

As Kaduna seeks end to killings, kidnappings

By Andrew Agbese & Mohammed Yaba, Kaduna | Published Date Feb 8, 2020 4:48 AM

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Kidnappers paraded by policemen in Kaduna (Archived)

There seem to be hope that the worrisome renewed attacks, killings, and kidnappings in Kaduna State would be curtailed or better still contained with the killing of about 250 terrorists/bandits in Kudaru forest by the police on Wednesday.

Police Public Relations Officer, Frank Mba, who confirmed the killings in a press statement on Wednesday, said the operation was carried out

by a combined team of Operation Puff Adder comprising the Police Mobile Force, Counter Terrorism Unit, Special Forces, Intelligence Response Team, Special Tactical Squad, and Special Anti-Robbery Squad.

“Unfortunately, during the operation, a Police Bell helicopter, which provided aerial and intelligence cover for the ground troops came under attack from the bandits using sophisticated anti-aircraft rifles and General-Purpose Machine Gun (GPMG),” Mba said.

Apparently disturbed by the spate of killings and other related crimes across the state, Governor Nasiru Ahmad El-Rufai on Tuesday also sought for closer ties with traditional rulers and security agencies to deal with the security challenges in the state.

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Although the meeting was held behind closed doors, Commissioner for home affairs and internal security, Samuel Aruwan, told journalists that several resolutions were reached between the governor and traditional rulers.

In the last three months, Kaduna State has repeatedly been in the news for series of killings, kidnappings, and violent attacks of innocent citizens by armed men and bandits.

At least 11 persons were shot and killed while no less than 20 were abducted in five major cases of banditry in Kaduna in January alone.

The Kaduna Police Command confirmed the killing of six and abduction of 20 persons in one of the major attacks.

The figures seemed to have confirmed that Kaduna State experienced one of its worst times in terms of security in January.

Our correspondents learnt that people are moving out of certain places in the metropolis for fear of being attacked.

A resident of Juji, one of the settlements in the metropolis, told Daily Trust that residents now abandon their houses to rent houses in more secured parts of the town.

“My landlord has abandoned the house and has moved to a rented apartment in Barnawa because of the security situation in the area,” he stated.

The police command has however assured residents that it is on top of the security situation and has been doing much to check the criminal activities.

The state’s police PPRO, in a recent statement said, “The Command wishes to reiterate its assurance to the good people of Kaduna State of continued battle against criminals and criminality with a view to reducing crime to the barest minimum. The Commissioner of Police,

therefore, enjoins the general public to continue to support the Command on this noble course.”

But many have expressed concern over the issue.

Last year, residents of Lariya community in Kaduna Metropolis took to the streets to protest the spate of kidnaps in their community.

The Southern Kaduna Peoples Union (SOKAPU) on January 11 also issued a statement calling the attention of the public to the security challenges in the state.

It said communities in the southern part of the state have been sacked by armed gunmen while many have been killed.

The union in the statement by its spokesman, Luka Binniyat, listed attacks in Kasso in Chikun LGA, another in Badna, Guruku Ward, still in Chikun LGA where it said 40 people were kidnapped in one fell swoop.

It said, “The spate of killings, kidnapping, arson, looting, rape and amounts paid in ransoms to these terrorists by our communities is traumatising and impoverishing our people on a daily basis, making them susceptible to hunger and disease,” and he called for the setting up of government funded and staffed vigilante organization for every communities.

Our correspondents also reported that in January, Nigerian Airforce personnel were attacked during an operation at Unguwar Yako in

Buruku area along Birnin Gwari Kaduna in which one of its personnel was killed by the suspected bandits while two persons were killed in Gora-Gom community in Zangon Kataf Local Government Area of the state.

Suspected gunmen late last year also attacked 16 villages in Igabi Local Government Area of the state and the villagers fled in their hundred to take refuge at LEA primary school Birnin Yero along the Kaduna Zaria highway for days.

Suspected bandits attacked a police escort vehicle along Kwanar Labi to Kwaru forest close to Udawa village in Chikun local government area of the state.

In December, our correspondents had reported attacks in two separate communities in Kaduna State in which four persons were killed while two were abducted. There was also an attack at Kutura station in Tantatu ward of Kajuru Local Government Area where four persons were killed and eight others wounded and another attack on Gwagwada in Chikun where two persons were said to have been abducted while the villagers were celebrating New Year.

In addition to the efforts of the police which said it rescued 20 persons abducted at the Mararaban Jos attack, other security agencies have also stepped up efforts to check the situation.

Troops of the Nigerian Navy School of Armament Technology recently arrested nine suspected kidnappers said to be terrorising communities

in Kachia Local Government and other parts of Kaduna State.

The troops also rescued 28 kidnap victims who have since been reunited with their families.

Speaking during the handing over of the suspects to the Department of State Security in Kachia, Commandant of the school, Rear Admiral Tanko Yakubu Pani, said the success recorded was due to four months surveillance of some dangerous criminal syndicates operating in Kachia and other parts of the state.

He said: “We want to further assure the populace that justice can be delayed but not denied as manifested in the arrest of these criminals. The public should not be intimidated by the threats of these criminals which are intended to discourage them from giving information to security agencies, as this is what the criminals aim to achieve by instilling fear in them.

He said the Service in collaboration with other security agencies is irrevocably committed to locating and flushing out criminal elements in the state.

Troops of the military Operation Thunder Strike have also raided kidnappers’ hideout around Kuyeri Mountain, Kagarko Local Government Area.

Kaduna State Commissioner for home affairs and internal security, Samuel Aruwan, assured the people that the government will continue

to partner with security agencies towards the peace and security of the state and will be alive to its responsibilities to the citizens.

He said, “The government will also continue to appeal to citizens to be law abiding and avoid resorting to self-help. All parties in a conflict must recourse grievances to the government and security agencies as the only path to administration of justice and amicable resolutions.

“We should all view criminality for what it really is and discourage ethnic and religious stereotyping. The sooner we come together to fight banditry without prejudice, the sooner we will be rid of the scourge. It is criminality, and it knows no delineations.

“Similarly, we encourage the traditional and religious institutions, individuals and members of the general public to assist security agencies with information and extend unlimited cooperation for the overall security of the state.”

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