Gunmen kill monarch, 21 others, kidnap scores in Kaduna, Benue, Niger

By Peter Duru, with agency report

O fewer than 22 persons were reported killed, weekend, in Kaduna, Benue and Niger states by

Qunmen
Un Kaduna, at least 10 persons
were killed by suspected bandits during separate attacks in Birnin Gwari Local Government Area of Kaduna State

The bandits also kidnapped an unspecified number of people, mainly women, from the communities during the operation that lasted several hours.

Although the state and police authorities are yet to comment on the incident, a local security source said the bandits had earlier attacked some villages in neighbouring Niger State where they kidnapped some people, and while on their way back to their camp passing through Birnin Gwari. they were attacked by some local vigilantes at Ungwan Bula, Unguwar Dafillo and Ijinga villages in Randagi district of Birnin-Gwari

In retaliation, the bandits were said to have returned to the villages on Saturday morning and killed 10 persons, including six vigilante members and four villagers. They also kidnapped an unspecified number of

people during the operation. Similarly, bandits also blocked the Kaduna-Birnin-Gwari Road at about 10 am on Saturday and attacked

According to the Chairman of Birnin-Gwari Vanguards for Security and Good Governance, Ibrahim Nagwari, a final year student of Science Secondary School, Birnin-Gwari, who was on his way to Kaduna for the JAMB-UMTE registration and three other passengers, escaped with bullet wounds, as the bandits sprayed bullets on their vehicle at Manini village along Birnin-Gwari Kaduna Highway.

Nagwari said the student is awaiting surgery for the removal of the bullets on his shoulder at Jibrin Maigwari General Hospital in Birnin-Gwari.

While commending the local government authorities for taking care of the hospital bills of those injured in the attacks, the residents called on the government to, as a matter of urgen set up a special centre for JAMB examinations in Birnin-Gwari to reduce the risk of students travelling far down to Kaduna for registration

Kill monarch, 8 mourners in Benue

In Benue State, a traditional ruler and eight other mourners were reportedly killed during a burial ceremony by bandits suspected to be loyalists of the late Terwase Agwaza alias 'Gana' at Imande Mbakenge, Mbache Council Ward of Katsina-Ala Local Government Government Area, LGA, of Benue State. The gruesome murder of the

mourners came less than 48 hours after troops of the joint security/ military operation in Benue State, codenamed Operation Whirl Stroke, OPWS, eliminated three militia leaders and loyalists of the late 'Gana' in Katsina-Ala and Ukum LGAs.

Vanguard gathered from a source in the area that the well-armed gunmen stormed the venue of the burial, Saturday morning, on motorbikes and opened fire on the moumers.

He said: "It happened during the burial ceremony of Mr Atser Nor Agbev from Imande Mbakange, Mbache Council Ward in Katsina-Ala

"The group of well-armed young men just came on three motorcycles and immediately went straight to

where the kindred head, named Zaki Isaac Gande, was seated and started molesting him.

They searched him and took away some money from him after which they shot him and also opened fire at the other mourners, killing about eight and injuring several others.

"After the attack, they fled the scene and everyone is linking the attack to the operation carried out on Thursday and Friday by the troops of Operation Whirl Stroke during which they killed three militia leaders who were loyal to the late

It's reprisal for murder of Gana's men by military-Witness

Confirming the development, Chairman of Katsina-Ala LGA, Mr Alfred Atera, who stated that nine persons lost their lives in the attack, said the attack might not be unconnected to the earlier operation carried out by troops of the OPWS in the LGA.

Nine persons were killed at a burial on Saturday. It was a reprisal. You know that Janta was killed in the earlier operation by OPWS. So I strongly believe it was a reprisal."

The Chairman said three other ersons, who were critically injured in the attack, were taken to an undisclosed hospital while only four of the murdered

mourners were from Katsina-Ala.

He said: "Five of the victims, including the in-law of the deceased man came from Vandeikya to witness the burial of their in-law and got killed by the gunmen.

Army reacts

Speaking on the incident, the Force Commander of OPWS, Major General Kevin Aligbe, who confirmed the attack, however, dismissed insinuations that the attack was a reprisal for the killing of three wanted militia leaders linked to the late 'Gana'.

Aligbe, who vowed to track down the perpetrators of the dastardly act, said there was an ongoing operation in that axis of the state to rid the communities

of the armed gangs.

