

Bandits kill one, abduct 40 in Katsina

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...save us, Southern Kaduna residents cries out

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Bandits on Sunday night invaded Tsauri village in Kurfi Local Government Area and killed one person identified as Yasir Usman.

The bandits, who stormed the community on motorcycles about 7.30p.m., were said to have shot indiscriminately and ransacked several homes.

This came as the Southern Kaduna Peoples' Union (SOKAPU) yesterday cried out over the invasion and occupation of some of villages in the area by bandits and kidnappers.

Usman was rushed to the Orthopaedic Hospital in the state capital where he died yesterday morning.

He was buried yesterday, according to Islamic rites.

In a related development, bandits also kidnapped about 40 persons who were travelling on Jibia-Batsari Road on Sunday night.

They were said to have been abducted while travelling in two J5 buses.

The state Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), SP Gambo Isah, confirmed both incidents to journalists yesterday.

Isah, however, said that the bandits only abducted seven persons and not 40 as being speculated.

He said the bandits, numbering about 60 and armed with AK47 rifles, had blocked the Jibia-Batsari Road and stopped the buses at Ruma village in Batsari Local Government Area.

The PPRO added that the bandits took occupants of the vehicles into the bush, but that a search party led by Operation Puff Adder went after the hoodlums and succeeded in rescuing all the victims “with the exception of seven others”.

Isah identified the abducted victims as Maazu Yasore (80), Alhaji Nuhu (45), Labor Hashimu (37), Dan-Asibi Tela (50), Sani Kokari (70), Nura Shambal (45) and Ali Dan-Maituwo (65).

He said: “The police in collaboration with community members are combing the bush with a view to rescue the remaining seven persons not seen.”

Meanwhile, SOKAPU raised the alarm of invasion of Southern Kaduna in a statement issued in Kaduna by its National Publicity Secretary, Mr. Luka Binniyat.

Binniyat said: “SOKAPU wishes to draw the attention of the public and government to the unrelenting impunity with which several Gbagyi communities in Chikun Local Government Area of Kaduna State on its boundary with Niger State are being invaded by bandits and kidnappers.

“We wish to bring to the attention of the public and the government that for the past five days, the villages of Kuduru, Tawali, Unguwan Madaki and Katarma, all in Chikun Local Government Area, close to the border between Kaduna and Niger states, have been under

severe attacks by bandits and kidnappers numbering over 200, riding on motorcycles and heavily armed with AK47 rifles.

“These invaders, who took the villages by storm and went only in the wee hours of the night, had continued to kill, maim, destroy, loot, sack and occupy these villages with impunity.”

The SOKAPU scribe said being unarmed and not forewarned, all the village youths of these communities could do was to reduce the level of casualty by assisting to evacuate women, children and the infirmed into nearby bushes carrying little or nothing with them in terms of food and clothing.

He added: “After days in the bushes, the beleaguered victims have found their ways to Sarkin Pawa town, in Niger State, trekking for days and crossing by canoe to their neighbours in Niger State.

“In all the affected villages, foodstuff, cows, goats, sheep, motorcycles and other household items belonging to the villagers have been taken over as the invaders are currently occupying the villages unchallenged by the Nigeria military, police or any security agency.

“Information available to us has it that in Tawali village, six persons were kidnapped and nothing has been heard of them ever since. The ECWA Church in the village was not spared as it was burnt down completely. Also, a young lad, by name Ezra Bala (16), who is a student of Government Day Secondary School, Gashan-Kwoi, was shot dead in Kuduru village during the attack.

“The attack, expulsion and occupation have continued at the time of releasing this statement as more communities have come under similar siege. They are: Zoko Yako, Sabon Gida Katarma and Unguwan Sarki, Bwadana, and Kwayipe.

“In Kwayipe, one person, whose name was given as Dimas, was shot but escaped with injuries. He was lucky to be helped to Sarkin Pawa, where he has been rushed to Minna, Niger State for urgent medical attention.

“We hereby call on the government to look into this ugly development and take urgent necessary steps to address these perennial crimes against the humanity in these Gbagyi communities of Chikun Local Government Area.”

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