

22 feared killed as bandits attack southern Kaduna again

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ABOUT 22 people have been feared killed after bandits stormed Runji village in Zangon Kataf Local Government Area of Kaduna State on Saturday night.

A resident of the area, who pleaded anonymity in an interview with newsmen, said the hoodlums stormed the village at about 9:00p.m when residents were indoors.

"We just heard gunshots everywhere and it occurred to us that invaders had taken over our community. At this

point, people were running into the forest for safety.

"Even the local guards who kept watch over the village were helpless. The coming of the military who engaged the hoodlums reduced the number of casualties and destruction.

"This morning we discovered that several houses were set ablaze by the invaders, while we counted 22 dead bodies. There could be more as the search continues."

Sources also revealed that many residents had fled to neighbouring villages for safety.

Confirming the develop-

ment, the state Commissioner for Internal Security and Home Affairs, Samuel Aruwan, in a statement on Sunday said: "The military has informed the Kaduna State government of an attack in Runji village, Zangon Kataf Local Government Area in which several lives were lost on Saturday night.

"The preliminary report further informed the government that the attack also left some residents injured and an unspecified number of houses burnt down in the community.

"According to the report, troops had a fierce encounter with the attackers and are

still in the general area.

"While waiting for a detailed report, Governor Nasir el-Rufai, who received the preliminary report in the early hours of Sunday, has condemned the killings as unacceptable and unjustifiable.

"The governor condoled with the families that lost their loved ones and prayed for the repose of the victims' souls. He also prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured.

"The Kaduna State government will update the public on the incident as soon as detailed reports are received from the security agencies.