

Bandits killing us despite peace deals, northern villagers cry out

5th October 2025



Illustration image: Gunmen

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Some communities in Nigeria's North-West have continued to suffer at the hands of bandit leaders, who previously agreed to peace deals with community leaders and state authorities.

While Katsina State recently brokered another round of peace talks with known bandit leaders, neighbouring Zamfara State was thrown into mourning following an attack that led to the abduction of at least 40 worshippers and the displacement of other residents.

Sunday PUNCH gathered that the assailants were members of the same armed groups, who had earlier taken part in peace negotiations in the state.

It was reported that Ado Allero, a bandit leader who was at the forefront of peace talks in the North-West, slaughtered a traditional ruler, the Hakimi of Dogon Dawa, in Keta village, Tsafe Local Government Area, Zamfara State.

The same group was reportedly responsible for the abduction of 40 worshippers from a mosque in the local government area.

Earlier, they were also said to have kidnapped 12 individuals in Godai village, located in the Bukkuyum area of the state.

These incidents took place after community leaders and some armed groups in neighbouring Katsina State were engaging in a peace agreement.

‘Why killings won’t end’

Speaking in a viral video seen by Sunday PUNCH during a peace deal discussion in Katsina State, an unidentified bandit leader gave ethnic profiling as one of the reasons they operate.

The bandit kingpin, who can be identified as a Fulani man, warned that unless the negative stereotypes against his ethnic group came to an end, the cycle of killings would continue.

He said, “The problem that has gathered us here today is the issue of killings, stealing, and many other things that we all know. Everywhere in Nigeria, people are talking about banditry. That is the real and current issue.