

## **Shadow Actors behind Rural Banditry in Zamfara State, North-Western Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

*Zamfara is one of the states located in North-Western part of Nigeria. It has until recently, been at the top of most Nigeria's newspapers on the issue of cattle rustling and rural banditry. Unlike other states in northern Nigeria where the bandits operated with less sophistication, Zamfara rural banditry is completely an organized crime that involved wide range of factors and actors. This made the whole gamut of rural insecurity in the state very complex, leading to destruction of lives and properties, wanton rape and other related human right abuses. The sinister implication of this was the creation of large army of internally displaced persons and widows with an ever increasing number of desperate and destitute orphans. The preoccupation of this paper attempts to show the role of the major actors responsible for promoting and instigating rural banditry in the area. The paper does not in any way intend to study the different facets of banditry. It is only concerned with how some actors whom the paper considered as 'shadow' contributed to rural banditry.*

## **Introduction**

Rural banditry has recently attracted the attention of most security experts in the country. At the inception of this insecurity both the state government and other stake holders underestimated the threat it may likely cause to human security. Within the span of five years (2011-2016) rural banditry has transformed itself into the most dangerous security threat the state has ever witnessed in the past. This is partly because of the involvement of what we called ‘the shadow actors’ behind the conflict. Shadow actors here mean all those forces responsible for fueling the conflict from behind. Some experts on security studies also called them the perpetrators, referring to the agents or factors contributing or instigating the conflict. Rural banditry has remained a hydra headed monster in Zamfara compared to other states in the federation due to its complex nature and the involvement of those actors who significantly benefit materially from the conflict.<sup>i</sup> This brings us to the issue of the political economy of rural banditry and cattle rustling in the state, where some few individuals promote the conflict for selfish gains.<sup>ii</sup>

The most pertinent question often asked by most observers is that what benefits do these hidden actors derived from rural insecurity in the state, a question which this paper also attempts to address. The paper derives most of its sources from the subalterns, the downtrodden and victims of banditry in the state. There is no opportunity to have a balance perception and opinion from both sides because the actors are really inaccessible. Where they were reached and interviewed about the situation of things they argued that all the statements and facts presented by the other side are false insinuations. At any rate the role of the historian is to call a spate a spate and presents the facts as they really are. It is left for the reader to separate the ‘grain from the chaff’. Part of the preliminary findings of the paper is that, rural banditry in Zamfara only used cattle rustling as a cover up, thus the facts remain that the elites in the state recruited and used the bandits to achieve their selfish political and economic interest. Therefore, this article explains the role of the ‘shadow actors’ such as the state government, traditional rulers, Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria, (MACBAN) and informants in facilitating rural banditry in Zamfara state.

## **State Government**

Provision of basic security of life and properties of the citizens should be the fundamental responsibility of the state government. It is expected that the state will do everything possible to ensure maximum security of its citizenry. At the inception of rural banditry in Zamfara, if the state was truly committed to its fundamental objective could have organized meetings with all the stake holders at the grass root to address the problem once and for all. But the way past and present governments in the state had handled the security situation has left much to be desired.<sup>iii</sup> This really created an atmosphere of suspicion and ill feelings on the part of the governed towards the government. In a situation like that of Zamfara state, the first suspect is usually the state government, because people will keep on observing the commitment and seriousness of the state government towards such security challenges in the state.

Some informants traced the origin and development of rural banditry in the state to the period of election campaigns when most politicians were struggling for elective positions in 2011.<sup>iv</sup> The

current leadership at the state level according to some informants had a hidden deal with the bandits and made some promises if elected into office. The government provided support, financial and logistics to the bandits. Most of the immediate demands of the bandits were fulfilled.

