

16 feared dead as suspected bandits attack Katsina village



Kiliya, a community in Dutsinma Local Government Area, **Katsina State** is engulfed in fear and grief following a deadly attack by suspected bandits.

No fewer than 16 people are feared dead from the attack while several others missing.

The tragic incident reportedly occurred on Friday afternoon, shortly after residents had concluded Juma'at prayers and were gathered in celebration of the Eid-el-Kabir festivities.

Armed assailants were said to have stormed the community and shot indiscriminately.

Eyewitnesses recalled scenes of horror as the attackers, initially arriving on motorcycles, turned a peaceful afternoon into a tragedy.

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A resident, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said he was among the villagers who were relaxing after prayers when two armed bandits rode into the area, triggering panic among residents.

“People started running when they saw them, but the gunmen ordered everyone to stop.

“Moments later, they went towards a mechanic’s house and suddenly began shooting at residents and passersby,” he said.

The witness also said that he narrowly escaped death after taking refuge inside a nearby house.

“After the Friday prayers, we were sitting together when I called a boy selling local drinks and bought a bowl from him.

“Suddenly, the bandits arrived. The boy and I ran into a house and hid.

“While we were inside, we heard screams and gunshots everywhere.

“When the shooting eventually stopped and we came out, we found about 16 lifeless bodies, including some of my uncles and cousins,” he lamented.

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The attack has triggered a mass displacement of residents, with more than 400 villagers reportedly fleeing to neighbouring Bagagadi and Radda villages in search of safety.

Several others remain unaccounted for, raising fears that the death toll could rise.

Residents said some people might have been killed while working on their farms, as several bodies were reportedly discovered in farmlands surrounding the village.

Another eyewitness disclosed that the initial attackers were later reinforced with additional gunmen who arrived shortly after the first shots were fired, intensifying the assault.

Sources within the area suggested that the attack might have been a reprisal by bandits following the reported killing of two suspected members of a notorious criminal gang by local vigilantes or villagers days earlier.

“From all indications, this appears to be a revenge attack. Two bandits were reportedly killed recently, and they were believed to be members of a notorious gang.

“That might have triggered this brutal retaliation against the village,” a source revealed.

As of the time of filing this report, security authorities had yet to issue an official statement on the incident.

When contacted, the spokesman of the Katsina State Police Command, DSP Abubakar Sadiq, said the report had not yet reached the Command.

He, however, said the police would provide updates once details of the incident were formally received.

Earlier on Thursday, the Katsina State Government had reassured residents that it remains fully committed to restoring lasting peace and improving the welfare of citizens across the state.

Deputy Governor Faruk Jobe, who gave the assurance during the 2026 Eid-el-Adha Durbar Festival, popularly known as Hawan Sarki, held at the historic Katsina Old Government House as part of the second day of Sallah celebrations, acknowledged the security challenges facing parts of the state but expressed confidence that ongoing efforts by the government and security agencies were already yielding positive results.

“Our government will not relent until every community sleeps with two eyes closed,” the deputy governor said.