

# Gunmen Kill 4, Kidnap 39 In FCT, Niger Communities

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Gunmen launched attacks on Kuduru and Garam communities in Bwari Area Council, Federal Capital Territory (FCT), and Azu community in Niger State, resulting in the deaths of at least four individuals and the abduction of 39 others.

Reports indicate that the incident in Bwari occurred on Saturday, December 23, with bandits invading the Garam community, situated a five-minute drive from Bwari. During this assault, they killed a pastor affiliated with the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) and abducted 13 people.

On Thursday, December 28, the bandits struck again, this time invading Kuduru, which shares a border with Garam, and abducted 18 individuals.

Also, on Friday, December 29, the assailants attacked Azu, claiming the lives of three people and abducting eight others.

A Garam resident named Mrs Juliana recounted the bandits' entry into a wrong house initially, where they seized two boys, later using them to locate their actual target's residence.

"The bandits entered a wrong house and kidnapped two boys who later led them to the house of their target. When they got there, they kidnapped the entire family, but while leaving the house, they shot the man (their target), who is a pastor at the Redeemed Christians Church of God in the presence of his wife and their three children," she said.

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Upon realisingk that she had left her six-month-old baby behind, the pastor's wife requested permission from the bandits to retrieve the child. She was accompanied back to the house by the sole female among the bandits. However, the female bandit impatiently abandoned the woman and joined the others, leaving with the 13 kidnapped individuals.

The pastor's wife, who teaches at a government secondary school in Bwari, narrowly escaped being taken.

An eyewitness, speaking anonymously to our correspondent for fear of reprisal attack, described the bandits' visit to the house of a military personnel, where they demanded the husband's rifle and uniform from his wife. The wife informed them that her husband was on duty, yet they abducted two of their children.

During the harrowing incident, a five-year-old son of the murdered RCCG was left behind by the bandits near a riverbank as they fled, as he couldn't cross the river. Thankfully, vigilant community members rescued the boy while tracking the bandits.