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# Again, bandits attack Zamfara community, kill 35

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**A**rmed men terrorising Zamfara State yesterday struck at Kwaren Shinkafi, Shirea and killed at least 35 people.

The ubiquitous bandits, said to be about 100, on motorcycles stormed the village and shot anyone on sight.

At the end of the invasion, 35 people were killed while several others sustained various degrees of injury.

A survivor, who identified himself simply as Malam Lawali, said he was woken up by gunshot sounds and screams for help from every angle of the village.

This, according to Lawali, made him realise that the village was under siege by the bandits.

He said: "I just heard voices of helpless women screaming for help and helpless children crying as they were stranded, looking for their fleeing mothers. On the other hand, leaders among the bandits were giving command for killing of anybody on sight."

According to him, the bandits' leaders were shouting: "kill anybody on sight, do not spare even pregnant women and the old."

Other survivors, who did not want their identities in print, said the bandits invaded the village about midnight and started raping and killing innocent people while they set several houses ablaze until 3a.m. before carting away several cows and sheep.



Gunmen

"They used a public address system, asking people to jump out of bed and point out those giving information about their movement to security agencies, or they would sack the entire village and kill anybody on sight."

"The announcement was made several times but I did not hear any response from anybody. The last word I heard was an order, saying, 'search every house and kill at will,'" one of the survivors recalled.

Hundreds of people, including aged men and women, as well as children, who escaped the attack, have been reportedly seen trekking with difficulty to Shinkafi town, the headquarters of Shinkafi Local Government Area, to take refuge.

The state Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), SP Shehu Muham-

mad, did not pick his calls.

The attack came less than 24 hours after Governor Abdul Aziz Yari swore to deal with bandits.

The governor had ordered security agencies to deal ruthlessly with bandits before the latest attack.

The Army spokesman for Operation Sharar Daji confirmed the attack.

He said the casualties and extent of damage in the attacks would be released later.

The spokesman disclosed that the Commander-in-Charge of the operations had arrived the area to provide security and get on-the-spot assessment.

Earlier on Friday, the bandits killed about 30 people in what has been described as a reprisal on local vigilantes known as "Yan sa kai" in

Kwari community in Shinkafi Local Government Area.

According to report, the bandits also abducted about 60 people during a raid of the area on Wednesday.

During a visit on Sunday, Yari told the bandits that there would be no negotiation with them and that they would not know peace unless they put an end to their nefarious activities.

Residents said the hoodlums who had laid an ambush unexpectedly attacked a convoy of vehicles conveying traders from Shinkafi market back to Kwari about 11.45p.m.

The police said they found at the scene of the attack 13 bodies of traders and another 16 of members of the Civilian JTF in the surrounding bush.

They also burnt a police station on the outskirts of the town. They

reportedly either killed or kidnapped six policemen.

Yari was with the Emir of Anka who doubles as the Chairman of the Zamfara State Council of Chiefs, Alhaji Attahiru Ahmed, and heads of security agencies in the state.

However, while the governor was listening to the victims who narrated what happened during invasion, there was a phone call from one of the suspected heads of the bandits inside bush to the Emir of Anka, begging for negotiation.

According to the caller, they were tired of their activities in the state.

The emir relayed the bandit's demand to the governor. But Yari became furious and turned down the demand.

He said there would be no negotiation and that his government was ready to take on the bandits.

The governor, who addressed the victims taking refuge at nearby villages, described the attack as man's wickedness to his fellow being.

He, therefore, urged the villagers to be patient and remain calm as government would compensate them and take necessary action against the criminals.

Yari requested the location of a military base at Kawaye village in order to bring an end to the activities of bandits.

He also directed the state police commissioner and other security agencies to intensify efforts in tackling the situation.

The governor promised that his administration would provide all the necessary assistance to end insecurity in the state.

## City Briefs