

Sokoto: Bandits kill scores, abduct dozens in fresh Sabon Birni attacks

Olakunle Maruf August 18, 2025



Armed bandits suspected to be loyal to the notorious kingpin, Bello Turji, have unleashed a wave of coordinated attacks on communities in Sabon Birni Local Government Area of Sokoto State, killing scores and abducting dozens in renewed violence that lasted from Wednesday, 14 August, to Friday, 16 August.

The three-day siege left villagers, a soldier, and a vigilante member dead, while several others remain missing. Survivors said the attackers, armed with sophisticated weapons, moved from one village to another, leaving a trail of blood and destruction.

On Wednesday, the assailants ambushed travellers along the Yankasuwa–Masawa road, intercepting vehicles and abducting all passengers. By Thursday, they had stormed Garki village, where 16 residents were seized. One of the captives was later killed, another freed, while the gunmen rustled three cows.

The violence continued on Friday as the bandits invaded Turtasawa and Faru villages near Sabon Birni town, abducting 28 more villagers. Families say many victims remain unaccounted for, and the affected communities have been thrown into mourning.

The Movement for Social Justice in Sokoto State, which has been documenting the crisis, confirmed the casualty figures.

“In just four to five days, our records show these coordinated incidents,” the group said in a statement. “What we have are verified reports, but there could be more cases yet unreported. We call on the Sokoto State Government to rise to the occasion and adopt urgent measures to end these atrocities committed by Bello Turji’s boys.”

Prayers have since been offered for the victims, with residents appealing for swift security intervention to stop what they described as “unrelenting violence” in Eastern Sokoto.

When contacted, the spokesman of the Sokoto State Police Command, ASP Ahmed Rufai, said he would respond but had yet to do so as of press time.

Similarly, calls placed to the Special Adviser on Security Matters to Governor Ahmed Aliyu, Colonel Ahmed Usman (rtd), were not answered.

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