

Troops overrun bandits, release kidnapped victims in Zamfara

THE Defence Headquarters has said troops of Operation Hadarin Daji deployed to Zamfara State have continued to close in on the bandits in the state.

The **News Agency of Nigeria (NAN)** also reported that troops also neutralised many bandits and released kidnapped victims in the last one week.

The Acting Director, Defence Media Operations, Brigadier-General Benard Onyeuko, disclosed this in a statement on Sunday in Abuja.

Onyeuko said that the troops in a subsidiary operation 'Chingaba,' successfully released 12 kidnapped victims and reunited them with their families, including the District Head of Wuya, who was kidnapped a week ear-

lier.

He added that the troops killed nine bandits in another clearance operation conducted at Gidan Usman, Gidan Babagoji, Gadauna, Gidan Janari, Kekuwaje, Gidan Sarki, Gardi and Bingi, all in Bungudu Local Government Area of the state.

Onyeuko disclosed that 14 bandits were also arrested while 13 houses belonging to them were cleared and set ablaze by troops.

According to Brigadier-General Onyeuko, a total of 67 cattle rustled by the bandits were recovered and handed over to the district heads of the communities.

"In the same vein, troops engaged some bandits who attacked Julee Vilage and rustled goats.

"The bandits came under

the fierce firepower of the troops, abandoned the goats and fled into the forest.

"The troops recovered the goats and handed them over to their owners.

"Similarly, troops on patrol at Nasarrawa Village, close to Tunga Haki in Gusau Local Government Area intercepted nine suspected bandits and recovered 600 cows and 300 sheep.

"After due interrogation, the bandits confessed to have rustled the animals and were proceeding to Zaria, Kaduna State to avert possible arrest by the troops," he said.

Onyeuko added that the recovered animals were currently in the custody of troops.

He stated that proper handover would be done after

investigation, in conjunction with local authorities to confirm the owners.

Onyeuko further disclosed that the military troops, in conjunction with other security agencies conducted an assault operation at Gabyer Village also in Bugundu Local Government Area of the state on March 28 and chased a number of armed bandits.

According to him, the bandits withdrew in disarray into the forest after a fire-fight, adding that exploitation was carried out by the land component, after an aggressor aircraft had engaged the fleeing bandits.

He noted that the country's Armed Forces would not relent in its resolve to restore peace, law and order in the nation.