

Bandits kill two, abduct several at Katsina wedding as govt clarifies swap deal

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Bandits: Photo Leadership News

Gunmen have reportedly attacked a wedding convoy at Unguwar Nagunda Community in Kankara Local Council of Katsina State, killing no fewer than two people in the process. Several others, including the bride, were injured.

During the attack, which occurred on Sunday night, an unspecified number of guests were said to have also been abducted. A security source explained yesterday that residents reported heavy gunfire and widespread panic upon the arrival of the bandits.

“As of this morning (yesterday), families are still trying to confirm how many people were abducted,” he said. Contacted for comments, the **Katsina State Police** Command’s Public Relations Officer, DSP Abubakar Sadiq, was not available as phone calls and text messages put through to him were not responded to at press time.

The assault comes at a time when the state government was making plans to release 70 detained suspected bandits as part of measures to consolidate what it described as the “existing peace” deal between banditry-affected communities and repentant bandits in the state.

The government said the deal had led to the release of at least 1,000 persons held captive by hoodlums in parts of the

state.

ON his part, the Commissioner for Information, Salisu Bala, has shed more light as to why the state government agreed to release dozens of detained suspected bandits, saying the action was a swap deal that followed a peace agreement with repentant bandits.

Recall that an official letter had indicated that the state government had given the nod to the courts for the release of 70 suspected bandits who were in custody.

The Commissioner for Internal Security and Home Affairs, Nasir Muazu, had also, in an interview, said the current administration agreed to their release as part of an agreement reached during a peace deal between repentant bandits and security-prone communities.

The development had sparked reactions from critics, some of whom had raised concerns over the release of bandits who had killed, maimed, raped, and plundered hapless residents and communities over the years.

But Salisu said some traditional leaders approached the government to facilitate the release of the incarcerated bandits.

He argued that the peace deal had yielded positive results, with normal activities like farming having resumed full-time in the vulnerable council areas.

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The commissioners urged support for the state government in its effort to promote peace, and cautioned against politicising the swap deal, which, he said, was normal in war situations.