

# Army Kills 29 Bandits after Ultimatum, Loses Three Personnel

No fewer than 29 bandits have been killed by operatives of Operation Hadarin Daji in an onslaught carried out by the troops in Moriki forest of Zamfara.

This was confirmed to the *News Agency of Nigeria* (NAN) by the Public Relations Officers of the operation, Lt. Oni Orisun in Gusau yesterday.

He said that the troops moved against the bandits after they failed to embrace the 24-hour ultimatum issued by the Force Commander, Maj. Gen. Jide Ogunlade for them to surrender and embrace peace.

"The Force Commander was clear and did not mince words when he said the operation will land heavily on them after the expiration of the ultimatum.

"The Moriki general area was professionally cordoned and offered no escape route which led to the bandits returning fire against our operatives.

"That action led to two soldiers and one mobile policeman paying the supreme price with their dear lives.

"The death of the three saddened all the operatives especially the Force Commander, Maj. Gen. Jide Ogunlade, who however expressed determination, confidence and ability of the operation to fully contain banditry in the state," Orisun said. Mallam Lawali Moriki an eye witness to part of the operation told NAN in an interview that "we saw a lot of movement by security

men more than usual these past days.

"This was followed by heavy gun fire from all parts of the bushes in our locality and we have seen many bodies of the bandits being packed in security vehicles."

NAN recalls that the Force Commander, on Tuesday warned the bandits that they would be smoked out of their hideouts if they failed to surrender.

Ogunlade had expressed disappointment in the failure of the bandits to accept amnesty offered in May by Gov. Bello Matawalle, noting that some of them even tried to hoodwink the state government with a fake surrender.