He said: "It is true that we are on operation around that area and the reason is that these boys (militia) have been killing people and extorting them, so whatever happened yesterday (Saturday) is not as a result of what we are doing because some of them (bandits) have submitted their weapons within the last two weeks or something

'They have just made up their mind that they are going to make the place unsafe for law-abiding citizens. But in

the next two weeks, we are going to get all of them that is a promise I am making to Benue people.

Recall that a wanted militia leader, Iortyom Wuave, also known as Janta, and two gang members of the late Terwase Agwaza also known as Gana militia group, Terdoo Kiorga alias Apaapa and Orkulam Mom alias Orbutee, were killed in a gun battle with troops of the joint security operation codenamed Operation Whiri Stroke, OPWS last week.

Eunmen kill

3 in Niger

The Niger Police Command has confirmed the killing of three people by gunmen in Ebbo and Ndagbegi villages of Lavun Local Government

Area of the state.

The state Commissioner of Police,
Mr Monday Kuryas, who confirmed
this, yesterday, in Minna said the
incident occurred, yesterday, at about 5am when the gunmen attacked the village.

According to him, a detachment of police tactical squad and the military have been deployed to the area and have launched a manhunt with a view to

tracking down the criminals.
"We appeal to residents to assist security personnel deployed with reliable information that could aid in apprehending the miscreants in their



BUSINESS UNUSUAL: A man making brisk business by selling plastic containers at the front of a filling station as fuel scarcity bites harder, in Ibadan, the Oyo State capital. Photo: Dare Fasube

Police nab 5 suspected cultists in Ogun

By James Ogunnaike

BEOKUTA- Five dreaded ABEOKUTA— Five greated cultists, who have been on the wanted list of the Ogun State Police command have been arrested in a long Molipa road, their hideout along Molipa road, Ijebu Ode while planning another violent attack.

The suspects, Segun Olabiyi aka Koleje; Musa Atanda aka Musa sars, Olorunjuedalo Adewala, Olamide Odewole and Peter Unknown persons kill 35-year-old Anuoluwapo Akinyemi were arrested following information received by policemen attached to Obalende divisional headquarters, Ijebu Ode.

The Ogun State command Public Relations Officer, Abimbola Oyeyemi, in a statement, said the hoodlums, who are members of Aiye confraternity, were gathering in groups at the back of De Prime Hotel in preparation for a deadly attack.

He said: "Upon the information, the DPO Obalende division, Salami Murphy, mobilised his men and headed to the scene."

"On sighting the policemen, the hoodlums engaged them in gun battle but they were subdued by the superior firepower of the policemen, which eventually led to the arrest of five among them while others escaped with bullet injuries.

"Items recovered at the scene of the encounter are one locally made short gun, two live cartridges and assorted charms.

"Preliminary investigation revealed that the suspects were actively involved in various cult clashes that had claimed lives, including that of a policeman, Sgt Akeem Oseni attached to Igbeba

"Their trademark, according to their confession, is to cut off the right hand of their victims after killing them.

"They also confessed to have been involved in some robbery operations in Ijebu Ode and its environs and that one of their prominent leaders simply known as Perth was killed in one of the robbery operations."

woman in Jigawa

HE Jigawa Police Command has confirmed the death of a 35-year-old woman, Ladi Anndu, after being attacked by unknown person(s), in Hadejia Local Government Area of the state.

command's Relations Officer, Lawan Shiisu, told the News Agency of Nigeria that the incident occurred, yesterday, at about 8:45 p.m.

Shiisu said the matter was reported to the police by one Linder Geoffrey, a sister to the deceased, who alleged that unknown person(s) trespassed into Anndu's room at Gandu quarters and attacked her with a charmodistic. sharp object.

He said: "On 26/02/2022, at

about 2045hrs, one Linder

Geoffrey came to the station and reported that on the same date at about 2030hrs, unknown persons trespassed into Ladi Anndu, her sister's room, used a sharp object and inflicted injuries on her neck.

Upon receipt of the report, the police visited the scene and took the victim to hospital for treatment," adding that a blood covered scissors was recovered from the scene as exhibit.

He explained that the victim. who died later while receiving treatment, was confirmed dead by a medical doctor.

According to him, the police had raided the area in an effort to arrest the suspected culprit(s).