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Gunmen Kill 8 In Niger

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NO fewer than seven members of a vigilance group and a policeman have been killed by gunmen suspected to be cattle rustlers in Kusherki community in Rafi Local Government Area of Niger State.

The state police command was said to have mobilised a combined team of police operatives, men of the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) and the vigilance group after it received a distress call on Thursday evening that some gunmen had invaded Lamba Waya village in Pandogari community of the council area with the aim of stealing cows.

Saturday Tribune gathered that the security operatives, in a swift response, engaged the gunmen in an exchange of gunfire that lasted for about three hours.

Residents said seven members of the vigilance group and a policeman were killed in the crossfire, even as the gunmen escaped with the stolen cows.

The latest attack came barely one month after a siege on Kusherki which resulted in the killing of one person and abduction of three others.

Confirming the incident, the state Police Public Relations Officer, Mohammed Abubakar, a Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP), said the combined security team had been drafted to the area in to arrest the criminals.

He said some of the bandits who were either killed or injured were taken away by their colleagues to avoid leaving any trails behind.

"Our men are following the blood trails and combing the areas as we speak," he explained.

On the rumours that two military personnel have also been kidnapped by the cattle rustlers, he said he was not aware of such a development, adding that only the Nigerian Army's spokesman could comment on that.

However, efforts by Saturday Tribune to get the Training and Doctrine Command of the 33 Artillery Command of the Nigerian Army in Minna to comment on the development were futile as of the time of filing this report.

