



## Banditry: Sokoto confirms 23 deaths in travellers' attack

● Buhari expresses sadness  
seeks support of Nigerians

● Senate, Ortom mourn

By Peter Duru

**S**OKOTO State Government, yesterday, confirmed 23 deaths among travellers attacked by bandits in Isa Local Government Area of the state.

This came as the Senate, mourned the deaths of travelers burnt to ashes on Monday by suspected bandits on their way to Gayan in Kaduna State.

Also, Governor Samuel Ortom of Benue State has sympathized with his Sokoto counterpart, Governor Aminu Tambuwal, as well as the government and people of the state over the massacre of the commuters.

Meanwhile, President Muhammadu Buhari has expressed sadness over the recent gruesome attacks on innocent travellers in Sokoto State.

The president's reaction is contained in a statement issued by his Media Aide, Mr Femi Adesina on Wednesday in Abuja.

"I am very distressed at the manner of death visited on these hapless citizens who were undertaking a legitimate journey to another part of the country.

"It shows that the evil this administration is confronting is one that requires the support and involvement of all Nigerians," he said.

The president extended deep condolences to the families of the victims, assuring that security agencies would continue to give their all to bring to an end the operations of the despicable people.

Governor Tambuwal's Special Adviser on Media and Publicity, Malam Muhammad Bello, said the state government had

introduced measures and new strategies to avert future occurrence through increased synergy with security agencies.

"Contrary to speculations that over 40 people lost their lives in a bandits attack on a 42-seater bus traveling to Kaduna on Monday, facts emerged that 23 people lost their lives during an attack at Gidan Bawa village in Isa LGA of Sokoto state," Bello said.

Meanwhile, coming under order 43 of the Senate rules, Senator Ibrahim Gobir (Sokoto East), drew the attention of his colleagues to the gruesome murder of the travelers.

He lamented the spate of killings, which, he warned were alarming and on the increase.

He called on the military and security agencies to immediately intervene by deploying personnel to secure the lives of residents in states affected by the activities of bandits.

The Senate, thereafter, observed a minute silence to mourn the victims of Monday's attack by bandits.

Ortom in a statement in Makurdi by his Chief Press Secretary, Nathaniel Ikyur, said: "The boldness these terrorists are exhibiting daily across the country is a clear indication that the nation is in grave danger and stands the risk of losing its sovereignty if urgent steps are not taken to eliminate them and keep Nigeria safe again.

"Governor Ortom condoled with Governor Tambuwal and the people of Sokoto State and prayed God to grant the victims rest, and the families fortitude to bear the irreparable loss."