

Bandits kill 20 in Bauchi, residents flee communities

From **Paul Orude**
Bauchi

NO fewer than 20 people were killed while scores sustained injuries, and other fled for safety as bandits attacked villages surrounding Duguri District of Alkaleri Local Government Area of Bauchi State in what appears to be a reprisal.

The state Police Command in collaboration with local vigilance groups recently stormed a forest in the area and killed 12 suspected bandits, including one of the kingpins that had been terrorising the communities.

Governor Bala Mohammed paid a sympathy visit to the affected communities, yesterday describing the situation as unfortunate and unacceptable.

Speaking at the Palace of the

District Head of Yelwan Duguri, Alhaji Adamu Duguri, the governor lamented that activities of bandits in the area were getting out of hand as the people could no longer engage in farming which is their mainstay. He charged residents to rise up, take up arms and defend themselves.

"You are known to be men, you should not allow these bad elements subdue you, defend your land and liberate yourselves."

He also charged the people to search themselves and bring out the bad eggs amongst them serving as informants to the bandits stressing that without inside information, the bandits would not operate freely.

He assured that his administration would continue to work assiduously in collaboration with the security agencies operating in the

state to protect lives and properties of innocent citizens.

At Kafin Duguri, he commended the people for standing to defend themselves from the attacks of the bandits.

"I know you people, including your women, to be warriors. Rise up, defend your people and the neighbourhood from the activities of the bandits. That is the way it should be, we should defend ourselves from any form of banditry and criminal activities. What you did was the right thing and you should continue to do that even to your neighbours.

"From now on, anyone who comes to attack you to kill you, defend yourselves, attack and kill him, they can't stop us from living in peace. All these communities have been existing over 500 years, we will not allow these Zamfarawa

(bandits) to chase us away from our ancestral land."

He then assured that soon a security outpost would be stationed in the area to collaborate with locals to beef up security just as he promised adequately compensate families that lost their loved ones to the attack of the bandits.

He commended the district head for trying his best to keep the people together in spite of the activities of the bandits urging him not to relent as government will always support his efforts.

Alh Duguri lamented that bandits had in recent times attacked communities in the area killing people, destroying their houses and rustling their cattle. He specifically mentioned Rimi village as the worst hit, lamenting how 20 people were killed during the attacks.