Some political aspirants during this period intended to use the bandits for political gains. In fact, during the 2011 general elections some of the notorious bandits were seen canvassing support and threatening political opponents.<sup>v</sup> This was the first time in the recent history of the state to see bandits operating openly and freely. To most observers, the very party and candidates the bandits were campaigning for were either responsible for their formation or constitute their main sponsors.<sup>vi</sup> The armed bandits seen in some parts of the state at this time were mostly considered political thugs recruited for election purposes, therefore never considered a threat.<sup>vii</sup>

But the bandits later became a cog on the wheel of the state government after elections. One believes that there is really a hidden agenda between the bandits and the state government, because of the persistent nature of the banditry in the state. Although, most states in the north-west geo-political zone have similar bitter experience of banditry, but the fact remains that Zamfara experience is the worst and most complicated. This is attributed to the presence of large forest in the state that made it a safe haven for the bandits.<sup>viii</sup> Thus, this accounts for the persistent and consistent attacks by the bandits in the state.<sup>ix</sup> One will as well argue that it is not about forest or safe operational base for the bandits, but sincere commitment on the part of the state government. Some state Governors like Malam Nasir El-Rufa'i of Kaduna state was able to chase out the bandits out of the densely forest of Birnin Gwari. Also, the Governors of Katsina, Kano, Sokoto and Kebbi have shown greater sincerity of purpose and are still committed to the fight against rural banditry in their respective states.

There were several committees and meetings held on how to put an end to rural banditry in Zamfara state in the later period when the situation was already out of hand. But the general public particularly the victims of banditry see it as a mere rhetoric, because the body language of the government does not show commitment to the security situation. There are several instances to support this claim. First the vigilante leadership accused the government for underfunding at the apex of rural banditry in the state in 2015. Moreover, members of this group were one time warned to stay away from their primary responsibilities of providing security at the grass root.<sup>x</sup> This could be a wise decision if the government is truly committed to solve the existing tension between the Vigilante Group Nigeria (VGN) and Militant Vigilante Group (MVG) on one side and the bandits on the other as the major actors to the conflict.

The action of the state government further proof to the VGN that their services are no longer needed, after the Yar-Galma incidence where one hundred and twenty members of the vigilante were killed by the bandits in Maru Local Government.<sup>xi</sup> The state government sympathized and commiserated with the victims but partly blame them for holding an unauthorized meeting. Most commentators condemned very strongly this statement by the state government. On the ground that this people are good citizens of the state committed towards provision of security of lives and properties in the state. The main agenda of the meeting was to chart a common course on how to find a lasting solution to the problem of rural insecurity in the state.<sup>xii</sup> Similarly, in June 2013, the military troops stationed at Kizara in Tsafe Local Government Area were withdrawn due to nonpayment of their feeding allowance by the state government. Two days later bandit attacked the village and killed 57.<sup>xiii</sup> Furthermore, the Chairman House Committee on Security,

Intelligence and Public Safety, Hon Muhammad Bello Matawalle, Member Representing Bakura and Anka Federal Constituency of Zamfara State in 2014 reported that;

The state government did not, in whatever aspect, help the matter. After series of meetings between my Committee and the National Security Chiefs, men were deployed to arrest the situation of rural banditry in Zamfara State. But, unfortunately later, we received complaints that the State Government was not willing to encourage the security personnel on the field. To cap it all, the recorded contribution given by the State Government as engagement for the maintenance of the operations carried by the security agencies across the dangerous forest was not even commendable, the worst part of it all is that the governor could not spend a week in the country ever Since he assumed office, therefore, he has no knowledge of the happenings in the state.<sup>xiv</sup>

Similarly, Senator Saidu Muhammed Dansadau has been the major critique of the attitude of the state government towards rural banditry. In most of the interviews he granted to media he challenged the state and exposes its inadequacies in addressing the security situation. To further show his commitment to his struggle Dansadau presented a seven page petition to the Federal Government against Zamfara State in June, 2016 titled *Declare State of Emergency Against Zamfara State*<sup>xv</sup> In this petition Dansadau accused the State for sponsoring rural banditry.<sup>xv</sup> Although, some people will consider the positions of Matawalle and Dansadau as a mere opposition, but the fact of the matter is that the state government cannot be exonerated from these pockets of allegations. There is no strong commitment on the part of the state to see an end to the lingering insecurity in the early period.

