

How Zamfara moved against Turji

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•DSS not involved

Details have emerged on how members of a civilian protection group backed by the Zamfara state government on Monday night launched a surprise offensive against hundreds of suspected bandits believed to be loyal to wanted kingpin, Bello Turji.

At the end of the attack, which happened near Cida, a remote village in the Shinkafi Local Government Area of the state, over 100 suspected bandits lay dead, with dozens of weapons were recovered from the dead bandits.

A security source disclosed that the state government had mobilised hundreds of civilian protection guards to prosecute the battle against Turji and his group.

According to the source, even though the operation had the backing of the Zamfara State government, no operative of the Department of State Services (DSS) was involved.

"After the bloody gunfight, we counted over 100 dead bodies of fighters loyal to Turji. We initially thought he was killed. However, a video Turji released the following day showing he and some loyalists celebrating over bodies of at least nine vigilantes killed in the fight led us to believe that, somehow, he managed to escape," added the source.

"The offensive against the terrorists' leader and his loyalists has been heightened with the civilian group determined to take the fight to Turji," he declared.