

# Traditional Rulers Gold Mining and the Rise of Banditry in Zamfara State, Nigeria, 2015-2023

Felicia Itodo

National Defence College Abuja, Nigeria.

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2023.7011108>

Received: 02 November 2023; Revised: 10 November 2023; Accepted: 16 November 2023; Published: 15 December 2023

## ABSTRACT

Zamfara State is one of the seven states in northwestern Nigeria. In recent years, the state has witnessed an increase in the wave of banditry. This has drawn the attention of scholars to begin to probe the linkage between illicit gold mining, traditional rulers, and rise of banditry in the State. Gold mining which is at the centre of the conflict, has long been a significant economic activity which has attracted both legal and illegal miners. Unfortunately, illicit gold mining has taken the centre stage and this portends grave danger for the state. One of the key players in this wave of criminality, are some traditional rulers, who ordinarily are supposed to be the custodians of peace in the State but have neglected those roles and have resorted to providing protection and support to the illegal miners in exchange for personal gains. The paper deploys the use of resource curse theory which postulates that the presence of minerals in an area could breed conflict. The study assumes that there is a deeper link between traditional rulers, illicit gold mining and banditry in Zamfara State. Using primary and secondary sources, the paper argues that the traditional institutions in Zamfara State have failed in their primary responsibilities in promoting peace and social harmony in the State which explains the rise of criminal activities in the State which has led to the wanton destruction of lives and properties. The paper concludes that the roadmap to peace in the region lies in the complete overhaul of the traditional institutions of the State. The objective being to draw their attention back to their responsibilities. The paper also recommends that appropriate sanctions should be meted on traditional rulers found complicit in fueling conflict in Zamfara State.

**Keywords;** banditry, conflict, illicit gold mining, insecurity, and traditional institutions

## INTRODUCTION

The African continent is richly endowed with mineral resources spread across different across its regions. The presence of minerals on the continent has made it a hotbed for recurring conflicts. From South Africa in southern Africa to Rwanda in Eastern Africa, Congo in Central Africa Republic, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Nigeria in Western Africa, Morocco and Egypt in Northern Africa are flashpoints for conflicts. Analysts using the resource curse theory have argued that, the presence of minerals on the continent is more of a curse than blessing taking into cognizance the conflicts the presence of minerals have generated (Smith and David, 2023). Zamfara State which is located in the northwest region of Nigeria, is known for its vast mineral resources, particularly gold deposits. The abundance of gold in the state has led to a surge in illegal mining activities, attracting both local and international actors seeking to exploit its wealth. This influx of miners has had dire consequences for the state, leading to environmental degradation, social unrest, and an increase in criminal activities, including banditry.

One of the key factors contributing to the rise of banditry in Zamfara State is the complicity of traditional rulers. These traditional rulers, who are highly revered and respected in their communities, have often

turned a blind eye to the illegal mining activities taking place in their space (Olanrewaju, 2020). Some have even been accused of colluding with the miners, receiving kickbacks in exchange for their silence. It is against this backdrop, that this paper set out to analyze the role traditional rulers play in the illicit gold mining and the rise of rural banditry in the state which has claimed the lives of innocent citizens.

## **THE RISE OF BANDITRY IN ZAMFARA STATE, NIGERIA.**

Banditry constitutes one of the major challenges confronting the Nigerian state. Many lives have been lost as a result of the heinous crime perpetrated by bandits over the years. Their activities became more intense in the administration of President Muhammad Buhari 2015 to 2023. They operated freely dispossessing farmers and pastoralists of their possessions, kidnapping villagers and harassment of innocent travelers on the highway.

