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The vehicle involved in the crash that claimed seven lives in Niger State.

Bandits lay siege to Sokoto communities, kill scores, abduct 50

BANDITS have reportedly killed many residents and abducted over 50 others, during attacks on communities in Goronyo, Gada and Sabon Birni LGAs of Sokoto State.

Speaking with *TheCable*, Lukman Ilyasu, a resident of Sabon Birni, said the attacks took place between Monday and Wednesday.

Ilyasu said the bandits invaded the communities in large numbers, shooting sporadically, and causing many residents to sustain various degrees of injuries.

"The attack started from Monday to Wednesday. The affected villages are in Goronyo, Gada and Sabon Birni LGAs," he told *TheCable*.

"The villages that were attacked yesterday in Sabon Birni are Dan Gari where seven people were killed and dozens kidnapped, in Kurawa two people were killed and several others abducted, then Gumozo village, three residents were killed and many others kidnapped.

"They were about to invade Gatawa village when security operatives engaged them and I

learnt that a number of the bandits were killed in the process.

"The bandits killed many people and took away more than 50 people from some villages. You know how they operate, they invaded different communities on separate days. They have been attacking Sabon Birni for a long time now. They even imposed a compulsory peace levy on our communities.

"This is the second year we have been placed on a compulsory peace payment. They said they will not allow our farmers to go to farms and cultivate or harvest food produce.

"Last year, they imposed N3 million on Sabon Birni due to our large population but we could only pay N1.5 million. This year, we were asked to pay N2 million because of the reduction in population as many people have been killed and several others have been displaced but we only paid N1 million to them."

Women, children abducted

Kabir Dauda, lawmaker

representing Gada East in the Sokoto house of assembly, in an interview with *Vision FM* in the state, said among the 50 persons abducted were women and children, adding that they are still in captivity.

Dauda said the bandits have demanded N5 million for the release of one person.

"Two months ago, the security situation reduced but currently, the situation is more heightened than it used to be," he added.

"Currently, we have over 50 residents that are being held captive by the bandits. In the process of the attack, some people sustained gunshot injuries.

"Some of the injured persons are in a specialist hospital, some are in Goronyo, while others are in Gada.

"Those are some of the villages they invaded. The incidents all occurred within one week. They kept coming every day for three consecutive days. All these happened last week.

"They invaded Basana, they killed some people and abducted some, they also attacked Tsitse, Balakozo, they took children and several others, they invaded Karangiya and abducted three people and also shot several others. They also attacked Garin Hashimu, killed some residents and also went away with many people.

"Altogether, the people they abducted that I can confirm are 50 persons taken from different villages."

o strikes kill scores of terrorists in Borno

within the Sambisa forest.

The source disclosed that on December 25, Boko Haram's Amir Jaysh, Ali Ngulde sent some militant delegation, headed by Amir Muke, from the Mandara Mountains and

sustained various degrees of injuries, later died, due to a lack of proper medical assistance.

Further damage assessment indicated a mass burial