

Bandits kill traditional ruler, ten others, kidnap 24 in Niger

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By Wole Mosadomi

...wife of slain traditional ruler also abducted

The village head of Kusherki in Rafi local government area of Niger state, Alhaji Masud Abubakar has been killed along with ten other villagers by bandits.

Not only that, the bandits also kidnapped twenty villagers from different communities in the area while the wife of slain traditional ruler was among those kidnapped.

An eye witness told our Correspondent that the raid started at about 12:30 and lasted till around 2:pm unabated.

The bandits numbering up to fifty were said to have invaded the Communities on Motorcycles armed with AK47 rifles and other dangerous weapons as they rode from village to village and started shooting sporadically and ended up killing eleven people including the village head.

Among the eleven killed were five members of the local Vigilante and other youths supporting the vigilante men.

It was reliably gathered that the bandits started from Kasuwe village and moved from there to other villages killing and maiming innocent villagers.

They were also said to have moved from house to house and carted away with cash, valuables and foodstuffs.

Just as the invasion was on in these Communities, another set of bandits were also reported to have blocked the Major Highway from Sarkin Pawa to Minna leaving motorists to scramble for their safety.

Secretary of Munyan Local Government, Mr James Isaac Jagaba confirmed the story but could not ascertain whether people were abducted or not.

According to him,"I cannot give details of what actually happened now but members of the Vigilante are still battling with the bandits.

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Reacting to the incessant banditry especially in the past three days, the state government in a statement signed by Chief Press Secretary to Governor Abubakar Sani Bello, Mrs. Mary Noel-Berje confirmed the Kuserki incident and lamented the increasing activities of kidnappers and Bandits in the state which she said is becoming a nightmare to the people.

She described the situation as callous and regrettable.

“The murder of the traditional ruler is callous, regrettable and it is a challenge to the security agencies to intensify their search to fish-out and ensure that the perpetrators of such heinous acts are brought to justice”

“The situation particularly in the last 72 hours has become regrettably alarming. Efforts are ongoing to secure the release of the abducted NSTA passengers the Governor assured because the development is becoming more worrisome.

Governor Bello, therefore, seek more of Federal Government’s intervention to tackle the rampaging menace noting that “banditry is becoming a situation of war in the state”, hence the need for a fresh, sustainable and multidimensional strategy that will neutralize both the bandits and their informants.

Just last Sunday, bandits blocked the ever busy Kontagora-Tegina-Minna Highway and kidnapped eighteen passengers from the Niger State Transport Authority,(NSTA) bus and left a nursing mother and her child on the Highway while the other eighteen passengers were led into the bush.

The whereabouts of the abducted persons is yet unknown.

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