

Bandits kill village head, 19 others in fresh Zamfara attack

From Shehu Umar,
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Suspected armed bandits on Sunday killed at least 20 persons in an attack on the Ganar-Kiyawa community in Bukkuyum Local Government Area of Zamfara State.

Ganar-Kiyawa had suffered a series of deadly assaults in recent times.

The community had paid N2 million harvest levies slammed on them by the armed men. Another N2 million was also paid as ransom for two kidnapped residents.

Locals said the armed men riding motorbikes arrived at the community after they had raided another village and rustled

herds of cattle. A resident, identified as Saminu Usman, said: "When they laid siege, residents scampered to safety after they sensed trouble. But the armed criminals began to chase the fleeing residents on motorbikes shooting them dead. They killed at least 19 people there including the village head.

"Shortly afterwards, the armed men rode and disappeared into the bush. After the armed men had left, the surviving residents picked the bodies of the slain residents from different spots inside the surrounding bushes for burials.

"The armed bandits suddenly came back and headed to the cemetery

thinking that the funeral rites have begun. They saw no one at the cemetery and thereafter zoomed off to the forest again.

"The bodies of those killed were later brought to Adabka, the district headquarters located 3 km west of the attacked community. The funeral rites took place at the district head's palace."

A source at the palace told Daily Trust that the fleeing residents especially women and children took refuge in Adabka community.

However, Zamfara State Police Command said 16 persons were killed.

The command's spokesman, SP Muhammad Shehu, said the police, in collaboration with

the military, have visited the affected community, conducting extensive bush combing to apprehend the perpetrators of the attack.

Meanwhile, the state's Governor, Bello Mohammed Matawalle, said he was deeply saddened by the recent bandits' attack on some communities in Bukkuyum and Maru Local Government Areas.

Governor Matawalle, who spoke through his media aide, Zailani Bappa, said the dastardly acts would not deter his administration to restore lasting peace. He directed the state's Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management to immediately release relief materials to victims of the attack.