

Bandits attack church, kill medical doctor, abduct four in Kaduna

Seven others killed in different locations - What is the offence of ordinary citizens? CAN asks

Muhammad Sabiu | Kaduna

BANDITS on Sunday attacked Haske Baptist Church at Manini Tasha village in Kuriga Ward of Chikun Local Government Area of Kaduna State, where a medical doctor was killed, while seven persons were killed when bandits attacked Bagomo village in Birnin-Gwari and Amfu village in Kachia LGA.

A survivor of the attack on the church, Mr Yakubu Bala, said the bandits stormed the church at about 9:00 a.m. and shot sporadically at worshippers.

"Dr Zakariah Dogo Yaro, a medical doctor with the Kaduna State Ministry of Health, was shot dead and unspecified number of people was kidnapped," he stressed.

He also said that so many worshippers sustained varying degrees of injuries.

As of the time of filing this report it was learnt that most of the villagers had fled to neighbouring villages.

However, the police command in the state said apart from those killed and injured, the gunmen abducted four worshippers.

The command's spokesman, ASP Mohammed Jalige, in a statement, described the attack as unfortunate.

Jalige said: "Preliminary investigation conducted so far revealed that four persons are missing, which arouse suspicion that they might have been kidnapped by the hoodlums.

"Two others sustained gunshot wounds, namely, Dr. Zakariya Doga Yaro, a staff of Kaduna State Ministry of Health attached to the Primary Healthcare Center in Rimi village, Udawa, Chikun Local Government Area and Shehu Haruna.

"Unfortunately, Dr Zakariya Yaro died on the spot, while Shehu Haruna is currently receiving medical treatment.

"Consequently, normalcy has since been restored; security has been beefed up in the area with a view to forestalling reoccurrence of the dastardly attack, while concerted effort is ongoing to locate the missing persons."

The state government has, therefore, come out to condemn the attack by bandits on a place of worship on Sunday morning.

A statement issued by the Commissioner for Internal Security and Home Affairs, Samuel Aruwan, on Sunday, disclosed that security agencies reported to the government that armed bandits attacked congregants at Haske Baptist Church, Manini, about 9:30 a.m., and killed a worshipper, Dr Zechariah Dogonyaro.

Aruwan said: "According to the report, about four worshippers were abducted from the church. One resident, Shehu Mainika, was injured in the general area by the bandits.

"In other reports received from security agencies, bandits also invaded Bagoma village in Birnin Gwari LGA of the state and killed six persons.

"Also reported was an attack by armed bandits at Amfu village in Kachia LGA, in which one Mrs Rahila Dauda was shot dead.

"Finally, the partially burnt corpse of a seven-year-old, Abubakar Sarki Musa, was found in an uncompleted building in Hayin Danmani area, Rigasa in Igabi LGA.

"One Saddique Umar, an 18-year-old resident of the area, confessed to killing him, after luring the boy into the deserted building in a bid to steal a phone

placed in his possession.

"Governor Nasir El-Rufai roundly denounced the attack on the church in Chikun LGA as a shocking act of depraved persons far-removed from humanity.

"The governor added that attacking innocent worshippers who were exercising their natural and lawful right to assemble in worship represented the worst kind of evil."

Reacting to the attack on the church, the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Kaduna State chapter, has asked bandits for the crime of the ordinary people who they have found joy in killing and abducting.

In a statement issued by the religious body and signed by its secretary, Reverend Cajeb Ma'aji on Sunday, CAN said it "continues to wonder, what is the crime of innocent citizens; how come the terrorists ap-

pear more free and protected than the citizens?

"It has grown so unfortunate and on a daily basis; the situation continues to get worse with no appreciable resistance against the terrorists who have continued to hold our dear state and nation to ransom.

"Today, April 25, innocent worshippers who went out for nothing but to worship and pray to God were attacked; a medical doctor and one other person were killed, many members injured and others taken into captivity.

"This is happening in a nation that her constitution allows for freedom of religion, yet this freedom is not guaranteed.

"This is a challenge to government; indeed, a government that is unable to guarantee the safety of her citizens and their properties will be best termed a failed government."