The motivating factor in the rise of banditry in Zamfara State, can be understood better within the context of the economic gains they derive from terrorizing the state. Nigeria has a porous border with her neighbors especially; Niger and Chad. This has encouraged the influx of foreigners into the country. Some of them are deeply involved in banditry. Their victims have attested to the fact that, while in the captivity of the bandit the brand of Fulani they hear them speak is completely strange to the Nigerian area. The increase in the rate of banditry in Zamfara State has been traced to 2011 (Haidara, 2014 & Rufai, 2018). The reason for this is directly linked to the menace of politicians who recruited young men as political thugs and later abandoned them after they must have succeeded at the polls. Rufai (2018) argued that in the heat of the 2011 elections, politicians mobilized some of the youths of the state and armed them with dangerous weapons to enable them win elections. They also provided them with means transportation which was motorcycles to navigate the terrain of Zamfara state. After they won the elections they were abandoned.

The youths reacted by taking to criminality which manifested in banditry of which they terrorized the public and unsuspecting victims. The government on its part responded to the criminality of the bandits by offering them amnesty. Observers have termed such amnesty as a morale booster for crimes in the area (Haidara, 2014). The amnesty can best be described as an appeasement to the bandits who were recalcitrant in turning a new leaf. This is evident in the wave of attacks that characterized the state even after amnesty was granted to the bandits.

Another explanation for the upsurge in banditry activities in the North-West is the availability of minerals in the region. Zamfara state is known for its enormous endowment in gold. The unfortunate story on the continent of Africa over the years, is the painful fact that, mineral resources does not translate to prosperity and wealth. We have seen countless examples on the African continent, where endowed countries are riddled with crisis and strife as a result of the presence of minerals (Olanrewaju, 2020). The case of Zamfara State is not different from other parts of the country and Nigeria as a whole. The availability of gold has attracted illegal miners both local and foreigners. Illegal mining activity has contributed to the destabilisation of the region (Owasanoye, 2021). It is the popular belief of the generality of the people of the area that foreign miners supply weapons to the locals to engage their rivals thereby creating instability in the region. Helicopters have been sighted in some of the mining sites exchanging weapons for gold. Traditional rulers and politicians are equally not exempted in this vicious circle. They are also culprits in the crises. They are known to fuel crisis in the region so that their subjects could be displaced to pave way for mining activities (Rufai, 2021). In recent times, some traditional rulers have been suspended for the role they play in the crises that has engulfed the region (Premium Times, 2018). There was an instance in Zamfara State, where a bandit kingpin who was on the radar of the Nigeria Police was turbaned as the Sarkin Fulani by the Emir of Yandoto of Tsafe Local Government Area (Shibayan, 2022). This demonstrates the level involvement of the traditional rulers with the bandits.

The humiliation, exploitation and extortion the Fulani experienced from law enforcement agencies is also

another factor in the rise of banditry in the State. Some of them expressed their grievances with the state.

They were made to pay exorbitant taxes of which they hardly get anything in return in terms of social amenities. The roads are in bad shape, grazing routes are non-existent as they have taken over by urbanization. Being that they are mostly pastoralists their needs in terms extension services and veterinary services for their cattle was completely neglected by the government. To add to that they also suffered in the hands of criminals who often rustled their cattle. They felt they have no choice than to go into banditry (BBC, 2022).

Unfortunately, the activities of bandits has brought untold hardship to the generality of the people of the state. The bandits are infamous for their daring attacks on the public. Most of their attacks were launched in the interior villages because these villages are without security presence. They raided such vulnerable communities, abducting young men, women and children for the purpose of ransom. They were brutal in their attacks on villages, burning down houses and murdering people. They also attacked passengers on the highway, killing and raping some of them (Betts, 2018:23). Some of the passengers who got lucky were abducted for ransom. So many cases of such attacks occurred on a regular bases in the heydays of their operation.

