

Bandits Kill 17, Abduct Two Women in Katsina Community

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Francis Sardauna in Katsina

Bandits have again invaded Yar Centre, an outskirts of Sherere community in Kankara Local Government Area of Katsina State, killing 17 persons, while dozens sustained varying degrees of injuries and many houses set ablaze.

The bandits, according to residents, also abducted two women, rustled 120 cattle and destroyed 21 shops and vehicles.

The incident, it was also gathered, took place last Sunday evening when the bandits riding on bikes stormed eight houses in the village and shot the occupants.

An eyewitness put the number of those killed at 17, while police in the state said only five were killed as a result of “reprisal” by the bandits.

The eyewitness said: “Bandits yesterday evening on motorcycles attacked our village and killed more than 17 persons. As of yesterday night, the corpses were 10 but this morning, we recovered additional seven corpses.”

Also confirming the incident yesterday, the leader of the village, Dikko Babba Sherere, said: “We can’t even go out and hold the burial rite of the deceased for fear of the bandits.

“The bandits also abducted two women, killed many animals and rustled 120 cattle. They also burnt 21 shops, many houses and vehicles.

"As I speak to you, many of our women and children are nowhere to be found, while hundreds of them are trekking to our local government area headquarters. We are calling on security operatives to come to our rescue."

THISDAY reliably gathered that over 500 residents of the community had fled the area for fear of another attack by the bandits.

It was also gathered that those injured during the invasion were rushed to an undisclosed hospital in the local government headquarters for medical treatment.

Meanwhile, the spokesman of the Katsina State Police Command, SP Gambo Isah, while confirming the incident to THISDAY in a telephone interview, said five persons were killed during the attack, adding that "we have evacuated the corpses of the victims.

"It was an ambush by bandits. There is conflict between Civilian JTF and bandits, and many of these bandits were killed. So, the bandits, as an act of reprisal, attacked the village and killed about five people."

He said the command had since launched a manhunt for those who perpetrated the killings, adding that normalcy had returned to the community.

According to him, "normalcy has returned and the people have returned to their houses. Our men, including senior officers, are in the forest searching for the bandits."

While describing the activities of Civilian JTF in the state as illegal, Isah said: "What they are doing is illegal. You cannot go to somebody's house on mere suspicion, fish him out and kill him.

"Even as police officers, we don't have the right to kill someone because of mere suspicion. It is the court that decides whether somebody is guilty or not. They should avoid taking laws into their hands. They should have confidence in the police by reporting happenings to us."