

How bandits killed 47 in Katsina, by police

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- We recovered over 70 bodies, say residents
- Security agents move against invasion

Bandits at the weekend invaded six communities in Safana, Dutsinma and Danmusa local government areas of Katsina State and killed scores of residents, including women and children.



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The police confirmed the killing of 47 people during the attacks, but the residents said 70 bodies were recovered.

They also said that dozens of their fellow residents were seriously injured while houses were burnt and valuables, including food items and money, were carted away by the bandits.

The attacks were said to have occurred shortly after relief materials were shared to some members of the affected communities to cushion hardship brought about by the deadly coronavirus.

Sources said the bandits, armed with sophisticated weapons, stormed the affected communities in their hundreds, riding on motorcycles in twos and threes.

It was learnt that many residents who refused to give up their relief materials or other belongings were beaten while unlucky ones were shot dead.

According to the source, some of the community members initially resisted the attacks but were overwhelmed when reinforcement came for the bandits.

He said the general hospitals in the affected council areas had received bodies of those killed and were attending to the injured as some of the community members fled their homes in fear.

Another source told The Guardian that the attacks might be reprisal in nature, coming after some vigilantes locally called Yansakai allegedly stormed some Fulani settlements and drove them away from the area.

He said the communities were worried that the Fulani settlements were attracting bandits living inside the forest to the area, and that some of the herdsmen were acting as informants to the criminals.

One of the sources, who gave a breakdown of the bodies of the victims so far recovered, said 30 were recovered in two villages in Danmusa council, 17 at Gurzar Kaka, and 13 in Gurzar Gamji, among others.

But the spokesman for the state police command, Gambo Isah, said 47 persons lost their lives in the attacks.

Isah said, “On 18/04/2020 at about 00:30hrs, bandits in their numbers, armed with AK47 rifles attacked Kurechi village of Danmusa LGA of Katsina State.

“The villagers summoned courage and chased away the hoodlums. Later the villagers started burning down empty corn stalk to keep their animals safe and to keep the hoodlums at bay.



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“Subsequently, the situation changed when some Yansakai group (local vigilantes) started setting ablaze some Fulani settlements at Aibon Mangwaro village of Danmusa LGA of Katsina State.

“Consequently, on the same date at about 03:00hrs, there were reports of organized and simultaneous attacks in villages in Danmusa, Dutsenma and Safana by groups of armed bandits.

“At Kurechin Atai village of Danmusa, 14 persons were killed. At Kurechin Giye and Kurechin Dutse villages of Dutsinma LGA of Katsina State, bandits killed four and six persons. And at Makauwachi and Daule villages, the hoodlums killed 19 and four persons.

“Detachments of police, Nigerian Army, Nigeria Air Force, Civil Defence and Directorate of State Services (DSS) have been drafted to the area. Currently, an operation is still ongoing by the combined joint forces,” he added.