Some people are of the view that state artificially created this problem so as to divert the attention of people from the main state's politics. With this the conflict will be used as a conduit pipe for siphoning public funds. The money that could have been used for infrastructural and other developments will then be diverted to the provision of security. The Governor in media briefing on security situation in the state in 2013 announced that his government spends 600 million monthly as security votes, a statement that attracts serious criticism in the state.<sup>xvi</sup> This is similar to present corrupt practices associated with diversion of funds meant for the purchase of arms to fight insurgency in the country. The fact of the matter is that if this is truly the case, it is not a better way for diverting people's attention from state's politics. Zamfarawa are naturally peace loving people who could accept the poor services of the state without going to the extreme of creating a conflict scenario which will result to the killings of uncountable number of innocent rural dwellers.

Moreover, some top government officials allegedly have close ties with the bandits. The Deputy Governor whom some sources revealed that he is very closed to the notorious Buharin Daji the bandit's leader in Zamfara State. Also, Alhaji Sani Governor Mayanchi a close associate of the Governor Abdulaziz Yari Abubakar was accused of being the middleman between the government and the bandits. Until recently all communications between the state government and the bandits were done through this agent.<sup>xvii</sup> The Deputy Governor has recently taken over the responsibilities of negotiations. After the kidnapping and abduction of forty people in November, 2016, the Deputy Governor Alhaji Ibrahim Wakkala negotiated and submitted 400 heads of cattle as ransom before the release of the captives.<sup>xviii</sup> There are similar instances like this where the Deputy Governor negotiated on behalf of the State government. This shows gross weakness on the side of the state government according to one village head

The inability of the state to adequately tackle this security threat in the early stage has continued to manifest in the later period. Bandit groups have transformed into professional organizations

due to high level connections with other bandits within and outside the country. This made their operations and activities more advanced and sophisticated.<sup>xix</sup>

To further compound this ‘invisible and indivisible’ role of the state in the conflict, some informants in Galadi District of Shinkafi Local Government, confirmed that in April, 2015, a Helicopter dropped some armed group in Batauna forest and few days later there was increase in the intensity of the attacks by bandits.<sup>xx</sup> A police officer confirmed this claim, but according to him at the time the Division Police Office received the report neither the DPO nor the Local Government Chairman of Shinkafi was around in the Local Government, therefore nobody could take any security measures against it.<sup>xxi</sup> If truly this is the case it is a great security shortfall on the part of state and all its security operatives. This is part of the reasons why most of the informants during Focus Group Discussion (FGD) considered the whole situation as conspiracy involving a lot of actors.

The purported helicopter could have provided human and material reinforcement to the existing bandits. This also reminds us of the farmers-herdsmen conflict in Agatu Local Government Areas in Benue state in May and June, 2016, where the people also reported such type of helicopter dropping armed bandits in different forests across the Local Government Areas.<sup>xxii</sup> These are all part of the accusations labeled against the state on issue of cattle rustling and rural banditry. It is part of the responsibilities of traditional rulers to advice the state on grass-root security challenges like this but unfortunately some of them are partly beneficiary to the conflict and formed part of the shadow actors.

### **Traditional rulers**

Traditional rulers by their nature and orientation are the most respected set of people in the society. In the past and to a very large extent in the present they are the custodian of the society’s rich traditions and customs. They wielded strong political power and influence and were equally respected by their people. But some of the traditional rulers in most Nigerian societies have derailed from their traditional functions of guiding and protecting the masses to searching and struggling for capital accumulation. This created an open competition and in some cases confrontation with their subjects that ideally supposed to be absolutely loyal to them.<sup>xxiii</sup> This struggle for money making has made some of the traditional rulers to serve as shadow actors in the perpetration of different types and forms of crimes.

Traditional rulers ideally, suppose to be the main agents of conflict resolution between the farmers-herdsmen. Past traditional rulers in the state were known for this form of conflict resolution. They were knowledgeable on the number and location of Fulani leaving in their domain. Above all also know the head of each clan by their names and in some cases the size of their herds. This made it easy for them to track their movement and also understand who among them is a potential threat in their territories. The palaces of most village and district heads as well as emirs in most part of Hausaland are usually busy with reported cases of farmers and herdsmen conflicts. Most a time such conflicts were resolved amicably without much rancor.

