

Daniel Atori and Ahmed Idris

Bandits numbering about 100 yesterday attacked a Joint Security Task Force camp in Shiroro Local Government Area of Niger State and killed seven people, among them five soldiers.

The Joint Force, which comprises the Army, Police, Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) and vigilantes were attacked about 2am yesterday at Allawa village.

The attackers also abducted over 10 people, stole seven motorcycles and burnt military vehicles.

The affected communities are Allawa, Manta, Gurmana, Bassa and Kokki all in Shiroro Local Government Area.

The bandits, who were fully armed, invaded the military camp at Allawa and opened fire on members of the task force. In the process, five soldiers, one NSCDC officer were killed, while several others sustained various degrees of injury.

A source said the bandits had attacked Manta, Gurmana and Bassa villages on Wednesday night, where they killed one person identified as Alhaji Salle at Madalla community under Bassa Ward. They kidnapped four people and went away with two motorcycles.

The President Shiroro Youth Movement/Chairman MHWUN-SHLGA in Bassa, Gurmana and Manta, Mohammed Sani Idris, confirmed the attack.

He said: "The bandits, numbering about 100, armed with AK47 rifles, attacked each community for about five hours unchallenged.

"During the invasion, they killed one Alhaji Salle at Madalla community under Bassa Ward and kidnapped four people and go away with two motorcycles.

"Also at Kokki Boddo, a community under Gurmana Ward, they

Bandits kill five soldiers, one NSCDC official in Niger

...injure many, abduct several villagers •Recruit, train youths in Kebbi



Bandits

abducted six people and took away five motorcycles. Five people were also kidnapped in Manta Ward."

Idris then appealed to both the Federal and state governments to double their efforts in protecting the lives of people at the various communities.

Also, Co-convenor of Concerned Shiroro Youths, Sani Abubakar Yusuf Kokki, told our correspondent that five soldiers and one NSCDC officer were killed at Allawa by bandits, who attacked their camp.

He said: "The bandits took the personnel of the Joint Security Task Force unawares and opened fire on them. In the process, unfortunately they successfully burnt the camp, including the operational vehicles, to ashes and also gruesomely killed about six personnel (five Army officers and one NSCDC officer) while many others sustained various degrees of gunshot injury."

Kokki also disclosed that Alla-

wa, before the attack, was one of the few towns standing in the Lakpma axis of Shiroro Local Government Area, which had not been invaded.

He said: "We, the affected victims, view this phenomenon from the angle of ethnic cleansing as we have been abandoned to our fate. As a result of sheer negligence from the authorities constitutionally saddled with the responsibility of providing adequate security to the citizenry, there are deliberate efforts by criminals through

crude means to depopulate us which from all indications, they are coasting to their target."

The state Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), DSP Wasiu Abiodun, did not pick his calls to confirm the attack.

Meanwhile, the bandits are recruiting and training youths on how to handle guns in Kebbi State, according to the Chairman, Truck Owners' Association, Bena branch in Danko Wasagu Local Government Area of Kebbi State, Alhaji Salihu Mohammed Bena.

Bena disclosed this yesterday while speaking with journalists on the phone.

He appealed to the state government to urgently tackle the insecurity situation in the area as bandits were now recruiting youths and training them on how to handle weapons.

Bena also said that bandits were now occupying more than 25 communities in Bena axis.

According to him, the bandits are now imposing levies to any drivers coming or going through

communities they are occupying in the area.

He said: "The bandits will tell any driver or person coming into the village they are occupying to give them food and recharge card or they will kill him.

"The people of the area are predominantly farmers but they cannot afford to go to farms due to the current security situation. Most people have migrated to Bena town."

Bena disclosed that those bandits were indigenes of the area but invited foreigners to be part of them in committing criminal activities.

He said that on their part as members of a union, they had arrested over 50 criminals trying to sell stolen cows at their park and handed such people over to relevant authorities.

Bena pointed out that military and police were deployed in Bena town but could not withstand the bandits.

Bena town shares boundaries with Zamfara and Niger states.

Ebonyi killings: Things are falling apart, says Reps member

Philip Nyam
ABUJA

Recent killings in Ebonyi State, the attack on former Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Governor, Prof. Chukwu-ma Soludo, and the prevailing killings across the country are ominous signs that things are falling apart in Nigeria.

The Deputy Minority Leader



Herdsmen

He said: "This continuous carnage as evident from the at-

to pre-empt, curtail, mitigate or solve these devilish attacks and

Man convicted for energy theft in Kano