

Bandits ambush vigilantes, kill 7 in Niger

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From **John Adams**, Minna

Armed Bandits on Monday ambushed local vigilantes and killed no fewer than seven and injured several others in Mashegu local government area of Niger state.

The bandits also burnt over 50 Motorcycles belonging to the vigilante

The incident was said to have occurred when the vigilantes had mobilized to lunch an attack on the bandits hideout after they (bandits) had killed seven farmers in the area two weeks earlier.

According to a source close to the community, unknown to the vigilantes, a mole among them leaked the plan to the bandits resulting in the gunmen rounding up the local vigilantes where they were making the final plan for the attack on the bandits.

The bandits opened fire at the vigilante killing seven of them on the spot and injured several others.

The bandits also set fire on over 50 Motorcycles belonging to the local security men that were parked at a distance to where the meeting was being held.

The Secretary to the State Government Alhaji Ibrahim Ahmed Matane who confirmed the development to our correspondent described it as "very sadden".

Matane however said government in collaboration with all the security agencies in the state have begun a massive assault on bandits lurking around forests in the state saying:

“Recently the security agencies burnt down completely one of the camps of the bandits”.

Meanwhile not less than 40 fulanis and some members of their families were arrested by security operatives last Monday at the Abdulsalami Abubakar motor park in Minna .

According to reports, the Fulani men were suspected bandits who escaped from one of the local government areas of the state where security men have launched attack on bandits.

Those arrested were said to have stayed the night at the motor park for a journey that will take them outside the state that Monday morning but their plan leaked to the security operatives.

It was said that three trucks loaded with heavily armed soldiers, policemen, men of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps carried out the operation after which they took those arrested to unknown destination.

Also no fewer than 10 locals suspected to be informants to different groups of bandits have been arrested by security agents in the state.

They were picked up from Zumba market in Shiroro local government area of the state on Saturday.

Also a chief negotiator for ransom between the villagers and the a group of bandits have fled the community with his entire family, while two ferry drivers who aided his escape with their ferry has been picked up by the security agents

When contacted on phone the Police Public Relations Officer Niger State Police Command ASP Wasiu Abiodun promised to investigate and get back to our correspondent but was yet to do so as at the time of filing this report.

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