In the same vein, some of the traditional rulers instigate and benefit from the conflict, while some even connived with bandits to perpetuate armed robbery. As far back as 1891, some traditional rulers around Dansadau area were accused of either involving directly or conniving with bandits in armed robbery.<sup>xxiv</sup> The situation has not changed even in the present as informant

complained bitterly on the role of traditional rulers in rural banditry. Substantial parts of the first class Emirs in Zamfara State are allegedly deeply involved in the ‘politics of rural banditry’.

There were instances during the past administration when some of the emirs were suspended for allegedly involving in cattle rustling. Moreover, during wedding, tubarning or naming ceremonies that involved some of the village, district heads or emirs, the bandits are usually part of the ‘chief sponsors’ who donate money and livestock.<sup>xxv</sup> Moreover, because of the wealthy nature of the Fulani, there is a strong tie between the Fulani and the traditional rulers in the state.<sup>xxvi</sup> This created a lot of suspicion on the part of the non-Fulani masses who felt that in an event of farmers-herdsmen conflict the traditional rulers would likely side with the Fulani. To confirm this allegation, a research visit was made to the palace of one of the accused Emir’s, where a palace guard stated in confidence that the allegations are truly valid. Bandits or their agents use to visit the Emir in the mid-night probably to give him his own share of the loot.

At the early stage of banditry, some of these traditional rulers usually bail-out the bandits from either police or judges in the court of law. This also added to the numerous accusations that the traditional rulers were partly involved in the syndicate of cattle rustling and rural banditry. Anonymous informants in one of the most affected areas of rural banditry always ask question even though secretly, that their village heads were the wealthiest in terms of livestock, but yet have never experienced the menace of cattle theft, while the vast majority were crying for help from the hands of the rustlers and bandits<sup>xxvii</sup>.

More importantly, some of the traditional rulers have their sons, relatives and close associates in banditry. The traditional rulers who were free from this allegation could not come out clearly and fight against it because of the powerful nature of the bandits in the state. Those that tried it, like the village head of Mallamawa was killed by the bandits for open condemnation of rural banditry. In fact, even those traditional rulers behind the formation of MVG (Yansakai) were also allegedly accused of sharing some of the livestock recovered from the bandits, instead of given them to the rightful owners.<sup>xxviii</sup>

Furthermore, some of the attacks carried-out by the bandits on miners also continue to raise a lot of concern. There is ‘cut-throat competition’ in the mining fields among the artisanal gold miners. Some of the miners are of the view that the attacks were partly instigated by some traditional rulers who are deeply involved in illegal mining in the State. The validity of this claim is difficult to be established, but the fact of the matter is that the Emirs and District Heads located at gold endowed areas of Dansadau, Maradun and Anka are extremely reach due to their involvement in mining activities.<sup>xxix</sup> According to Desert Herald Newspaper:

The solid mineral resources in the state have been hijacked by highly placed people in the state including traditional rulers... mining has continue to arouse and attract local and international attentions with regard to mining and exploration of these vast deposits in the state...considering the fact that illegal mining is the main business of the traditional rulers and highly placed people in the state... who are always at loggerheads with other artisanal miners.<sup>xxx</sup>

It is within this perspective that some people view the conflict as an intense struggle for mineral deposit between the highly placed individuals on one hand and the vast majority of the masses on the other. At any rate, these factors and a lot more made the fight against banditry merely impossible in Zamfara State. In this respect the traditional rulers could go to any length to maintain the existing order of exploiting the mineral deposit in their respective areas. The



Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association (MACBAN) has also been fueling the fire of the conflict from behind.

