

How bandits kidnapped 25 Kebbi schoolgirls



By Victor Ahiuma-Young, Haruna Aliyu & Abel Daniel

Bandits in the early hours of yesterday kidnapped 25 students of Government Girls Comprehensive Senior Secondary School, GGCSS, Maga, Kebbi State, killing the principal in the process.

According to sources, the attackers killed the school's Vice Principal, Malam Hassan Makuku, before abducting several schoolgirls.

Witnesses said the bandits operated without resistance and caused widespread panic, throwing the entire area into deep fear and mourning.

Makuku, it was learned, was reportedly shot while attempting to protect the students during the invasion.

Maga, a community located in Danko/Wasagu Local Government Area of the state, has come under a series of attacks recently.

A resident of Maga, Aliyu Yakubu, said the bandits invaded the school around 5 am yesterday without any resistance.

He said the school vice principal, Makuku, was shot while trying to protect the students during the attack.

"He was shot as he tried to protect his students from being taken by the bandits. It's a great loss for the community and the school," he said.

Another resident, Sulaiman Abdullahi, said the bandits killed the vice principal of the school, adding that so many yet-to-be identified dead bodies were seen in the school premises

"They came in large numbers at night, began shooting sporadically, before they got access to the school," he said.

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He added that air force jets hovered over the sky by 8 am after the attack, while the area was cordoned off by heavily armed security personnel.

Community members have been offering prayers for his soul, asking Allah to grant him mercy, a peaceful resting place, and to comfort his family and loved ones over the painful and unjust loss.

Police confirm Kebbi school invasion

Confirming the attack, the Public Relations Officer of the state police command, CSP Nafiu Abubakar, said the attackers scaled the school's fence to carry out the attack.

According to him, the bandits, who were armed with sophisticated weapons, shot sporadically before whisking away 25 students.

He said: "The police tactical units deployed in the school engaged them into a gun duel but the suspected bandits had already abducted them in their hostel."

Concerned parents and residents, Vanguard gathered, are awaiting official updates on the fate of the abducted girls.

Abduction barbaric, condemnable — Kebbi govt

Reacting to the incident, Kebbi State government described the abduction of the schoolgirls as condemnable and barbaric.

Ahmed Idris, the Chief Press Secretary to Governor Nasir Idris, said: "Kebbi State government is shocked to receive the news of the abduction of 25 students from Government Girls Comprehensive Senior Secondary School, GGCSS, Maga.

"While we strongly condemn this devilish act by bandits, the government wishes to express its sympathy to the victims' parents, relatives, friends, and the school community.

"We urge the good people of Kebbi State to remain calm, as the government and security agencies are doing everything possible to ensure the safe return of the abducted students. We also call on residents to unite and support the government in its resolve to stamp out banditry from the state."

He added that Governor Idris, who visited the scene of the incident, described the attack as unfortunate and barbaric.

The governor was accompanied by speaker of the Kebbi State House of Assembly and the Emir of Zuru.

The Deputy Governor, Senator Abubakar Umar, had earlier visited Maga for an on-the-spot assessment, ahead of the governor's arrival.

Tinubu orders rescue of 25 abducted schoolgirls

Also reacting yesterday, President Bola Tinubu directed security agencies to immediately rescue the 25 female students abducted from Government Girls Secondary School, Maga, in the Danko-Wasagu area of Kebbi State.

In a statement, the Minister of Information and National Orientation, Mohammed Idris, said President Tinubu strongly condemned the attack and reaffirmed his administration's commitment to safeguarding all Nigerians, especially

schoolchildren.

“President Bola Ahmed Tinubu has reiterated that protecting every Nigerian, especially schoolchildren, remains a solemn responsibility of the state.

“The government condemns the reprehensible attack on innocent students and the killing of school officials who were carrying out their noble duty,” Idris said.

He added that the President has issued “clear directives” to security and intelligence agencies to locate and safely recover the abducted students, with a firm charge that the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

“The Federal Government will not relent until this objective is achieved,” he noted.

The minister assured Nigerians that internal security remained a top priority for the Tinubu administration which, according to him, is “recalibrating the nation’s military, policing, and intelligence capabilities” to prevent and swiftly respond to such attacks.

He said Nigeria was also deepening security cooperation through ECOWAS, the African Union, and the Multinational Joint Task Force, MNJTF, to strengthen border security and dismantle terrorist and criminal networks.

“We urge the public to remain calm and confident as security forces work around the clock to resolve this matter,” the minister added.

Atiku condemns attack, advises FG to strengthen security architecture

In his reaction, former Vice President Atiku Abubakar, condemned the deadly attack on the school, calling on the federal government to urgently overhaul the nation’s security architecture.

In a statement, Atiku said he was “devastated” by the killing of the school’s vice-principal and the abduction of several students, describing the incident as another tragic reminder of Nigeria’s deepening insecurity.

“This is yet another reminder of the worsening insecurity in our nation,” he said.

Atiku also denounced the killing of an APC chieftain, Umar Moriki, as well as the mass abductions in Tsafe Local Government Area of Zamfara State, where entire families, including women and children, were reportedly taken by bandits.

“These acts of barbarity have no place in a civilised society,” Atiku stated.

He noted that similar violent attacks were occurring across Plateau, Benue and other states, leaving communities in fear and disarray.

Atiku cited the situation in Shanono LGA of Kano State where residents were fleeing their homes, as proof that the country’s security crisis had reached “intolerable levels.”

“Nigeria cannot continue on this path,” he warned.

The former vice president urged the federal government to urgently review and strengthen its security framework, deploy more personnel to vulnerable areas, and intensify intelligence-driven operations, saying “our citizens deserve protection, dignity, and peace, nothing less.”

Atiku stressed that safeguarding lives must remain the top priority of government, noting that no nation could achieve meaningful progress while citizens live under constant threat of violence.

Armed men abduct ex-NSUBEB’s father as Nasarawa communities thrown into panic again

In a related development, heavily armed men, suspected to be bandits, have abducted a community leader, Alhaji Musa Usman, father of the immediate former chairman of Nasarawa State Universal Basic Education Board, NSUBEB, Mohammed Musa Dan-Azumi.

Alhaji Dan-Azumi was reportedly abducted in his residence at Daddere in Obi Local Government Area after sporadic gunshots by the bandits.

According to sources, the victim was whisked away by his abductors at about 8:00pm on Sunday and the community was subsequently thrown into panic.

A resident, who preferred anonymity, told Vanguard that the fierce-looking bandits were ready to waste anyone who crossed their way during the operation.

Some Nasarawa communities have, in the past one week, witnessed another wave of terror by bandits, which claimed over seven lives and abduction of several persons.

“The style of operation of these gunmen is so frightening and has thrown many rural dwellers into serious panic, as security operatives have continued to battle the resurgence of attack in the state.

A farmer in one of the communities, who would not want his name in print, lamented that the unrestrained and coordinated attacks in the state in recent time was scary, saying many farmers could no longer go to their farms freely to harvest their crops already perishing.

He called on government and security agents to speed up measures to end the resurgence of terrorist activities in the state.