

Bandits injure Marafa, kill cleric, worshippers in Zamfara

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 Armed Bandits

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[Bandits](#) at the weekend shot and injured a chieftain of the [All Progressives Congress \(APC\)](#), [Abdullahi Marafa](#), in Zamfara State.

The prominent cleric and former Commissioner for Religious Affairs narrowly escaped death when the gunmen opened fire on his vehicle.

The incident occurred while he was travelling from Talata Mafara Local Council for an APC stakeholders' meeting in Gusau, the state capital.

Security analyst, Bakatsine, wrote on X that the politician sustained a [gunshot](#) wound in the leg.

According to the report, the bullet has been surgically removed, and Marafa is recuperating at the Usman Danfodio University expert also shared images of the victim and his vehicle, which was riddled with bullet holes, raising concerns over the escalating bandit attacks on major highways in the state.

Spokesperson for the [Zamfara State Police Command](#), Abubakar Yazeed, said the incident was yet to be formally reported to the force.

However, an Imam and some worshippers were not as lucky, as they were killed by bandits, while several women and young girls were abducted in a separate attack in Zamfara State.

It was gathered that the incident occurred on Saturday night at Sabuwar Tunga village in Kaura Namoda Local Government Area, where the assailants stormed a mosque, some houses and carried out the attacks.

Sources said the attackers, in a brazen assault, targeted worshippers after prayers, killing the cleric and another victim before whisking away a number of women from the community.

he bandits also attacked Gommanan village and kidnapped more women in Gabake ward under the Kaura Namoda local council.

Security operatives have since been mobilised to track the perpetrators and rescue the abducted victims, with intensified operations ongoing across the affected area.

MEANWHILE, [former Vice President Atiku Abubakar](#) has cautioned against moves to suspend political campaigns in parts of Northern Nigeria, warning that such a step could undermine constitutional rights and deepen fears of disenfranchisement amid worsening insecurity.

Atiku's reaction followed reports that the Senate may be weighing suspending political activities in eight states grappling with escalating violence, including Borno, Benue and Plateau.

In a statement issued yesterday by his Senior Special Assistant on Public Communication, Phrank Shaibu, the erstwhile presidential candidate described the development as deeply troubling, noting that while insecurity remains a grave national challenge, it must not be used to justify restrictions on democratic participation.

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He said: “Let it be clearly stated that the right to vote and participate in the electoral process is fundamental and cannot be abridged under any guise.

“Any attempt — whether deliberate or disguised — to suppress political activities in parts of [Northern Nigeria](#) raises legitimate concerns about disenfranchisement.”

Atiku recalled earlier intelligence suggesting possible efforts to weaken electoral participation in key northern states, warning that recent developments appear to reinforce such concerns.

“This is not merely about campaigns; it is about representation, inclusion, and the integrity of our democratic process. You cannot cure insecurity by silencing people’s voices.”

Democracy must not become a casualty of government failure,” he added.

The former vice president stressed that citizens in the North, like their counterparts across the country, deserve both security and full democratic participation, insisting that neither should come at the expense of the other.

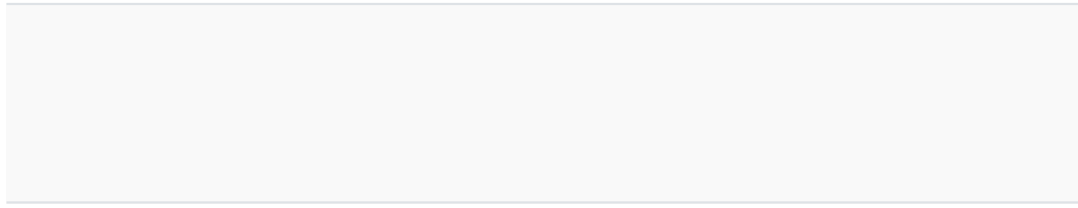
He added that it remains the government’s responsibility to guarantee security, just as citizens must be allowed to freely exercise their civic rights without fear or intimidation.

“At a time when citizens are already battling hardship and insecurity, the least the government can do is to guarantee their right to be heard, not to restrict it. Any policy that creates the impression of targeted exclusion will only deepen distrust and national division,” Atiku warned.

He further called on the [Independent National Electoral Commission \(INEC\)](#), [security agencies](#) and the administration of [President Bola Tinubu](#) to clarify their positions and reassure Nigerians that no part of the country would be denied its constitutional rights.

The debate on suspending political activities comes amid renewed anxiety within the National Assembly over the deteriorating security situation, particularly in the North-East and parts of the North-West and North-Central.

Last week, the senator representing Bauchi Central, [Abdul Ningi](#), urged the Senate to consider far-reaching emergency measures, including halting political activities in frontline states most affected by insurgency and banditry.



Raising a point of order during plenary, Ningi warned that the worsening violence demands urgent and decisive action beyond routine deliberations.

His proposal reflects mounting concern over a resurgence of attacks by Boko Haram insurgents, including coordinated assaults on military formations and renewed threats against rescue operations for abducted civilians.