## MACBAN

The Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria, henceforth MACBAN is basically a flat form meant for the unity and protection of all livestock producers, an occupation predominated by the Fulani.<sup>xxxii</sup> MACBAN is a Fulani formed and Fulani dominated association inaugurated by President, Alhaji Shehu Aliyu Usman Shagari in 1979. This organization became a full social and cultural organization, with its members formally inaugurated in Bauchi in 1987. It gained further recognition after its second meeting that took place in Sokoto, where late Sultan Abubakar III accepted the position of grand Patron of the association.<sup>xxxiii</sup>

The Sultan being a Fulani and also the leader of Muslims in Nigeria expand the frontiers and membership of the association. Some Emirs like late Alhaji Ado Bayero of Kano, late Ahaji Usman Nagoggo of Katsina and late Alhaji Haruna Rasheed of Gwandu all joined the association, under the leadership of Alhaji Adamu.<sup>xxxiv</sup> The main objective of MACBAN is to unite all the Fulani herdsmen in Nigeria. The specific objective is to promote and protect the interest of herders and their grazing facilities in the country.<sup>xxxv</sup> Therefore, the major voice of the Fulani in the state is (MACBAN) which also has its fundamental short comings in addressing the challenges of Fulani people in Zamfara State.<sup>xxxvi</sup> According to an informant;

The association faced leadership crisis, misappropriation of funds and lack of sincerity of purpose both at the national and state levels. This invariably made it ineffective in championing the course of the Fulani. Therefore, some Fulani people have no respect for the association simply for its inability to adequately channel Fulani grievances to the appropriate authorities. There are instances where some leading members of MACBAN in the state extort money from members and the most annoying thing is that some of them (leaders) are accused of cattle rustling and rural banditry in the state.<sup>xxxvii</sup>

Some of the above allegations could be proved and accepted, because since the inception of this conflict so many State and Local Government Chairmen of MACBAN were arrested by security personnel on the accusations of participating in cattle rustling and rural banditry. Whenever and wherever bandits are apprehended after serious interrogations it would be realized that one member of MACBAN or the other could be implicated.<sup>xxxviii</sup> In fact, since the beginning of this conflict, Zamfara State has produced seven different set of MACBAN Chairmen at the state level. Most of these Chairmen are presently serving jail terms in different prisons in the state. The last chairman was Alhaji Tukur Jangebe, who was recently released from prison for allegedly conniving with the bandits and rustlers in carrying out their activities.<sup>xxxix</sup> In fact, at the time of carrying out field work for this research, Shinkafi and Maru Local Governments had no chairmen of MACBAN because they were accused of cattle rustling. Malam Mamuda the Chairman of Shinkafi was arrested in August, 2016 for allegedly conniving with the bandits.<sup>xl</sup> The worst part of it is that some leading members of the association seized this opportunity of the conflict to extort money from their fellow Fulani people. They often follow the family of those arrested due to accusations of cattle rustling and banditry to collect money in the name of bribing security officers for the release of their beloved ones. The Family of Sani Zurmi suffered a lot from such dubious acts of some members of the MACBAN in the Local Government.<sup>xli</sup>

Also after, violent conflict between the bandits and members of MVG in Shinkafi Local Government, large number of Fulani people migrated to other Local Government Areas and States for the fear of attacks by either the bandits or MVG into month of May, 2016. After peace was restored in the area, all Fulani that fled were asked to come back. A Member of the MACBAN under the leadership of one Lawali Shinkafi demanded one hundred thousand naira (₦100,000) from each family that wanted to come back and settled in Shinkafi Local Government Area. It was discovered that within two weeks Lawali Shinkafi has collected the sum of two million naira ₦2,000,000,000 from different families.<sup>xlii</sup> It is confirmed that there is nothing new in the activities of MACBAN, their leadership has been characterized by dubious act, an informant observed that;

Even before this contemporary Fulani predicament the MACBAN was nothing but an agent of Fulani exploitation. Since conflict is inherently part of the Fulani, MACBAN gapped the opportunity and constantly extort money in the name of bribing Police officers or Judges. In fact, it is better to deal with law enforcement agencies directly than to put MACBAN in between. I have personally lost five herds of cattle through the dubious act of MACBAN, because my livestock eventually tress-passed and destroyed some ones farm. After investigation, the MACBAN member that collected money from me never took it to the law enforcement agencies that he claimed demanded for the money.<sup>xliii</sup>

