

Bandits kill 50 in Sokoto, 31 in Zamfara

**Animasahun Salma
and Maiharaji Altine**

OVER 50 persons were reportedly killed in the Gwadabawa and Tangaza local government areas of Sokoto State as gunmen suspected to be bandits struck on Saturday evening.

This was as 31 villagers were killed by bandits in Janbako and Sakida villages, Maradun Local Government Area of Zamfara State also on Saturday afternoon.

The Sokoto State Command of the Nigeria Police Force, on Sunday, confirmed the bandits' attack in the two local government areas in the state.

The command's spokesperson, ASP Ahmad Rufa'i, promised to provide *The PUNCH* with details of the deadly attacks, saying the police were on top of the situation.

A villager in the Gwadabawa LGA, who spoke anonymously, said two attacked villages are the most populous in the area.

The villager said, "Some of the bandits were already in the town, unknown to residents of the affected communities, before others arrived in the evening to strike."

"The operation started after evening prayer, where they attacked the two villages simultaneously."

"In Bilingawa, not less than 18 people were killed during

the attack on Saturday evening.

"After killing them, they set their corpses and those of their animals on fire, ensuring that most of them were burnt beyond recognition."

In the Tangaza LGA, no fewer than 37 persons were allegedly killed and several others injured in attacks on three communities.

According to a resident of the area, the affected communities include the Raka, Raka Dutse, and Filin Gawa communities.

A former Chairman of the LGA, Bashir Kalenjeni, said 18 persons were killed at Raka, 17 at Filin Gawa, and two at Raka Dutse.

"We wanted to bury them in the night, but the bandits came

back and dispersed us. As of this morning, the deceased are still there, unburied," Kalenjeni said.

According to him, the "offence" of the villagers was their "refusal to pay levies imposed on their communities."

"But the villagers refused to succumb and because of that, they attacked them, killing 37 persons while several others sustained varying degrees of gunshot injury and are currently receiving treatment at General Hospital, Gwadabawa."

"There are others who are still unaccounted for," the former chairman disclosed, adding, "Right now, we are waiting for security operatives to lead us to the villages in order

to bury the dead ones."

Meanwhile, in Zamfara State, a resident, Mallam Abubakar Mohammed, told *The PUNCH* on the phone that the bandits, who came in their large numbers, attacked two communities on Saturday afternoon.

According to him, the bandits invaded Janbako village around 2.30pm on Saturday where they killed 28 people and injured several others.

They later moved to Sakida village the same day where they again killed three and also injured many people.

Mohammed said, "We just finished afternoon prayer when we heard gunshots and everybody ran Helter skelter

for safety".

"The bandits shot sporadically immediately they arrived at our village as a result of which they were able to kill 28 people and injured several others."

"They later moved to Sakida village very close to our village where they also launched an attack, killing three on the spot and also injured several others."

"As I am talking to you now, the people of the two communities have fled to other places."

All efforts to speak to the newly posted police public relations Officer SP Yazid Abubakar proved abortive, as he did not pick up the phone calls after several attempts.

PDP wants Tinubu to make asset declaration public

**Dirisu Yakubu
and Adebayo
Folorunsho-Francis**

THE Peoples Democratic Party has called on President Bola Tinubu and Vice President Kashim Shettima to take a cue from the late President Umaru Yar' Adua by publicly declaring their assets as a demonstration of their determination to lead by example.

The PDP stated this through its National Publicity Secretary, Debo Ologunagba on Sunday.

Speaking in a telephone conversation with *The PUNCH*, Ologunagba said it was not enough for the President and the VP to fill asset declaration forms and return same to the Code of Conduct Bureau, just to fulfil the requirements of the law.

Although the PDP is challenging the declaration of Tinubu as winner of the February 25 presidential poll, Ologunagba urged both men to show the world that indeed they are different, by following the path of Yar' Adua in declaring their financial and material worth

before Nigerians publicly.

He said, "They should follow the path of the late President Umaru Yar' Adua to demonstrate to Nigerians their readiness for transparent and accountable leadership. There are provisions in our laws covering asset declarations by public officers; it is a statutory requirement. Recall that Umaru Yar' Adua, a president elected on the platform of the PDP, declared his assets publicly. Those are the kind of leadership traits expected at that level."

The PDP spokesman said having filled their assets

declaration forms, Tinubu and Shettima should not secretly submit same.

But the spokesman for the dissolved APC Presidential Campaign Council, Festus Keyamo, kicked against the agitation for the President to publicly declare his assets.

Keyamo, who is a Senior Advocate of Nigeria, said, "Public declaration of assets is not a legal requirement. The public deserves to know this. It is just a matter of choice. If anyone thinks it is a moral obligation, he can do it. But that is left to individuals."

When asked if Labour Party would want Tinubu to make