

Bandits kill 7 policemen, 35 others in Zamfara, Katsina

From Yusha'u A. Ibrahim,
Gusau, & Saawua Terzungwe,
Abuja

Bandits have killed at least 42 persons in different attacks on many villages in Zamfara and Katsina states.

In Zamfara State, 12 people, including seven policemen were killed yesterday at Magarya village in Zurmi Local Government Area. Among the victims were a member of the Zamfara State Community Guards, also known as Askarawan Zamfara and four residents of the village.

The Commissioner of Police in the state, Muhammad Shehu Dalijan, confirmed the killing of his officers to *Daily Trust* last night.

The CP said the bandits, numbering about 300, stormed the village on motor bikes.

"They surrounded our men and opened fire on them, thereby killing seven of them and injuring several others.

"The bandits were not happy with our men who prevented them from carrying out their heinous act for over two years now.

"Since the deployment of police to the area, the bandits could not have a chance to attack the village," Dalijan said.

The police commissioner said more police personnel would be deployed in the area.

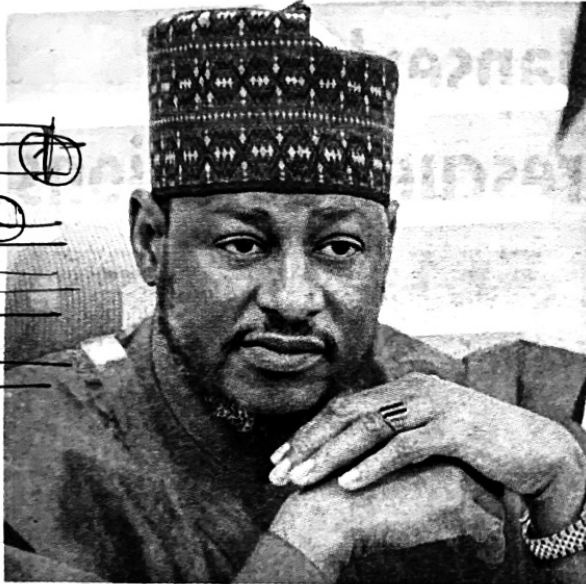
A resident, Muhammad Yusuf, told *Daily Trust* that the assailants invaded the village at 5.10am when people were preparing for subhi (morning prayer).

He said the bandits also burnt two houses, a car and many silos.

"The bandits also rustled three camels and some cows, sheep and goats. However, they did not abduct anybody during the operation.

"When the bandits attacked the village, the occupants ran into the bush. When they returned, we took a head count and discovered that 12 people, including seven mobile policemen, were killed.

"This is the fourth time bandits are attacking our village. The first attack was two years after the deployment of a mobile police unit to the area. They attacked the village three times before the



■ Governor Dikko Radda

deployment of security personnel," Yusuf said.

Another resident, Ibrahim Shehu, said many of the villagers had fled for fear of further attacks.

"The bandits had warned that they would come for another attack; hence the residents fled their homes. Some residents moved to Gusau, the state capital, while others went to nearby towns.

"We are terrified. And you know that these people are like animals. Since they promised to come back, it is better for us to leave the area for our lives. Very few people remained in the village," he said.

Also confirming the incident to our correspondent, Inuwa Isa, another resident, said the attackers "conducted a house-to-house search before killing people, burning two houses and a car."

30 killed, others injured in Katsina bandits' attacks

Different sets of bandits were also said to have killed no fewer than 30 persons in attacks on villages in Dutsinma and Safana Local Government Areas of Katsina State.

The affected villages are Tashar Kawai Mai Zuri, Sabon Gari Unguwar Banza, Dogon Ruwa, Sanawar Kurecen Dutsi,

Unguwar Bera, Kuricin Kulawa, Larabar Tashar Mangoro, Sabaru, Ashata, Unguwar Ido, Kanbiri, Kunamawar Mai Awaki and Kunamawar Yargandu.

