

## 3 dead, 300 missing, houses burnt as bandits attack Taraba village

**A**T least three persons were killed weekend, while 300 others have been declared missing, as bandits attacked Wuro Bokki village of Sindirde Ward in Gassol Local Government Area of Taraba State.

The bandits were said to have stormed the area on motorcycles in the late hours of Saturday, dressed in military camouflage.

Chairman of Gassol Local Government Area, Musa Abdullahi, who confirmed the attack yesterday, said the armed men also set eleven houses ablaze with properties worth millions of naira destroyed during the operation before returning to their hideouts.

He also confirmed that the bandits had camps in a forest between Sindirde and Gassol wards of the local government area.

Police Public Relations Officer, Taraba State, Abdullahi Usman, who also confirmed the attack, said the Commissioner of Police had given matching order to flush out the bandits in collaboration with sister security agencies.

"Efforts are in top gear to

douse the tension in the affected and neighbouring communities created by the attack", he said.

Before now, rumours of hoodlums taking refuge within forests in the area had filtered in without any confirmation from security agencies.

A source from the area who preferred anonymity, disclosed that the bandits were said to be those fleeing the sustained onslaught against banditry in Zamfara State where they were said to have engaged local vigilante groups in gun duel before they settled in the said forest.

According to the source, it is unclear if the armed vigilante groups who engaged them got any backing from conventional security agencies as none of them could disclose what they discovered when they laid siege at the forests.

Gassol Local Government Area is the hometown of the state's Deputy Governor, Haruna Manu, and a haven for investors in rice cultivation and harvesting.

At press time last night, efforts were on by security men to find those missing.