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Katsina Mosque Killing: 'We Were Attacked During Prayers'



■ Protest after the mosque attack at Gidan Mantau Village of Malumfashi LGA, Katsina State, yesterday.

By Our Reporters

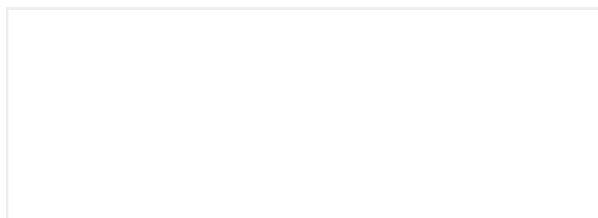
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Survivors of an attack on a mosque in Katsina State said they were attacked in the early hours of Tuesday while observing the Subhi (morning) prayers.

Members of the Gidan Mantau community, which is less than 10 kilometres from Malumfashi town of Katsina State, who spoke to Daily Trust yesterday, said about 23 people died in the incident, but the state government said 13 worshippers were killed. It was also gathered that many others sustained varying degrees of injuries following the attack. The incident occurred just a day after Governor Dikko Radda began a three-week medical leave, transferring power to his deputy, Malam Faruk Lawal.

This attack also comes 18 months after a similar assault on worshippers observing Isha (night) prayers in Yargoje village, Kankara LGA, within the same state.



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Sources quoted the survivors of the latest attack as saying that the incident happened around 5 a.m, shortly after they started their Subhi prayers.

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“They heard the sound of a gunshot while praying. They (the attackers) killed some people and injured others,” one of the sources said.

Daily Trust gathered that the attackers were on a reprisal mission after the community’s members had successfully ambushed them, killing many and seizing their weapons and operational motorcycles. A resident, who requested anonymity, said the number of casualties could be higher, as many were taken to the hospital in critical condition.

“The number of those who died has risen to 27 from what we heard regarding those taken to the hospital,” the source said.

Confirming the incident, Dr. Nasir Muazu, the state commissioner for internal security and home affairs, said it was a retaliatory attack. “The Muslim members of the community were praying in the mosque during the Fajr prayer when the criminal elements started shooting sporadically,” he said. The commissioner added that the state government immediately sent security reinforcements and support measures to the affected community.

“The attack was in retaliation for the community’s successful defence efforts two days earlier,” Muazu stated. “The people of Gidan Mantau decided to lay an ambush against the bandits and killed many of them. They rescued victims taken from Ruwan Sanyi village, seized three motorcycles, and two AK-47s.” He also mentioned that security agencies have been deployed to the area and are working to bring the bandits to justice, particularly during this rainy season when they hide in farmlands to perpetrate their acts.

“As a government, we salute the gallant disposition of the people of Unguwar Mantau, and we are committed to fighting these bandits and ensuring safety across our communities. The state government extends heartfelt condolences to the families affected and reaffirms its unwavering support for community-based security initiatives while working to eliminate criminal elements from the region,” he said.

Daily Trust reports growing concerns over the resurgence of bandit attacks in various local government areas, especially during the farming season. This is despite some LGAs, including Jibia, Batsari, Danmusa, and Safana, having entered into peace deals with bandits. However, Malumfashi is not one of these LGAs; it is among the local governments under attacks in the southern part of the state.