## **THE ROLE OF TRADITIONAL RULERS IN THE RISE OF BANDITRY**

Traditional rulers have long played a significant role in traditional African societies. Before the advent of European imperialism on the continent they took firm decisions on issues pertaining governance and growth of the society. There were famous traditional rulers in the continent that left long lasting imprint on the continent in the likes of; Shaka of the Zulu Kingdom, Ama Pepple of the Bonny Houses the Prempeh of Ghana, the Oba, and emirs in the Nigeria area. (Haidara, 2014:12) These were prominent rulers who had jurisdiction over their kingdom and piloted the affairs of the state. The infiltration of external forces and the conquest of the continent eroded their powers. And therefore, made them stooges or appendages of colonial administration. The powers they wielded in the pre-colonial period were reduced drastically, they became ceremonial figure heads and at best the embodiment of the culture and tradition of their societies (Walter, 1973). In Zamfara, which is the focus of this paper, there are a number of traditional rulers who are referred to as emirs and village heads. They operate within the ambit of constitutional roles assigned to them. This explains why they come under the ministry of local government and chieftaincy affairs.

They are seen as royal fathers who are meant to give direction and guidance to their subjects. They are revered figures who have the power to influence and guide their communities. They are the custodians of the customs and traditions of the society. Despite, their waning influence due to the activities of British imperialism, they have continued to play enviable roles in the society. They settled disputes within their boundaries and they see to the maintenance of peace and security. The relationship they have built with their subjects overtime gives them an edge to identify people with criminal intent within their locality (Olawole, 2023). Armed with this knowledge however, in recent years, their involvement in gold mining activities in Zamfara State has raised concerns. Traditional rulers, motivated by economic gains, have been accused of colluding with illegal miners and turning a blind eye to the environmental degradation caused by their activities. This involvement has not only compromised their traditional role as custodians of their people's welfare but has also contributed to the rise of banditry in the region.

This is a pointer to the fact, that, they have derailed in their constitutional and traditional roles as custodians of societal morals and values. Their quest for insatiable wealth and vain glory is their greatest undoing. They have lost respect before their subjects who perceive them as being part of the larger problem confronting the society. According to Rufai (2018) they serve as shadow actors in the perpetration of different types and forms of crimes.

In an ideal situation, the traditional rulers are main agent of conflict resolution process especially between the farmers and herdsmen. This one of the prevalent conflict in the region, because of the age-long relationship between the two. The herdsmen sometimes invade farmlands of farmers destroying their crops which was a source of conflict between the two groups. In such cases the traditional institution had the mechanism for the peaceful resolution of such conflicts. As we noted earlier in the paper, traditional rulers are knowledgeable on issues in their jurisdiction. By the virtue of their position in the society they know the number and location of Fulani residing in their vicinity (Tahir and Ojo, 2021). In the same vein, they 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 engrossed with reported of farmers and herdsmen conflicts. Most often such conflicts are resolved amicably without much rancor. In recent times, traditional rulers have abdicated this responsibility and have become part of the problem. Some of the traditional rulers instigate and benefit from the conflict, while some even connived with bandits to perpetrate robbery. History has shown that as far back as 1891, some traditional rulers in Dansadau area one of the communities in Zamfara were accused of conniving with bandits in armed robbery (Rufai, 2021) This is a pointer to the fact that the trend in conniving with criminal is not new to the area, as there are evidence from colonial records that this existed as far back as 1891. The situation has remained unchanged in recent times, there are complaints from residents on the active role of traditional rulers in instigating rural banditry or being part of the problem. It is disheartening to note that, substantial parts of the first class Emirs in Zamfara State are neck deep in the politics of rural banditry (The Nation, 2018).

There are arrays of news on the media on the involvement of traditional rulers in banditry. Their involvement include recognition given to prominent bandits and covert support given to them to operate freely in their domain. For this reason, the state government had reason to suspend emirs allegedly involved in cattle rustling (Shuaibu, 2023). Cattle rustling has been one of the major triggers of conflict in Zamfara State. One of the dominant ethnic groups in Zamfara are the Fulani. The Fulani ethnic stock are widely known for their attachment to their cattle. It is their major source of livelihood. It becomes worrisome to them when their cattle is being rustled. To add pain to injury is the fact that traditional rulers who are supposed to guarantee their security are involved in this heinous crime of rustling their cattle. This has fueled the case of banditry in the region.