The villages were said to have been attacked on Tuesday.

The bandits were said to have launched a fresh attack yesterday on Dogon Ruwa, Yar Kuka, Rimi, Lezumawa and other villages.

The attacks forced residents to flee and seek refuge in Dutsinma town and Turare village.

When contacted for comment, the spokesman of the Katsina State Police Command, ASP Abubakar Sadiq Aliyu, promised to get back to our correspondent yesterday, but he never did.

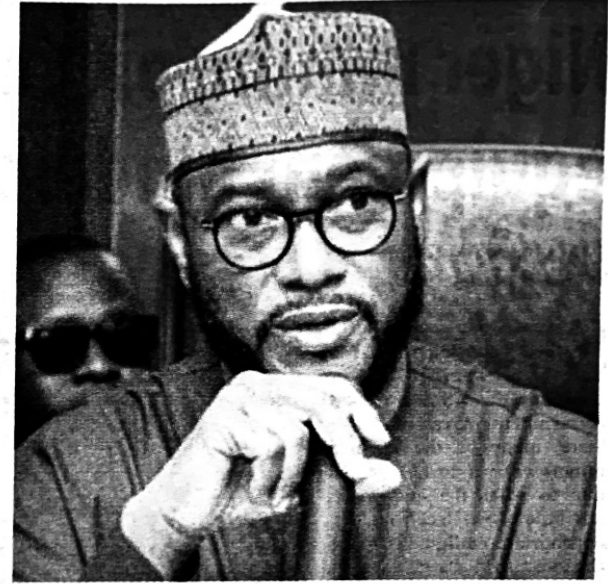
Local government areas like Batsari, Kankara, Malumfashi and Faskari had witnessed attacks by bandits in recent times.

Senate to Tinubu: Review security strategy in N/ West, N/Central

The Senate yesterday asked President Bola Ahmed Tinubu to review the security approach in the North West and North Central geopolitical zones of Nigeria.

It also asked the president to direct the establishment of a task force to secure farmlands.

It urged the security agencies



■ Governor Dauda Lawal

to collaborate with the respective state governments, local communities, traditional leaders and stakeholders to gather intelligence and enhance security operations in the affected states.

The resolution followed the adoption of a motion co-sponsored by Senator Nasiru Sani Zangon Daura (Katsina North) and 10 other senators from the North West.

In his lead debate, Zangon Daura noted that the North West had been plagued by escalating banditry attacks, resulting in loss of lives, kidnappings for ransom, displacement of communities and disruption of socio-economic activities.

He said state governments in the zone had allocated significant funds to augment the operations of the security agencies in combating banditry and restoring peace in the region, but little or no results had been achieved.

He said: "The incessant banditry attacks in the North West region will significantly impact food production and agricultural activities, jeopardizing food security and livelihood of the people in the affected states of the region, especially in the present raining season."

Senator Aminu Waziri Tambuwal (PDP, Sokoto South),

asked President Tinubu to declare a state of emergency in the North West to enable the military adopt a holistic approach in addressing insecurity in the region.

According to Tambuwal, if the security situation in the zone is allowed to fester, it will affect food production. Senator Abba Moro (PDP, Benue South), said: "The time to take decisive action is now. I think the leadership of the Senate should interface with Mr. President to address this issue."

Senator Muntari Dandutse (Katsina South), said 122 persons were killed in four local government areas in his senatorial districts within one week.

"There is no synergy; no coordination, no cooperation among the security agencies. We should have the political will to deal with these criminals," he said.

Senator Abdul Ningi (PDP, Bauchi Central) said the president ought to have extracted a commitment from the service chiefs on the timeframe to end insecurity before appointing them.

The Senate also adopted a motion by Senator Mohammed Sani Musa (APC, Niger East) and seconded by Senator Emmanuel Udende (Benue North East) that all resolutions on security in the North West be applicable to the North Central.