This is why some Fulani people have no respect for MACBAN and did not recognize the association. Some people are of the view that some of the problems facing Fulani today are partly influenced by MACBAN, in Zamfara State for instance, prior to this conflict transformation the association had a full knowledge on the number of bandits and their potential threat to the state. It is better as suggested by an informant to go back to the traditional method of farmers-herdsmen relations that emphasized on the role which traditional political system of the Fulani played.<sup>xliii</sup>

Historically, Ardo, Dikko or Sarkin Fulani as the case may be, are respectable and responsible Fulani leaders with absolute position of political authority amongst the Fulani. Most cases of farmers-herdsmen conflict in Hausaland were amicably resolved by this class of Fulani leaders. They often have a record of all Fulani families in their domain including new comers and are solely responsible for whatever happens under their watch. Under this arrangement, Fulani herdsmen who trespassed into someone's farm usually reported themselves to their respective leaders for safe landing. The respect for these traditional Fulani leaders goes beyond the Fulani and transcends to their host communities. Their words are always taken very serious because they are men of virtue. Therefore, the rate of farmers-herdsmen conflict during period was at its lowest ebb. But today, modernity, politics, corruption and greed have rendered this system useless. It is unfortunately replaced with MACBAN an association which an informant described as 'unfriendly friend of the Fulani'.<sup>xliiv</sup> It is observed that leaders of this association have no grass root support. Although, some of them are Fulani by birth but could not speak the language fluently. To further compound the problem some have little or no understanding of the actual demands and needs of the Fulani. If this is the case the association has no moral basis to claim the unity of the Fulani. As earlier stated some leading members of this association collaborated and provided useful information that facilitates cattle rustling and bandits operations in the state.



## **Spy Agents**

Rural banditry and cattle rustling has spread its tentacles to different parts of Zamfara State. The transformation in banditry in the state is tied to the role played by different collaborators in the development of banditry in the state. The bandits have established wide range of connections across different Local Government Areas in the state. There is considerable number of people across different ethnic groups and social status that served as informants to the bandits. Their main role is to provide relevant security information on conditions of different towns and villages in the state. Part of the vital information is to identify friends and enemies of the bandits and at the same time furnish the bandits with every bit of information regarding the security situation on their respective areas.

The spies are very critical to the organization and prosecution of any attack in a particular area. In this light, where to attack, when to attack it and from which direction to attack is fundamentally determined by the information given by the informants. The main attribute of informants is that they are often very silent on issues related to security of the village and always wants know the strategic plans of the village towards banditry. There are instances where informants will also want to engage people in discussion on the security issues of the town or village. Development in information and communication technology has simplified the role of these spy agents. Such agents use their telephones to communicate and even send videos to the bandits. It is very easy to see the bandits calling their respective enemies on phone warning them about their utterances against them. In fact, hardly could one find a village in cattle rustling and banditry prevailing areas in the state without a couple of these informants. In some of these places the informants are known by their names and locations, while in others they are yet to be identified.

The most annoying aspect of it is that the informants cut across different strata, comprising religious and community leaders, security agents, Fulani herdsmen, farmers and above all village heads. These categories of people are as dangerous as the bandits who execute the actual plan, for the simple reason that 'information is power'. This is not without material benefits, the informants are usually provided with their own share of the loots. Some of them owned large herds of cattle in the forest and always have a rest of mind because they know as far as rural banditry is concerned nothing will happened to them. Therefore, in most part of the villages people are in silence mood about rural banditry because you don't know who is friend and foe to the bandits. This factor has put many people in the condition of perpetual fear in the rural areas of Zamfara State.