The bandits freely mingle with the traditional rulers. Sadly, the involvement of bandits and traditional ruler is no longer a hidden affair in Zamfara. During social activities that involves traditional rulers they are known to give their support in monetary times. This is as a result of the enormous wealth they control from the illicit money they make from perpetrating crime (Adedeji, 2021). They support wedding, installations of new emirs of District Heads. They are part of the chief sponsors of such occasions. In a rather bizarre twist, the traditional rulers because of the patronage they receive from the bandits, they have gone to the extent of bestowing traditional titles to renowned bandit leaders. According to one of the officials of the palace;

The title of Sarkin Fulani was conferred on Alero considering his present status as a 'peace-maker' within the emirate. The chieftaincy title was given to him in appreciation of the process reconciliation. The state government is aware of the development, we are terrorized, we cannot go to our farms; some of our people have evacuated from the town, and they ran away. How can we live in that situation? (Ifeanyi, 2022)

The above statement is a confirmation of the state of helplessness of the people of the emirate they find it difficult to go about their agricultural activities because of the activities of bandits. As part of the process to foster peace between them and the bandits, the traditional ruler in away danced to the tune of the bandits by conferring titles on bandit leaders (Bagu, 2017). To say that, the renowned bandit leader that was installed was a peacemaker, is being economical with the truth. Because the renowned bandit leader, Ado Aleru was well known for terrorizing the region. Innocent citizens have lost their lives in his hands as he is known to

be ruthless in executing perceived enemies. During the occasion, several bandit group leaders and lieutenants were present at the venue of the occasion on several motorbikes to celebrate with their leader. It can be argued that this gesture was aimed at pacifying the bandit leader so that the emirate will be free from future attacks. Another official from the emirate also noted that; “we did not have any reinforcement from outside or from government; these people called us for peace between us and them, what can we do? It is only to accept the peace, we cannot do otherwise.” Yandoton Daji was carved out from the Tsafe Emirate by the Zamfara State Government as one of the two new emirates. The emirate was created as a second-class emir. It comprises of Yandoton Daji, Keta, Kizara, Bawa Kwanga, Kwaren Ganuwa, Danjibga, and Kuncin Kalgo districts with headquarters at Birnin Yandoto under Tsafe Local Government Area of the State (Tom Jones *Useful Notorious Bandit Leader Bags Chieftaincy Title in Zamfara Channels Tv 2022*)

The close association between bandits and traditional rulers has generated suspicion in the society especially from farmers. Many of the bandits are from the Fulani ethnic stock, their close contact with the traditional rulers causes suspicion among the farmers who are mostly of the Hausa ethnic stock. They felt that, in an event of farmers-herdsmen conflict the traditional rulers would likely side with the Fulani. From information gathered from the field Rufai (2018) noted such allegations were confirmed by palace guard to be true. He also affirmed that bandits or their agents use to visit the Emir in the midnight probably to give him his own share of the loot.

The former Minister of Defence, Mansur Dan-Ali also weighed in on the level of culpability of traditional rulers in aiding bandits perpetuate criminal activities. He observed that, traditional rulers were involved in compromising military operations. He gave a stern warning that the armed forces would go after “any person or group of persons who choose to connive or sympathize with bandits to perpetuate crime against law abiding citizens” (Aluko, 2019). Unfortunately this threat was not backed by action as the problem of banditry continued to threaten the peace and stability of the state. Shinkafi (2023) a security expert also waded in on the issue of banditry in the state, he argued that, banditry had become a criminal enterprise in the state and it has become very difficult to put an end to it in the shortest period of time. He noted that;

The problem we are having now, more than 400 villages are under bandits in Zamfara State and the problem is we have weak border control. Like where I come from in Shinkafi Local Government, we share border with Niger Republic, Sokoto, and Katsina State, so it is very easy for bandits to commit crime in Zamfara and fly to Sokoto, Katsina or Niger. So it is a criminal enterprise a lot of people are into. Traditional rulers, security agents, drug dealers, doctors are involved, that is why we call it organized criminal enterprise (Akinwotu, 2022).

