

# Zamfara communities bury over 60 killed by fleeing bandits

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...As military onslaught forces, Turji & his men relocate to Bukkuyum, Gummi forests

...Uses locals as a human shield in transit

**By Ibrahim Hassan-Wuyo**

As Nigerian Air Force (NAF) continued to pound notorious bandits in Zamfara forests, locals in villages such as Kurfa Danya, Kurfa Magaji Rafin Gero, Tungar Isa and Barayar Zaki in Bukkuyum and Anka Local Government Areas have cried over the loss of many loved ones shot and killed by fleeing bandits.

Already, over 40 dead bodies were prepared for burial in the Palace of a local monarch in Anka community.

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Bello Turji, perhaps fearful of the devastating effect of military jets that had intensified bombing forests near Shinkafi where he held sway, had moved together with his men to another forest near Bukkuyum and Anka, on the invitation of another notorious bandit who locals call Shehu Usman Bayade.

The Zamfara state Police Command was yet to answer journalists inquiries on the development.

However, a local told journalists that “bandit King Bello Turji, and his new who were displaced by fighter jets of the Nigerian Air Force from their enclaves in Fakai forest of Shinkafi Local Government Area, had gone southwards.

” They are killing people in villages on their way. At the palace of Emir of Anka last night, 43 dead bodies have been recovered from some of the affected villages They killed helpless people and local vigilantes. “

“43 people were buried. The corpses were found in villages where people could go. There are other corpses in Hard To Reach villages.”

“A leader of the vigilantes was killed as he was trying to push back the bandits. Many locals were injured and their houses burnt, by the fleeing bandits,” the local said.

It was gathered that the fleeing bandits were moving on motorbikes, in one carrying 2 or 3 forms. Many others were on foot, oftentimes shooting villagers and setting their homes ablaze.

Women, children and the aged who were vulnerable were seen looking for places to hide. Those who trekked long distances to safer locations have become the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the Local Government Headquarters of Bukkuyum and Anka, constituting a humanitarian concern in the areas.

” It’s sad that when military jets hovered above the area to deal with the bandits, they do run into the communities and mixed with innocent people. They use community members as a human shield,” a

local called Baba has said.

King Bello Turji and his men were sighted at the Gando forest in Bukkuyum Local Government Area ., reports have indicated.

” They are now in the Gando forest, about 35km south of Bukkuyum. The area is an ungoverned area for long, under the control of a notorious bandit called Shehu Bayade.

A mass exodus was being witnessed in the area as the locals said the combination of Turji and Bayade would increase the terror, killings and maiming of innocent souls.