

Army kills 17 bandits in Nasarawa, Benue, Taraba

JOSEPH ENNA WITH AGENCY REPORT

TROOPS of Operation Wild Stroke of the Nigerian Army, in the early hours of Tuesday, engaged some bandits at Bassa militia camp in Zwere in Toto Local Government Area of Nasarawa State in a shoot-out, and recovered 45 arms and 701 different categories of ammunition in the process.

The commander of the operation, Major-General Adeyemi Yekini, while displaying the recovered arms and ammunition before journalists in Lafia, the state capital, said soldiers at Ugya, after tracing the bandits to their camp, engaged them in a shoot-out.

"Although none of them died, they escaped with gunshot wounds."

Major-General Yekini said,

"We traced these armed men to their camp at Zwere, and we began the operation around 3:00 a.m on Tuesday, while it continued till 10:00 a.m on Wednesday.

"We were able to recover 39 locally-made rifles, three locally-made pistols and one Sub-Machine Gun (SMG), as well as 62x7.62mm spe-

cial round of ammunition, 72x7.62mm NATO round of ammunition, 510x9mm round of ammunition and 57 cartridges.

Major-General Yekini explained that Operation Wild Stroke was inaugurated about eight months ago with the mandate to end the incessant killings by armed herdsmen, bandits and other criminal groups operating in Benue, Nasar-

awa and Taraba states, and it has killed 17 bandits and arrested 67 others since its inauguration.

The *News Agency of Nigeria (NAN)* reported Major-General Yekini as saying that the troops had killed 16 bandits, arrested 53 people and recovered 11 weapons and 50 rounds of ammunition in Benue State.

"In Nasarawa State, 48 weapons and 801 ammuni-

tion were recovered, nine people arrested and one bandit killed.

"In Taraba State, we recovered seven weapons, 35 ammunition and arrested five people with no bandit killed.

Major-General Yekini assured of the troops' commitment to end kidnapping, killing, communal clashes and other forms of criminal activities in the affected states.

Birnin Gwari insurgency to end soon —Kaduna gov

MUHAMMAD SABIU - KADUNA

KADUNA State governor, Mallam Nasir el-Rufai, has said that President Muhammadu Buhari is committed to ending the insurgency that has been ravaging Birnin Gwari area of the state for several years.

Consequent upon this, the president has ordered for the establishment of a military formation, in addition to a police command which was recently established in the town.

Speaking during a town hall meeting at Birnin Gwari, on Wednesday, the governor said he personally

met with the president on Tuesday night over the security situation in the area.

He said security agents were already working on intelligence reports that insurgents who had been attacking Zamfara and Katsina states were now relocating to Birnin Gwari and Chikun local government areas of the state.

The governor further revealed that President Buhari had asked business mogul, Alhaji Aliko Dangote, to construct the Kaduna-Birnin Gwari road up to the border with Niger State.

According to the governor,

Alhaji Dangote had already committed N5 billion to the project, adding that the money was part of the tax holiday which the Federal Government granted him.

Governor El-Rufai also noted that Birnin Gwari and Lere local government areas had never experienced ethno-religious crises, in spite of the diversities of residents, while admitting the failure of the local administrations in areas that had been experiencing crises.

El Rufai also promised that a campus of the Kaduna State University (KASU) would be established in the town, while revealing that a Birnin Gwari-born businessman, Alhaji Shuaibu Idris Mikati, had already

0,000 flee Boko Haram violence in N/East —UN