

Over 200 bandits storm Kaduna airport, stop aircraft from taking off

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| Kaduna

THERE was palpable tension in Kaduna on Saturday as more than 200 bandits reportedly stormed the state airport, stopping an aircraft from taking off.

It was gathered that the aircraft was about to take off for Lagos when the hoodlums stormed the runway, forcing the officials of the airline and its passengers to run for safety.

A source, who pleaded for anonymity, said a staff of the Nigerian Airspace Management Agency (NAMA) was shot and killed by the bandits.

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The source said he overheard the bandits saying in Hausa 'Zamu rufe airport, ba jirgi da zai tashi', meaning 'We will shut down this airport. No aircraft will fly in and out.'

The source further said: "As I speak to you now, there is already military presence to beef up security, though most of the staff members are scared with the killing of the NAMA staff.

Meanwhile, more than 10 military trucks were said to have been deployed to the airport to reinforce the security network.

The bandits reportedly started attacking the airport

around midnight, alleging that the military personnel took away their cows.

"The military were able to repel them that midnight and we thought that was all. In fact, our staff resumed work this morning as usual. They worked around the runway five times till around 12:00pm.

"Shortly after that, some NAMA staff went to check some of their equipment, and these people (bandits) appeared and started shooting. The NAMA engineers scampered for safety; they could not even enter the vehicle that took them to the site. It was in the process that their security man

was shot in the head. The security man was rushed to the hospital and he was confirmed dead," the source further explained.

When contacted the Kaduna State Police Command spokesman, ASP Muhammad Jalige, promised to get across to the DPO in charge of the area.

Sunday Tribune learnt that situation at the airport had been normalised with scheduled flights departing after the incident.

Governor Nasir El-Rufai commended the security forces for their prompt response to the attack and commiserated with the family of the victim.