## **Conclusion**

This paper has shown the high level of syndicate and collaboration involved in rural banditry in Zamfara state. It seems that so many highly placed personalities, organisations and institutions are pertinently involved in the conflict. There could hardly be peace in the state without clearly identifying the role of the collaborators in rural banditry. On the whole it is basically resource base conflict and every agent is benefiting substantially from the conflict. The end result is that the vast majority of the masses are suffering from this 'Zamfarci Politics'. One could not rule out the possibility that there are some traditional rulers, politicians and highly placed individuals in the state who are not part of the perpetrators. But these sets of people are overwhelmed by the dominant interest. For this reason they are involved in a 'conspiracy of silence'. It is only by

coming out to condemn and fight the menace that the Federal Government will clearly understand the real problem and come to the aid of the state.

### Notes

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<sup>i</sup> I.M. Abbas, 'No Retreat No Surrender: Conflict for Survival between Fulani Pastoralists and Farmers in Northern Nigeria' *European Scientific Journal*, Vol.8, No.1 (2012),p.338

<sup>ii</sup> O.Al- Chukwuma and O. Francis, Cattle Rustling and Dialectics of Security in Northern Nigeria' *International Journal of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences*, Vol.2.No.3, 2014,p110

<sup>iii</sup> Isah Abubakar Gummi, 48 years, Oral Interview, Gusau, 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2017

<sup>iv</sup> Bello Ibrahim Gusau, 41 years, Oral Interview, Gusau 22<sup>nd</sup> December, 2016

<sup>v</sup> Mallam Isah Musa, Gusau, 52 years, oral interview, at Damba, Area, Gusau, 22<sup>nd</sup> December, 2016. He is a political commentator on Zamfara Politics; according to him some of the Fulani bandits started as political thugs during the 2011 gubernatorial elections in the state.

<sup>vi</sup> Ibrahim Ango Mai Kaji, 50 years, Gusau, Political Party Official, Oral Interview, Gusau,20<sup>th</sup> December, 2016.

<sup>vii</sup> Idem

<sup>ix</sup> Muhammed Umar, Oral Interview, 48 years, Gusau, 20<sup>th</sup> December, 2016, see also Okoli A and Fidelis I, 'Forestlands and National Security in Nigeria: A Threat-Import Analysis, *Journal of Political Science and Leadership Research*, Vol. 2 No.2, 2016, [www.iiardpub.org](http://www.iiardpub.org).

<sup>x</sup> Interview with Malam Usman Muhammad Jahun, Commander-General of Vigilante Group Nigeria,in Daily Trust Newspaper, Sunday,January 17,2016,pp.54-55

<sup>xi</sup> Premium Times Newspaper: Zamfara Attack- 112 Buried as Governor Yari Vows for Action,7<sup>th</sup> April, 2014

<sup>xii</sup> Muhammed Isa, Oral Interview, 45 years, Member of the Vigilante Group, Maru, 18<sup>th</sup> June, 2016

<sup>xiii</sup> .Vanguard Newspaper: Gunmen on 38 Motor cycles Invaded Zamfara Village, Kill 57, June, 19, 2013

<sup>xiv</sup> .Daily Trust Newspaper, April, 12, 2014; Governor Yari and APC Destroyed Zamfara State Economically: Says Hon Muhammed Bello Matawalle

<sup>xv</sup> See, The Sun Newspaper Zamfara Terror: Declare state of emergency, former lawmaker petitions Buhari, 26th June, 2016, for more details of the petition.

<sup>xvi</sup> See Daily Trust Newspaper, 600m monthly Security Votes, Zamfara State Not Sincere, 24 September, 2014

<sup>xvii</sup> Bello Abdullahi, Oral Interview, 45 years, Gusau, 22<sup>nd</sup> December, 2016

<sup>xviii</sup> Idem

<sup>xix</sup> . Alhaji Sirajo Na Makka Ibrahim District of Badarawa, Oral Interview, Badarawa 30 years , 18<sup>th</sup> September, 2016

<sup>xx</sup> Alhaji Haruna Ibrahim Galadi, Oral Interview 48 years, 15<sup>th</sup> October, 2016, Galadi village

<sup>xxi</sup> Musa Haruna, Oral interview, 35 year, Police officer, Shinkafi town, 16<sup>th</sup> October, 2016. According to him no sooner that the helicopter report was brought to their notice, banditry became more rampant in Maradun, Batauna and Galadi areas.

