leaving the bandits with several casualties.

The soldiers were said to have recovered sophisticated arms from the dead bandits while their bodies and motorcycles littered the bus and road on the road leading to Rijau on Wednesday morning.

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The villagers said only few bandits were able to survive the onslaught and signals had been sent to villages to be on the watch for any new face that might try to enter the towns.

It could be recalled that bandits in their numbers invaded Rijau town, the headquarters of Rijau Local Government on Tuesday last week Tuesday, held the people hostage and looted shops and houses without resistance.

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In a statement yesterday, the spokesman of Operation Fansan Yamma (OPFY), Captain David Adewusi, confirmed the operation.

He said: “During the engagement, the Air Component of OPFY provided vital intelligence, surveillance, and air strikes in support of the ground troops, enabling a decisive response.

“Several terrorists were neutralised, and numerous motorcycles and communication equipment were recovered.”

Recovered from the terrorists were two AK-47 rifles, one magazine loaded with five rounds of 7.62mm special ammunition, and 18 motorcycles, among other items.

Adewusi stated that the assault thwarted the terrorists’ plans to destabilise the area and rustle livestock. Sadly, one of the soldiers was injured during the firefight.

“OPFY remains resolute in its mandate to defeat terrorists and criminal elements operating across the Northwest and parts of the Northcentral region. We assure the public of our commitment to achieving this mandate and urge continued cooperation through the provision of credible information that will support ongoing offensive operations,” he added