

Security agents kill 30 bandits in Kaduna, Niger

Adelani Adepegba, Abuja

SECURITY operatives killed no fewer than 30 bandits during a special operation in Kaduna and Niger States.

Firearms, including automatic rifles, AK47, AK49 and two rocket-propelled guns were recovered from the bandits.

It was gathered that the personnel, comprising mobile policemen and soldiers, stormed the hoodlums' hideouts in Birnin Gwari and Rijana communities in Kaduna State and Kagara in Niger State.

Sources disclosed to *The PUNCH* on Tuesday that 15 persons who supplied information to the bandits were also apprehended in Kaduna metropolis, adding that they are currently undergoing interrogation.

A community chief in Rijana area was also arrested for allegedly conniving with the criminals in the area.

An operative who took part in the joint security operation said, "Some volunteers led us to the camps and hideouts of

the bandits in Kaduna and Niger States. The bandits had left some of the camps before we got there, abandoning huge quantities of food, motorcycles and clothes.

"During the operation, we were able to eliminate over 30 bandits and arrested 15

informants. Some of our men sustained injuries during the exchange of gunfire with the hoodlums."

The source further stated, "The government paid the volunteers who led the operatives to the camps; this is what we have been

advocating for a long time. Appreciating support from the civil populace would boost the war against insurgency and other criminality in the country."

Our correspondent learnt that the operation against the bandits would be sustained

till November.

The force spokesman, Muyiwa Adejobi, could not be reached for comment as he did not respond to telephone calls on Tuesday.

He had yet to reply to a text message sent to him as of the time of filing this report.

Governor won't interfere in Ogun Speaker's case – Commissioner

Abiodun Sanusi,
Onozure Dania
and Faith Ajayi

THE Ogun State Commissioner for Information and Strategy, Mr Waheed Odusile, on Tuesday, said the state government would not interfere in the ongoing trial of the Speaker of the State House of Assembly, Olakunle Oluomo, over alleged N2.457bn fraud.

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission had, on Tuesday, arraigned Oluomo before a Federal High Court sitting in Lagos State over alleged N2.475bn money laundering.

Oluomo was arraigned alongside three others, Oladayo Samuel, Adeyemo

Taiwo and Adeyanju Amoke (now at large) on an 11-count charge of conspiracy, forgery, stealing and money laundering.

Odusile, however, told *The PUNCH* on the telephone that the executive arm headed by Governor Dapo Abiodun would not interfere in the affairs of the legislative arm.

"Everyone knows that there are three arms of government, and every arm is autonomous. So, we cannot comment on the internal affairs of another arm of the government," he said.

At the Tuesday proceeding, the EFCC prosecuting counsel, Rotimi Oyedepo, told the court that the defendants committed the alleged offences between 2019 and 2022.

Oyedepo told the court that

they stole N2.475bn from the treasury of the Ogun State House of Assembly.

The defendants were arraigned before Justice Daniel Osiagor.

When the charge was read to the defendants, they pleaded not guilty.

Mr Kehinde Ogunwunmiju (SAN) appeared for the first defendant; Akinyemi Aremu for the second defendant and Oluwole Aladedoye for the third defendant.

On September 1, the EFCC's Lagos Head of Legal Monitoring Unit, Rotimi Oyedepo, filed the charge at the Federal High Court, in Abeokuta, Ogun State.

The Ogun State High Court had on Monday granted the commission's application for the case to be heard at the

Both the second defendant, Samuel, who is the Director of Finance at the Ogun State House of Assembly, and the third defendant, Adeyemo, who is the Clerk of the House, have been in EFCC's custody since last week.

They urged the court to grant them affordable bail conditions on account of being civil servants. They argued that the alleged offences are all bailable.

Justice Osiagor, while ruling on the bail application, admitted the first defendant to bail in the sum of N300m, with two sureties in like sum, one of whom must not be less than a Grade Level 16 civil servant in the Federal Civil Service.

The second and third defendants were granted bail in the sum of N100m each.