

National

# Gunmen kill three, abduct Catholic priest, 44 others in Niger

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**TheGuardian**  
Conscience, Nurtured by Truth



- **Military says Kaduna airport not attacked, 12 bandits killed**
- **HURIWA, NLC flay security breach**
- **'Insecurity has halved in Katsina'**
- **Surveyor-general, security intelligence partner to end banditry**

Gunmen have killed at least three persons in Kabo village, Gurara Local council of Niger State.

The killers, suspected to be herders, The Guardian gathered, arrived the community in large number, yesterday, shooting sporadically in different directions.

Stray bullets reportedly hit some residents as they were running for dear lives. A resident, who was identified simply as Kulus, told newsmen that the casualty figure was expected to rise.

“They (gunmen) arrived this afternoon and started shooting at houses and anyone on sight. As we speak, three people have been killed. There will likely be more deaths at the end of the day because bullets hit a lot of people that were running out of the village. The attackers are still shooting in the community,” he said.

ANOTHER set gunmen, on Sunday evening, abducted the Parish Priest of St. Mary’s Catholic Church, Sarkin Pawa, Munya Local Council of Niger State, Rev. Fr. Leo Ozigi, and 44 other villagers.

The Guardian gathered that the priest was on his way to Gwada from Sarkin Pawa when he ran into the bandits, who whisked him and other villagers away.

Niger State chapter of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) confirmed the abduction.

The Secretary, Raphael Opawoye, said: “Rev. (Dr.) Leo Ozigi was kidnapped on Sunday on his way back to Gwada from Sarkin Pawa after the Sunday service,”

A resident, Shehu Abubakar, told newsmen that 44 other abducted villagers were among those who returned to their communities from IDP camps on Saturday.

“The bandits moved freely on the road from Sarkin Pawa to Gwada unchallenged. We are worried because it seems our problem is yet to be over. People have just started returning on Saturday to prepare for yam plantation.

“Government encouraged us to go back to our communities that there was going to be security arrangements. People started returning on Saturday and these

criminals invaded us again,” he added.

MEANWHILE, the military authorities have said that bandits did not attack the Kaduna airport, but that attack happened six kilometres away from the terminal and outside the airport perimeter fence.

According to the military, 12 of the bandits, who were immediately given a hot chase, were killed through air strike.

This was disclosed when Kaduna State Commissioner for Internal Security and Home Affairs, Samuel Aruwan; Garrison Commander, 01 Division, Nigerian Army, Brig-Gen. Uriah Opuene and Air Force Base Commander, Air Cdore. Ademuyiwa Adedoyin led journalists on an assessment tour of the attack scene.

Opuene said the airport was well secured, as there were several layers of security, which would be difficult for bandits to subdue.

But the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), Kaduna State chapter, has condemned the attack, describing it act as an assault on the country.

This was contained in a statement signed by the Chairman, Ayuba Suleiman, and made available to journalists, yesterday, in Kaduna.

In the same vein, Human Rights Writers Association of Nigeria (HURIWA) has lamented the increasing spate and sophistication of coordinated attacks by terrorists in the North West and gunmen in Imo State, as well as other part of the South East.

Yesterday, gunmen attacked a police formation in Obowo, Imo State, in which two policemen were reportedly gunned down.

In a statement, yesterday, National Coordinator of HURIWA, Emmanuel Onwubiko, wondered whether the President was waiting for terrorists to invade the National Assembly complex within the three arms zone of Abuja before he would act.

ON a cheery note, Katsina State Government has said the insecurity in the state has reduced by 50 per cent in the last six months.

It, however, said that pockets of violence were still being recorded, due to “community banditry.”

Special Adviser to Governor Aminu Masari on Security, Ahmed Katsina, disclosed this in an interview with newsmen after delivering a goodwill message at the inauguration of a 25-member Technical Steering Committee on the UNSCR 1325 State Action Plan (SAP).”

IN another development, Office of the Surveyor-General of the Federation is partnering with security intelligence to smoke men of the underworld out of their hideout.

The synergy between the two critical stakeholders against insecurity was part of measures to enhance national security and territorial integrity.

The Surveyor-General, Abdulganiyu Adebomehin, disclosed this, yesterday, in Kano, at the meeting between the state’s surveyor-general and management of the Office of Surveyor General of the Federation.

Asserting that the surveyor-general’s office is critical, especially in navigating the hideout of the criminals, Adebomehin applauded government’s huge investment on sophisticated security hardware to combat banditry.

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