He analyzes the problem of banditry from a broader spectrum to include the role of other forces aside traditional rulers in aiding abating the crime. The involvement of other forces and the porous nature of Nigeria boundaries have made it difficult to bring an end to the problem of banditry in the state. The worsening situation of banditry in Zamfara State necessitated the administration of Governor Abdulaziz Yari to take drastic action against traditional rulers who were accused of complacency in the rise of banditry in the State. One of such drastic measures was the suspension of four traditional rulers over their alleged involvement with bandits terrorizing the state. According to the Commissioner of Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs Bello Dakande, those suspended were the district head of Gora in Talata-Marafa Local Government Area and Musa Bariki, the district head of Barikin Daji. Some village heads were also suspended to include; village heads of Gyado and Tungan Dutsi both in Bukkuyum Local Government Area of the State. A ministerial panel was constituted to investigate their level of involvement and they were to be charged to court if found wanting (Daily Post, 2018). After a thorough investigation, the panel submitted its report. Three of the suspended traditional rulers were indicted by the outcome of the report. The state government dethroned the three of them for their involvement in banditry (Ifeanyi, 2022).

Similarly, some of the traditional rulers knowing the gravity of their involvement in banditry decided to

abscond from the state. The state government declared the district head of Ruwan Jema in Bukkuyum local government area, Alhaji Mohammed Sani wanted over his involvement in banditry. According to the Commissioner of Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, Bello Dankande, the traditional ruler was implicated in the onslaught of innocent citizens by bandits in the state (Ifeanyi, 2022). According to investigation, the district head was among the traditional rulers who refused to heed to several warnings by the state government on traditional rulers not to mingle with the bandits. Also the village head of Gurbin Bore in Zurmi Local Government Area, Alhaji Bello Magaji was confirmed to have participated in the kidnap of seven family members of the state's Commissioner of Youth, Abdullahi Gurbin Bore. They were said to have collected 10 million naira ransom before releasing their victims after two weeks of captivity. He was removed from his position and was prosecuted along six other traditional rulers accused of the same offence. (Daily Post, 2018)

Rufai (2021) also posited that, some of the traditional rulers have their sons, relatives and close associates in banditry. This makes it difficult to curb the menace. For those who did not have their wards involved in banditry they it difficult to fight the menace because of the kind of influence the bandits wield. One of the traditional rulers who tried to condemn the bandits, the village head of Mallamawa was killed by the bandits for his open condemnation of rural banditry (Rufai, 2018:10). Another dimension to the involvement of traditional rulers in banditry is the presence of gold in Zamfara State Some of the attacks carried-out by the bandits on miners also continue to raise a lot of concern. It is a known fact that, the rate of illicit mining in Zamfara fuels insecurity in the area as there are cut-throat competition amongst the miners (Oluwole, 2023). What makes it more worrisome is the involvement of external forces in the illicit mining. The illicit miners over the years face the challenge of insecurity. They find it difficult to carry out their activities smoothly as a result of the attacks coming from the bandits. Some of the miners are of the opinion that, these attacks wer orchestrated by traditional rulers who were involved in illegal mining in the State. According to Rufai (2018) it is difficult to establish this claim but one fact is certain that, the Emirs and Districts Heads located at gold endowed areas of Dansadu, Maradun and Anka are extremely rich due to their involvement in mining activities. Scholars have also argued that the availability of gold has intensified the rate of conflict in the state as there is intense competition to exploit the mineral deposit of the area. (Rufai, 2018) The tussle is between different classes of people; the highly placed in the society, foreigners and the masses who are at the receiving end of the crisis.