<sup>xxii</sup> M.A Rufa'i 'Perspectives on Farmers-Herdsmen Conflict in Agatu' Being a Paper Presented at the 61<sup>st</sup> Annual Conference of the Historical Society of Nigeria(HSN) on the theme: Nigeria

Counts: Issues of National Rebirth, held at the University of Port Harcourt, Port Harcourt, 9<sup>th</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup> October, 2016

<sup>xxiii</sup> . I.W. Zartman, *Traditional Cures for Modern Conflicts: African Conflict Medicine*, Boulder, London, 2000,p148

<sup>xxiv</sup> NAK: SNP:17: Sokprof. Security Report on Dasadau Area, 1913

<sup>xxv</sup> . Bello Ahmed Sani, Oral Interview, 40 years, Maru town, 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2016

<sup>xxvi</sup> Idem, but this should be seen entirely from this context, because traditionally there are such ties for centuries.

<sup>xxvii</sup> Anonymous informant

<sup>xxviii</sup> Vanguard Newspaper: Local Vigilantes Shared Rustled Cows with Traditional Rulers in Zamfara State: Police, 17<sup>th</sup> July, 2016

<sup>xxix</sup> For the nature and influence of these traditional rulers see, L.K. Salati, D.M.Gyimati and P.A Eshun, 'Evaluation of Stakeholder's Role in the Management of Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining in Anka, Zamfara State, Nigeria,' *Developing Countries Studies*, Vol.4, No.19, 2014

<sup>xxx</sup> Desert Herald Newspaper, Zamfara 2016 ' Budget of the People: A Hard nut to crack for Governor Yari, 19<sup>th</sup> February, 2016

<sup>xxxi</sup> O. Shola and I. Hassan, 'Herder's and Farmer's Association and Social Conflict in Northern Nigeria' in M.J.Kuna and J.Ibrahim, *Rural Banditry and Conflict in Northern Nigeria*, Centre of Democracy and Development, Abuja,2015,pp.217-256

<sup>xxxii</sup> See Elnathan's Dark Corner Interview with Mohammed Bello Tukur Esq., the National Legal Adviser of Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN) and the Acting Secretary General of Confederation of Traditional Herders Organization in Africa (CORET). Friday, March 21, 2014

<sup>xxxiii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xxxiv</sup> Ibe M., Miyetti Allah Reaffirms Endorsement of Jonathan', *Leadership Newspaper*, Kaduna, 21<sup>st</sup> November, available at accessed on 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2015

<sup>xxxv</sup> . Farouk U.B. 'The Pastoral- Agricultural Conflict in Zamfara State, Nigeria', Memo, North Central Regional Center for Rural Development, Iowa State University, 107 Curtiss Hall, Ames, 50011 IA, USA

<sup>xxxvi</sup> Dan Malam Harande, 50 years ,Oral Interview, Lambar Bakura, 6<sup>th</sup> April, 2016. The view of Dan Malam could be doubted because he is aggrieved by MACBAN an association that take away their position of authority over the Fulani people.

<sup>xxxvii</sup> Idem

<sup>xxxviii</sup> Usman Abubakar, Oral Interview, 46 years leading member of MACBAN, Bakura town, 6<sup>th</sup> April, 2016

<sup>xxxix</sup> Isah Abdullahi, Oral Interview, 40 years, Member of MACBAN, Shinkafi town, 18<sup>th</sup> September, 2016

<sup>xl</sup> Bello Sani, Oral Interview, 35 years, Zurmi town, 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2016

<sup>xli</sup> Ibrahim Usman, Oral Interview,38 years, Police Officer, Shinkafi Local Government, 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2016

<sup>xlii</sup> Sani Muhammed Batauna, Oral Interview, 48 years, 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2016

<sup>xliii</sup> Alkali Hamidu, Oral Interview, 54 years, Danba Village, 22<sup>nd</sup> December, 2016

<sup>xliv</sup> Bello Abubakar Barade, Oral Interview, 42 years, Zurmi town, 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2016