

# News around the

From John Adams, Minna

## Scores killed as vigilantes, hunters ambush bandits in Niger

**SCORES** of armed bandits were neutralised in Farin Doki community, in Shiroro Local Government Area of Niger State, when a combined team of local vigilantes and hunters ambushed them as they invaded the community.

The attack, which a community source told Daily Sun occurred on Tuesday evening, also saw two members of the vigilantes missing.

The bandits said to be riding on motorcycles, in their large numbers, had invaded some villages around Farin Doki community, but, unknown to them, the local vigilantes and hunters had laid ambush after receiving information about their invasion.

The bandits, it was further gathered,

could not communicate with their informants as service providers had cut off networks in the area due to the ongoing security operations and, therefore, ran into the ambush.

It was also gathered that after two hours of fierce gun battle with the ill-equipped local vigilantes and the local hunters, an unspecified number of the

bandits were neutralised, while two local vigilantes were stabbed to death when their ammunition got exhausted.

Our source said a number of motorcycles, AK47 rifles and machine guns were recovered from the bandits who our source said are now working closely with some Boko Haram elements who are

currently recruiting youths in the area.

Meanwhile, about 22 people suspected to have links with armed bandits have been arrested across four communities in the area after a joint security task force raided their hide-out. Some of the suspects were arrested with rifles and had been taken to security facilities in Zumba

for onward movement to the police command headquarters in Minna, the state capital.

The state Police Command Public Relations Officer (PPRO), ASP Wasiu Biodun, could not be reached to confirm the latest attack as his mobile phones could not go through at the time of filing this report.

## 250 bandits neutralised, 1,800 surrender weapons -Defence Chief

From Juliana Taiwo-Obalonye, Abuja

**CHIEF** of Defence Staff, General Lucky Irabor, has disclosed that 250 bandits have, so far, been neutralised in the quest to address the problem of insecurity in the North West zone of the country.

He made the disclosure, yesterday, at the weekly ministerial briefing organised by the Presidential

Communications Team.

He said: "The primary objective of the government is to ensure the peace and wellbeing of every citizen; so, we undertake our operations and activities to ensure there is peace, development and the provision of amenities that aggregate to governance.

"We are responsible for the security content in that regard, so, to that extent, looking at the numbers, from the last report that I got on Monday, we have neutralised over 250 of the bandits. We have equally arrested well over 600, and because it is a continuous thing, the figures might also change.

"I would like to also indicate that the rescue operations have led to the rescue of many of those who were recruited, which is also part and parcel of that action and is not limited to Zamfara State, but it also extends to Sokoto and Katsina."

Irabor restated the resolve of the armed forces to continue the fight against bandits and other criminals troubling some parts of the country.

Irabor also called on journalists to assist in monitoring the activities of aid agencies working in the North East.

Commenting on the recent surrender of Boko

Haram fighters, the chief of defence staff said over 1,800 have, so far, downed their tools and he called on stakeholders and all citizens to cooperate with security agencies, in order to win the fight against insurgency.

On the huge sum of money spent by the government on the armed forces, the defence chief said that should be sustained.

He also said the military strictly ensures that the provisions of the nation's procurement act are followed to ensure transparency, adding that all hardware so procured are handled with care and well maintained, to justify government's spending.

## Onitele stool crisis gets messier

By Peter Bakare

**ITELE**, a town in Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area of Ogun State, is in the news again as the Onitele

selected or chosen without the consent of the Akapos. It is an aberration to have done so. As it is, we are yet to choose or select any one as Onitele. We prefer Prince Sunday Olushola Akapo to be