It is important to note that the state government has also being fingered in the rise of banditry in the state. It is the primary responsibility of the state to guarantee the security of lives and property in the state. Unfortunately, they have not only failed woefully in that responsibility but they have also played a role in the worsening banditry problem in the state. Earlier on we explained the role of the state in the emergence of banditry through their deep romance with thugs whom they used to rig elections and later dumped them. The lackadaisical attitude of the state government in nipping the problem in the bud also demonstrate the level of their culpability in the problem. They have been accused of underfunding security agencies and paying leap service to the menace of bandits. In 2016, Senator Saidu Muhammad Dansadau, criticized the attitude of the state government in handling the situation at hand. As a result of that, he petitioned the state government to the federal government (Bagu, 2017). Some analysts have argued that, the attitude of the state government may not be unconnected to its effort in diverting the public's attention from issues of governance in the state.

## **GOLD MINING: A DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD**

Zamfara State is rich in mineral resources, particularly gold. The discovery of gold deposits in the early 2000s sparked a gold rush, with thousands of people flocking to the area in search of wealth. Unfortunately, this boom in gold mining has had severe social, economic, and environmental consequences. Illegal gold mining operations have proliferated, often led by criminal syndicates. These operations are often unregulated, leading to unsafe working conditions and the exploitation of vulnerable individuals, including

women and children. Moreover, the extraction process involves the use of hazardous chemicals, such as mercury, which poses significant health risks to miners and nearby communities (Adedeji, 2021). However, the unregulated and informal nature of gold mining has fueled a host of problems. The proliferation of gold mining has had severe consequences for the state. Land degradation, deforestation, and water pollution have become rampant. Moreover, the influx of people seeking their fortune has led to a surge in population, putting pressure on already limited resources such as healthcare, education, and infrastructure. Additionally, the unregulated gold trade provides a significant revenue stream for bandits. These criminals extort money from miners and control the flow of gold, further exacerbating the cycle of violence and lawlessness in the region.

The traditional rulers, have looked the other way in the illicit gold mining business in their communities despite the danger it poses. They have been accused of hobnobbing with the illicit miners in exploiting their communities. Some of them have turned multi-millionaires overnight as a result of their involvement in illicit gold mining business. From the foregoing, it is crystal clear that the presence of gold in Zamfara state present a case of a double-edge sword in the area. On the positive side it could be a major source of earnings for the state if properly harnessed and on the flip side, it poses serious threat to the society especially in the areas of increase in crime and the rise of banditry in the state. The convergence of traditional rulers, gold mining, and banditry in Zamfara State has a far-reaching implication for the state and the nation as a whole. It is incumbent on the federal government to intervene the security problems in the state through regulation and enforcement of laws. This include cracking down on criminals syndicates imposing stricter penalties for illegal mining, and ensuring the proper management of mining licenses. There is also a need for increased investment in alternative livelihoods for the communities affected by the rise of banditry (Tahir, 2021). By providing viable economic opportunities and empowering the local population, the government can reduce the appeal of engaging in criminal activities as a means of survival. It is also important doe the government to resort to community engagement and awareness campaigns to educate the people on the negative impact of illegal mining and banditry. On a whole traditional rulers have a crucial role to play in this regard, as they can use their influence to mobilize their communities against these destructive practices.

## CONCLUSION

The paper has examined the links that exist between traditional rulers, gold mining and rise of banditry in the state. From the findings in the paper, it is obvious that, the rise of banditry in the state is not unconnected with the presence of gold in the state which has attracted criminal elements to the state for the purpose of exploiting the minerals of the state. The traditional rulers on the other hand have looked the other way. Instead of being a solution to the problem they have also become a part of the problem by giving cover to bandits and hobnobbing with them. The paper recommends that, the government needs to engage the carrot and stick approach in solving the problem of illicit mining and banditry in the area. This involves the deployment of community dialogue, negotiations and sensitization of the community and also the use of force as last resort when other means fail.

