

# Gunmen kill 12 persons in fresh Katsina attack

By Joseph Onyekwere (Lagos) and Danjuma Michael (Katsina)  
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{FILES} gunmen. Photo: AA

## •Group backs gov on self-defence, another seeks his resignation

Gunmen, at the weekend, killed 12 persons at Dubu community in Batsari Local Council of Katsina State. The incident, which occurred at about 08:45p.m., saw over 250 bandits invading the settlement with assorted weapons.

The attackers, it was further gathered, looted homes and shops, including stealing foodstuffs and money. Residents claimed that the 20 lives lost, were yesterday morning, buried according to Islamic rites, while the injured are being attended to.

A source said some residents of the affected village had begun relocating to Batsari Town, headquarters of the council, for safety.

A spokesman for the state police command, SP Gambo Isah, confirmed a casualty figure of 12 and injuries to six others. His words: “The bandits, numbering over 300 and armed with sophisticated weapons, including GMP machine guns and anti-aircraft launchers, stormed the village at 20:45p.m on Saturday.



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“They ransacked houses and looted shops. They also killed 12 people and injured six others. “The joint team of the police and the military advanced to the village, but the bandits had retreated to the forest by the time they arrived.

“The team is still combing the forest with a view to finding the hoodlums.”



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spokesperson for the group, Hamza Sadiqawa, at a press conference, in the capital, argued that the call was consistent with Section 33 of the 1999 Constitution (as amended). He added that the “call was also in line with Section 286 of the Nigerian Criminal Code.”

The body pointed out that since the governor was not the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, he could not recruit or arm any security outfit.

“Looking at the foregoing realities, it will be unfair and preposterous for anyone to blame Governor Masari over insecurity or his call for people to defend themselves,” it added.

Masari, at a condolence visit to Jibia council area last Tuesday, had called on residents in vulnerable areas of the state to defend themselves against bandits.

The appeal has since generated mixed reactions. THIS is even as the state chapter of Coalition of Northern Groups (CNG) urged the governor to resign over pervasive insecurity.



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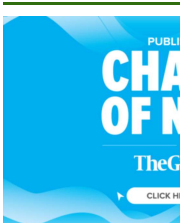
Comrade Jamilu Aliyu Charanchi, who spoke on its behalf during a news briefing at the weekend in Katsina, stated that the order might seem commendable, insisting that the continued killings, kidnappings, rustling and other criminal activities were proof that government had failed in its primary role of ensuring safety of life and property.

Also, the government regarded the call for the governor’s resignation as absurd. In a statement signed by Masari’s Director General, Media, Abdu Labaran Malumfashi, the state said it was wrong for anyone to ask its chief executive to quit because of his “patriotic candour and courage in admonishing his people to wake up and resist the bandits by acquiring arms for self-defence.”

He said such a call betrays “a sheer lack of understanding of the letter and spirit, as well as the workings of the Nigerian Constitution.”

The media aide explained that security is on the exclusive list of the Constitution, meaning it is exclusively a Federal Government affair.

Malumfashi continued: “In matters of security, a governor is the Chief Security Officer of his state only in name, because the various security chiefs working in the state take orders from their superiors in Abuja.



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“The only things they take from governors are the financial and material assistance (both solicited and unsolicited), which they extend to the security institutions in the states. Governor Masari is second to none when it comes to proactive engagement with security agencies in the state.”

The DG noted that the massive increase in the number of security formations in Katsina, and the North West in general, was due to the “dogged commitment and determination” of the governor, which “was done to ensure the successful prosecution of the war against banditry.”

He added: “It was this, which persuaded his North West colleagues to make him the chairman of their security committee. As constitutionally elected office holders, governors do not succumb to the intimidation of some self-serving disgruntled elements, masquerading as human rights campaigners by resigning.

“If they are found wanting in the discharge of their responsibilities, the Nigerian Constitution has provided the protocols for easing them out of office, and no House of Assembly is in the dark about that.”

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