

Four gunmen killed, 13 residents abducted in Kogi community attack

December 16, 2025 1:36 am



Kogi gov, Ododo. Photo: File

By Uthman Salami

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No fewer than four suspected bandits were killed following an attack on the Ayetoro Kiri community in the Kabba/Bunu Local Government Area of Kogi State during a fierce gun battle on Sunday evening.

The state government confirmed in a statement on Monday that about 13 residents were abducted in the attack.

The Commissioner for Information and Communications, Kingsley Fanwo, said during a press conference that the attack occurred in Ayetoro Kiri, a rural farming community.

He explained that the sustained onslaught by bandits in neighbouring Niger and Kwara States had pushed criminal elements into Kogi, noting that the state government had already established a coordinated security architecture to counter such threats, although the affected area still requires additional reinforcement.

According to Fanwo, local hunters in the community courageously resisted the attack, engaging the bandits in a fierce exchange of gunfire that led to the neutralisation of four suspects, while several others escaped with gunshot wounds.

He disclosed that 13 persons were kidnapped during the incident but assured that hunters and other security operatives are currently tracking the fleeing bandits within the forest, with ongoing efforts aimed at rescuing the abducted victims.

“We are quite hopeful that the kidnapped persons will be rescued,” Fanwo said.

The Commissioner confirmed that troops of the 12 Brigade of the Nigerian Army and personnel of the Kogi State Police Command have been deployed to the community, adding that the state would mount a strong joint security force in the area to safeguard lives and property.

He further revealed that the Department of State Services is actively supporting the operation through intelligence gathering and processing.

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Fanwo also appealed for air support from the Nigerian Air Force to complement ongoing ground operations and strengthen the security response.

“The Governor of the State, His Excellency Alh Ahmed Usman Ododo, is engaging the service chiefs with the aim of ensuring an air raid of the forest by the Air Force to support the ground duel of the Army, Police, and local hunters,” he said.

Commending the bravery and patriotism of the local hunters for rising to the occasion, the Commissioner reassured residents that the government remains firmly in control of the situation.

He stressed that Governor Ododo remains resolutely committed to the protection of lives and property across Kogi State, assuring Kogites that the government is steadily winning the battle against criminal elements.

“Their movement has been restricted by our security network. What they are doing now is attacking soft targets like churches. We have come up with measures to tighten security around the state.

“We are grateful for the cooperation of security agencies and our local hunters. We are winning the battle already,” he assured.

Recall that less than two weeks ago, four persons lost their lives when suspected bandits launched a deadly attack on Irunda Ile in Yagba East Local Government Area.

The State Security Adviser, Commander Jerry Omodara (retd), confirmed that the bandits invaded the community in the early hours of Wednesday and killed two vigilantes who confronted them.