

## Gunmen invade Katsina mosque at dawn, kill 13 worshippers



**By Ogalah Dunamis**

**KATSINA —** Tragedy struck in the early hours of Tuesday as gunmen stormed a mosque in Unguwan Mantau village, Malumfashi Local Government Area of Katsina State, killing 13 worshippers during dawn (Fajr) prayers.

The attackers reportedly opened fire on the congregation at around 5 a.m., shooting indiscriminately inside the mosque.

Dr Nasir Mu'azu, Katsina State Commissioner for Internal Security and Home Affairs, who confirmed the incident, said the attack was believed to be a reprisal following a recent ambush by villagers on a bandit group in the area. In that incident, several bandits were killed, kidnap victims were rescued, and weapons were recovered.

“The victims were observing prayers when the criminals started shooting sporadically,” Mu'azu said, adding that security personnel from the army, police and air force had been deployed to the area to restore calm.

He noted that during the rainy season, bandits often take advantage of tall crops to conceal their movements and launch surprise assaults.

The state government commended the courage of local residents who have resisted criminal gangs but urged closer coordination with security agencies to avoid further bloodshed. Authorities have promised additional reinforcements to safeguard vulnerable farming communities.

Katsina, the home state of former President Muhammadu Buhari, has been a hotspot of banditry and violent attacks in Nigeria's North-West, with armed groups engaging in mass abductions, extortion, and deadly raids despite ongoing military operations.