

# Bandits killed 20 soldiers, others in Friday attack – Plateau group

March 15, 2026 1:05 am



File photo: Terrorists

By James Abraham

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**The** Kanam Development Association of Plateau State has raised the alarm over the killing of no fewer than 20 security personnel, including local vigilantes, by bandits.

According to the group, the security agents, who were part of a patrol team, were ambushed in the Garga area of Kanam Local Government Area on Friday.

Our correspondent gathered that the incident occurred around 4 p.m. when a combined team of military personnel and vigilantes, travelling in two vehicles on routine patrol across Garga, Kyaram, Gyambau, and neighbouring communities, came under heavy fire by bandits near Wanka.

The group, in a statement announcing the attack on Saturday, said about 12 security personnel, including two senior military officers, lost their lives in the gun battle, while eight vigilante members who joined forces to defend their communities also paid the supreme price.

Sunday PUNCH gathered that while some bandits were reportedly killed during the exchange, the attackers later stormed Kyaram Community, looting properties worth millions of naira and rustling a large number of cattle from residents.

The Kanam group described the attack as part of a prolonged wave of insecurity that has plagued the border communities linking Plateau with Taraba State and Bauchi State for over three to four years.

The association highlighted recurring incidents of banditry, cattle rustling, kidnappings, and property destruction, despite repeated appeals to authorities.

In the statement jointly signed by its Chairman and Secretary, Garba Aliyu and Shehu Kanam, the group demanded urgent intervention from government at all levels.

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It also called for the immediate deployment of additional military and security forces to Garga, Kyaram, Gyambau, Wanka, and surrounding areas, as well as the establishment of permanent security outposts in these border communities.

“The Kanam Development Association (KADA) expresses deep sorrow, outrage, and grave concern over the tragic bandit attack that occurred yesterday at about 2:00 p.m. in Wanka and surrounding communities in the Garga area of Kanam Local Government Area of Plateau State.

“Confirmed reports available to our association as of this morning indicate that security personnel on routine patrol across the communities of Garga, Kyaram, Gyambau, and other neighbouring settlements were ambushed on their way to Wanka by a large number of heavily armed bandits numbering in the hundreds. The patrol team consisted of military personnel and local vigilantes operating in two vehicles.

“In the unfortunate exchange of gunfire that followed the ambush, our nation lost brave defenders who paid the ultimate price in the line of duty. About 12 security personnel, including two senior military officers, were killed.

“Additionally, eight vigilante members who courageously joined efforts to protect their communities also lost their lives. While reports indicate that some of the bandits were neutralized during the encounter, the loss suffered by our security forces and community defenders is deeply painful and unacceptable.”

Spokesman for the Joint Military Taskforce in Plateau State, Capt Chinonso Oteh, told our correspondent that a statement would soon be issued on the incident.

“I’m in Wase right now. I will soon issue a statement on the matter,” he said.

**| James Abraham**