

Bloody Weekend: 102 Killed in Borno, Sokoto, Katsina, Edo

By Musa Ubandawaki,
Ibrahim Hassan-Wuyo,
Ndahi Marama, and
Ogalah Ibrahim

A bloody weekend across Nigeria left at least 102 people dead, including security personnel and suspected bandits, in a series of violent incidents reported in Borno, Sokoto, Edo and Katsina states.

Katsina: Bandits Kill Seven in Night Raid

In Katsina State, seven people were killed when armed bandits raided Magajin Wando village between 11 p.m. and midnight on Friday. According to the Katsina State Ministry of Internal Security and Home Affairs, the attack was initially repelled by the Community Watch Corps (CWC), a volunteer security group dedicated to protecting local communities. However, as the corps members were evacuating the injured to hospital, they were ambushed by the same bandits in what appears to be a revenge attack.

The ministry confirmed a fierce exchange of gunfire during the ambush, during which the CWC vehicle was riddled with bullets and later set ablaze. Fortunately, the corps members escaped unharmed. Preliminary investigations suggest that several bandits were killed during the initial confrontation, which may have prompted the retaliatory ambush.

The Katsina State Government commended the CWC for its bravery and sacrifice, stating that their swift response prevented what could have been a far worse tragedy. Authorities assured that the state government is working closely with the military and police forces to track down and dismantle the criminal networks responsible for the attacks, which continue to plague northwestern Nigeria.

Sokoto: Villagers Kill 15 Bandits, Rescue Hostages

In a remarkable display of community resilience, residents of Shagari and Bimasa villages in Tureta

Local Government Area of Sokoto State launched a coordinated counteroffensive against bandits who had laid siege to their communities. In a prolonged gun battle lasting several hours, the villagers reportedly killed 15 bandits.

Eyewitnesses said the bandits, who attacked in large numbers, were overpowered by the coordinated self-defense efforts of the communities. The locals also freed scores of kidnapped victims who had been held hostage in nearby forests. During the retreat, the bandits abandoned dozens of rustled cattle, which were recovered by the villagers.

The joint action by Shagari and Bimasa communities has been hailed as a turning point in the fight against banditry in the region. Community leaders have called on the Sokoto State Government and federal authorities to reinforce security in the area to prevent possible reprisals from the defeated bandits.

"We will never allow bandits to dictate our lives again," declared a youth leader from Shagari, reflecting the renewed hope among residents that the tide is finally turning against rural banditry.

Borno: Boko Haram Kills 63 in Darajamal

Meanwhile, in Borno State, Boko Haram insurgents launched a deadly attack on Darajamal, a community near Bama, killing 63 people, comprising five soldiers and approximately 58 civilians. The civilians were mostly internally displaced persons who had been resettled in Darajamal two months prior after fleeing earlier attacks.

Governor Babagana Umara Zulum visited the community on Saturday to console grieving families and community leaders. Visibly moved, he condemned the attack in the strongest terms, describing it as a brutal act against innocent people striving to rebuild their lives.

"We are here to commiserate with the people of Darajamal over what happened last night that has claimed the lives of many people. It is very sad. This community was settled a few months ago and they go about their normal activities, but unfortunately, they experienced a Boko Haram attack last night. Our visit is to commiserate with them and build their resilience," Governor Zulum said.

Confirming the casualty figures, he added, "At this

moment, we have confirmed that 63 people lost their lives, both civilians and military, although the civilian casualties are more. Close to about 60 civilians and five soldiers lost their lives."

Governor Zulum also noted the challenges faced in the ongoing fight against insecurity in Borno and called for the immediate deployment of the newly trained Forest Guards to support the military in protecting vulnerable communities. "We have to take note that the numerical strength of the military is not enough to cover everywhere. So far so good, two sets of Forest Guards have been trained, therefore one of the solutions that we need to implement immediately is to deploy the trained Forest Guards to most of the locations that are vulnerable; they will protect the forest and communities," he said.

Senator Kaka Shehu Lawan, representing Borno Central (which includes Darajamal), condemned the attack, calling it a crime against humanity. He expressed his commitment to support Governor Zulum through legislative measures aimed at restoring peace in the state.

2027: Uncertainty in Jonathan's camp over party platform for likely presidential run

By Soni Daniel,
Northern Region Editor

There is growing uncertainty in the camp of former President Goodluck Jonathan regarding which political platform he may consider using, should he decide to pursue a return to the presidency in 2027.

Sources close to Jonathan's camp suggest that the delay in any official declaration stems from ongoing consultations about which of the major opposition parties would best serve his potential ambition.

According to officials familiar with internal discussions, the dilemma appears to revolve around the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), of which Jonathan is a founding member, and the recently restructured African Democratic Congress

(ADC)—both said to have loyal supporters of the former president within their ranks.

A source within the PDP noted that Jonathan remains undecided, especially given that his allies are split between the two parties. However, the presence of influential figures such as the FCT Minister, Nyesom Wike, in the PDP and Dumebi Kachikwu, the ADC's 2023 presidential candidate, is said to weigh heavily on internal dynamics within both platforms.

Complicating matters further are ongoing legal disputes surrounding the leadership structures of the PDP and ADC. Observers believe that the outcomes of these internal issues could significantly shape Jonathan's decision ahead of the 2027 elections.

One source close to the former president

commented:

"There's optimism in the camp, but also hesitation. While the ADC appears to be aligned with many of Jonathan's associates, there are still power dynamics at play in both parties that need to be carefully evaluated," the source noted.

The same source noted that while Jonathan's loyalists are pushing for a return to the PDP, citing longstanding affiliations and ideological alignment, strategic considerations continue to delay a final decision.

It was also gathered that a number of political stakeholders, including some former governors and party officials, have expressed interest in supporting Jonathan, should he decide to contest. Some of them are reportedly working behind the scenes to build a coalition that could strengthen his chances.