

Bandits kill Katsina DPO, three attackers neutralised

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FILE: A Nigerian policeman

Esha Aliku

The Divisional Police Officer of Rimi local government area of Katsina State, CSP Muhammad Kabir, was killed on Friday while leading an operation against suspected cattle rustlers, the state government said.

The Katsina State Ministry of Internal Security and Home Affairs confirmed that three rustlers were neutralised during a joint operation involving security operatives and community members.

In a statement on Friday, the State Commissioner of the Ministry, Nasir Mu'azu, said, "The Ministry expresses deep sorrow over the death of the Divisional Police Officer of Rimi, CSP Muhammad Sani Kabir, who was killed in the line of duty while leading the operation.

"According to credible sources in Rimi LGA, late-night reports were received from community leaders including the ward councillor, APC members, the Village Head of Karare, and the District Head of Rimi about suspected rustlers in Magaji town, under Maje-Gobir Ward. Upon verification, the DPO immediately mobilised security operatives to the area.

"The suspects reportedly invaded Magajen Gobir, prompting residents to organise and confront them. The ensuing confrontation lasted into the early hours of the morning, coinciding with Subh (dawn) prayers, during which most of the stolen cattle were recovered."

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During subsequent clashes in neighbouring areas, two men and several young girls were reportedly shot, though many stolen animals were retrieved thanks to the combined efforts of residents and security forces.

“Later, security operatives, supported by local vigilantes, engaged the rustlers again. The DPO personally led the operation to the suspects’ location. During the gun battle, his rifle reportedly malfunctioned, and he was fatally shot by one of the rustlers, identified as their leader, Maigemu,” he added.

Three security personnel injured during the operation are receiving treatment at Katsina Teaching Hospital, while the late officer’s remains were transferred to his family in Zaria, Kaduna State, for burial.

The ministry praised the courage of security personnel and community members, reaffirming Governor Dikko Umaru Radda’s commitment to ridding the state of criminals and ensuring residents’ safety.

“The Ministry mourns the loss of CSP Muhammad Sani Kabir and prays for Almighty Allah to grant him Aljannatul Firdausi, noting that his sacrifice in the line of duty will not be forgotten,” he said.