

# Residents hail Kogi vigilante commander killed by bandits

Gbenga Odogun, Lokoja

**T**HE Commander of the Kogi Local Government Area Vigilance Group, Mallam Alhassan Alhassan, has been killed by gunmen suspected to be kidnappers during a shootout at Ottoy, a border community between Niger and Kogi states.

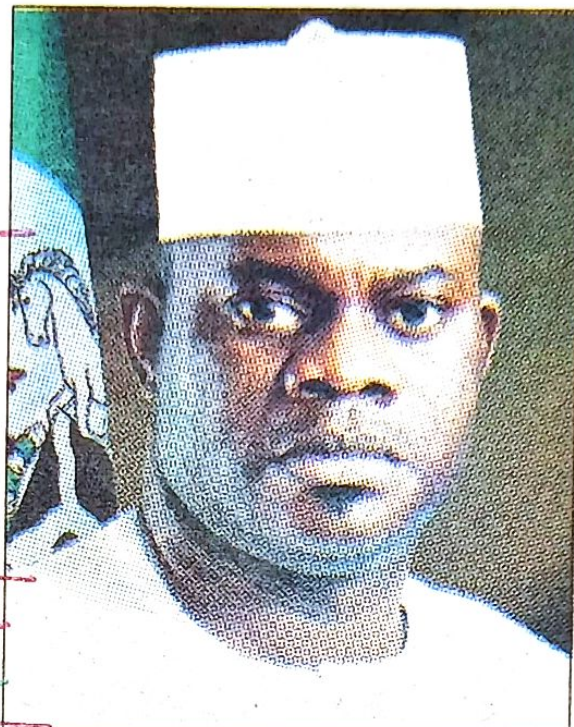
A source close to the vigilantes revealed that the gun battle lasted for about 30 minutes between 11.30am and 12noon on Tuesday, adding that several of the bandits were also killed while others escaped with injuries.

According to the source, Alhassan had successfully led his boys to destroy two of the kidnappers' camps and killed some of them.

Army uniforms, magazines, weapons, toiletries and foodstuff ingredients were reportedly recovered from the camps, while two kidnapped persons were rescued.

The commander was said to have sustained injuries in his head and was rushed to a nearby village for first aid, but gave up on the way to the village clinic at Ahoko in the Kogi Local Government Area of Kogi State.

Meanwhile, community leaders in Koton- Karfe have expressed their condolences on the death of the commander, whom they said died while



• Governor Bello

defending the area.

While commending the vigilantes for their gallantry and patriotism, the community leaders urged the state Governor, Yahaya Bello, to reward them and the late commander's family.

The state Commissioner for Solid Minerals and Natural Resources, Bashir Gegu, in a statement, commiserated with the immediate family of the late Alhassan, describing him as a martyr and prayed God to grant him eternal rest.

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