

Death Toll in Katsina Killings Hits 100 as Masari Condole Victims' Families

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Francis Sardauna in Katsina

The death toll in the recent clash between terrorists and vigilantes in Gidan Gamji village, Danmaidaki ward of Kankara Local Government Area of Katsina State has risen to 100 following the discovery of 56 more corpses.

A credible security source from Kankara told THISDAY in a telephone interview Monday that the additional corpses were recovered between Friday and Saturday by combined security personnel deployed to restore normalcy in the community.

THISDAY had earlier reported that terrorists ambushed and killed 44 vigilantes in Gidan Gamji village, Danmaidaki ward of Kankara Local Government Area of the state.

But the spokesman of the state Police Command, SP Gambo Isah, while confirming the incident, said those killed were members of the outlawed Yansakai (volunteers) group from 11 villages in Bakori Local Government Area who were tracing the footpaths of hoodlums to Yargoje forest.

Isah, in a statement Friday, further said the terrorists planned and launched a coordinated ambush on Yansakai, while “the hoodlums shot and killed forty-one (41) Yansakai and wounded two”.

However, the source said: “We recovered additional 56 dead bodies of the vigilantes and some residents. The corpses were recovered by search parties in Gidan Gamji village and some adjoining villages in Kankara Local Government, bringing the total number of people killed to 100 as of this (Monday) morning.”

A resident of Guga, one of the affected communities, Abubakar Hashimu, said: “Even on Friday, 63 people were buried, and on Saturday, a canter vehicle was also brought loaded with over 30 corpses, we are still anticipating more bodies. More than 100 died so far. The incident happened on Thursday after several cows were rustled on Wednesday by the terrorists.

“We felt bad when the incident happened. Many people have deserted the community now due to the incident. The bandits mobilised other bandits from

Zamfara to Yargoje, Gidan Gamji, a terrorists' camp in order to assist them in the operation but they were killed.”

Meanwhile, Governor Aminu Bello Masari has sent a powerful government delegation led by the Secretary to the State Government (SSG), Alhaji Muntari Lawal, to condole the families of the victims in their respective communities.

Lawal, who led the government delegation to Guga, Yargoje, Gidan Gamji communities, where the victims were killed, condoled with the people, while describing the situation as highly tragic for not only the victims and their families, but also for all residents of the state.

The secretary to the state government called on the residents to learn how to depend on themselves as such situations cannot be singlehandedly treated by the government or security agencies alone.

He, however, said: “The actual number of those killed cannot be ascertained because they are still counting the dead, nobody can tell you the accurate figure because some of the bodies are scattered in the bush, they have to go and retrieve them.

“As we are counting the number, so also are the bandits. So people should learn to be courageous enough to confront the devil before they finish them. Don't wait for the government, before the government intervenes the damage has been done, so organise yourselves to confront them.”

The Special Adviser to Governor Masari on Security Matters, Ibrahim Ahmed-Katsina; Commissioner for Water Resources, Musa Adamu-Funtua; Commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, Ya'u Umar Gwajo-gwajo and the Special Adviser on Agriculture, Dr. Abba Yakubu, were part of the government's delegation.

In a related development, the member representing Bakori/Danja Federal Constituency, Amiru Tukur, told journalists that 500 terrorists invaded five communities in the area, alleging that they are terrorists' informants and collaborators residing within the communities.

According to him, "As of now, over 80 corpses of the bandits have been recovered alongside 21 to 22 of the Yansakai members."