## REFERENCES

1. Adedeji, A. (2021). The Growing Threat of Armed Banditry in North-West Nigeria. The Growing Threat of Armed Banditry in North-West Nigeria – Strife (strifeblog.org) Accessed 14 June 2023
2. Akinwotu, E. (2020) “Waves of bandit massacres rupture rural life in northwest Nigeria”, The Guardian. <https://theguardian.com/world/2020/jun/03/waves-of-bandit-massacres- Rupture rural-life-in-north-west-nigeria> Accessed 10 March 2023
3. Altine Maiharaji (2023) Northern farmers turn beggars as bandits sustain occupation of farms Punch newspaper
4. Adamu Usman (2018). “Banditry: Zamfara traditional ruler on the run” Daily Post Newspaper

5. Bagu, C. & Smith, K. (2017). Past is prologue: Criminality and reprisal attacks in Nigeria's Middle Belt. Washington, DC: Search for Common Ground.
6. Campbell, J. (2020) "Not all Violent Problems Require Violent Solutions: Banditry in Nigeria's North-West. Retrieved from [cfr.org/blog/not-all-violent-problems-require-violent-Solutions-banditry-nigerias-north-west](http://cfr.org/blog/not-all-violent-problems-require-violent-Solutions-banditry-nigerias-north-west),
7. Daily Post (2018). Zamfara suspends four traditional rulers over banditry allegations
8. Haidara M. (2014). 'Bad Leadership and its Impacts on Security Situation in Zamfara, Press Release by Zamfara State, Chapter of Northern Youths Assembly.
9. Ifeanyi Nwannah, (2022). Banditry: Zamfara government officially dethrones 3 traditional leaders, Daily Post Newspaper.
10. Inuwa Wada (2018). "Zamfara Suspends Four Traditional Rulers for Alleged Links to Bandits," Premium Times Newspapers.
11. Tahir Adam Tahir & Usman Ojo Bernard (2021). Curbing Armed Banditry in Nigeria: A Panacea for Good Governanc, Zamfara Journal of Politic and Development Vol. 2. No. 2
12. Maishanu A.A. (2022). "Police Arrest Kaduna Councilor for Allegedly Smuggling Assault Rifle," Premium Times.
13. Oluwole Ojewale and Omolara Balohu (2023). Banditry's impacts on women and children in Nigeria needs a policy response <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/africaatlse.com>
14. Owasanoye, B. (2021) "How Illegal Mining Fuels Violent Crimes in Zamfara" Premium Times, November, 3, 2021
15. Rufai, M. A. (2021). "I am a Bandit,": A Decade of Research on Armed Banditry in Zamfara State" A Paper Presented at Usman Danfodio, University, Sokoto.
16. Rufai M. A. (2018). 'Vigilante Groups and Rural Banditry in Zamfara State: Excesses and Contradictions', International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention (IJHSSI) ISSN (Online): 2319 – 7722, ISSN (Print): 2319 – 7714
17. Rufai M. A. (2018). "Shadow Actors behind Rural Banditry in Zamfara State, Degel Journal.
18. Smith, Benjamin (2023). Waldner, David "Rethinking the Resource Curse" (<https://www.cambridge.org/core/elements/rethinking-the-resource-curse/98A68DF4E64A08EE1BCCA3099A49118F>). Cambridge University Press.
19. Wale Odunsi (2021) "Jets transport arms to bandits, pick gold illegally – Presidency" Daily Post Newspaper
20. What can be done to fight rural banditry in northern Nigeria ([theconversation.com](http://theconversation.com)) Accessed 24 September, 2023 Shibayan, D. (2022). Police: Bandit Kingpin Given Chieftancy Title in Zamfara on Wanted List," The Cable News.