

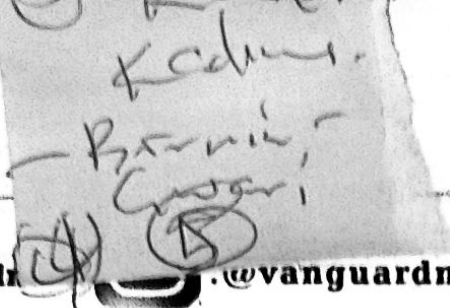
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Bandits kill 12, abduct 26 in Niger, Katsina

●As troops battle terrorists in Birnin Gwari, kill 11

By Ibrahim Hassan-
Wuyo, with agency
report

MINNA—Bandits, yesterday, killed seven persons and abducted 26 others from seven communities in Mashegu Local Government Area of Niger State.

Also in Katsina, terrorists in long kaftans, called Jalabiya, raided the Barebari community, weekend, killing five peasants. No fewer than three locals are said to be receiving treatment in hospitals following injuries sustained during the attack.

In another development, troops and Special Forces of the Nigerian Army, have neutralised 11 bandits in a fierce battle, which took place during fighting patrols in Birnin Gwari Local Government Area of Kaduna State.

In Niger State, Chairman of Mashegu council, Umar Igede, who confirmed the attacks on the seven communities in Minna, yesterday, said the attacks have forced residents to flee from their homes.

According to Igede, bandits have killed hundreds of residents between January and March 2023, adding: "Bandits have already caused our people to desert their homes in our communities because of incessant attacks.

"In the last two weeks, terrorists have

unleashed terror on Kulho, Sahon Rami and Tashan Hajiya among other communities. Most of the villagers in the affected communities have deserted their homes to Internally Displaced Persons' camp in Kontagora and other places for their safety."

He called on the state government and other relevant security agencies to come to their aid to bring an end to the terrorist attacks in the council.

"The ongoing attacks on my people is posing a serious security threat to the villagers as the attacks in Mashegu are becoming unbearable and we need serious assistance from the relevant security agencies."

Calls to the PPRO, Wasiu Abiodun, went unanswered, while that of the Commissioner for Internal Security and Humanitarian Affairs number was not reachable at press time.

Terrorists in kaftan kill 5 in Katsina village

In Barebari community attack, a survivor and community leader in the area, Ya'u Usman Chibauna told the BBC Hausa Service that the armed men disguised as good men in the Jalabiya and raided the

community.

"Already, five people were killed and others were taken to the hospital," he said.

The BBC Hausa Service reported that the police in Katsina had confirmed the attack.

For quite sometime, many communities in Katsina State have been under incessant attacks by terrorists, a situation that made the governor to call for communal self-defence, when he felt the federal authorities were not doing much to protect the people and their property from terrorists attack.

Earlier, efforts to have an understanding between state and local authorities with the rampaging terrorists, had not been successful as the hoodlums continued to renege on their promises to keep peace.

Many villages and hamlets especially in Funtua zone, Tumburkai localities and others have become empty as those locals, who survived previous attacks have relocated to safer locations while some were said to be languishing in IDPs camps.

Troops battle terrorists in Birnin Gwari, kill 11

In Kaduna, state Commissioner for Internal Security and Home Affairs, Samuel

Anrwan, said operational feedback to the state government revealed that the troops advanced to several identified locations, and cleared bandit camps in Bagoma, Rema, Bugai, Dagara, Sabon Layi, Gagumi, Kakangi, Katakaki and Randagi.

It was gathered that in the course of these operations, the forces made contact with bandits at Kakangi and Katakaki. A fierce gun battle followed, after which the criminals were subdued by the troops' aggressive firepower.

Eleven bandits were confirmed neutralised as others fled. After the battle, the troops exploited the location and recovered two AK-47 rifles, two AK-47 magazines and 57 rounds of ammunition. Six motorcycles belonging to the bandits were destroyed during the encounter.

Receiving the report, Governor Nasir el-Rufai expressed satisfaction with the conduct of the security forces and praised the leadership of the Major General TALagbeja, GOC, One Division and Force Commander of the Operation Whirl Punch.

The governor lauded the troops for their consistent and spirited efforts, as he urged them to build on the momentum of this notable success.

Bandits storm