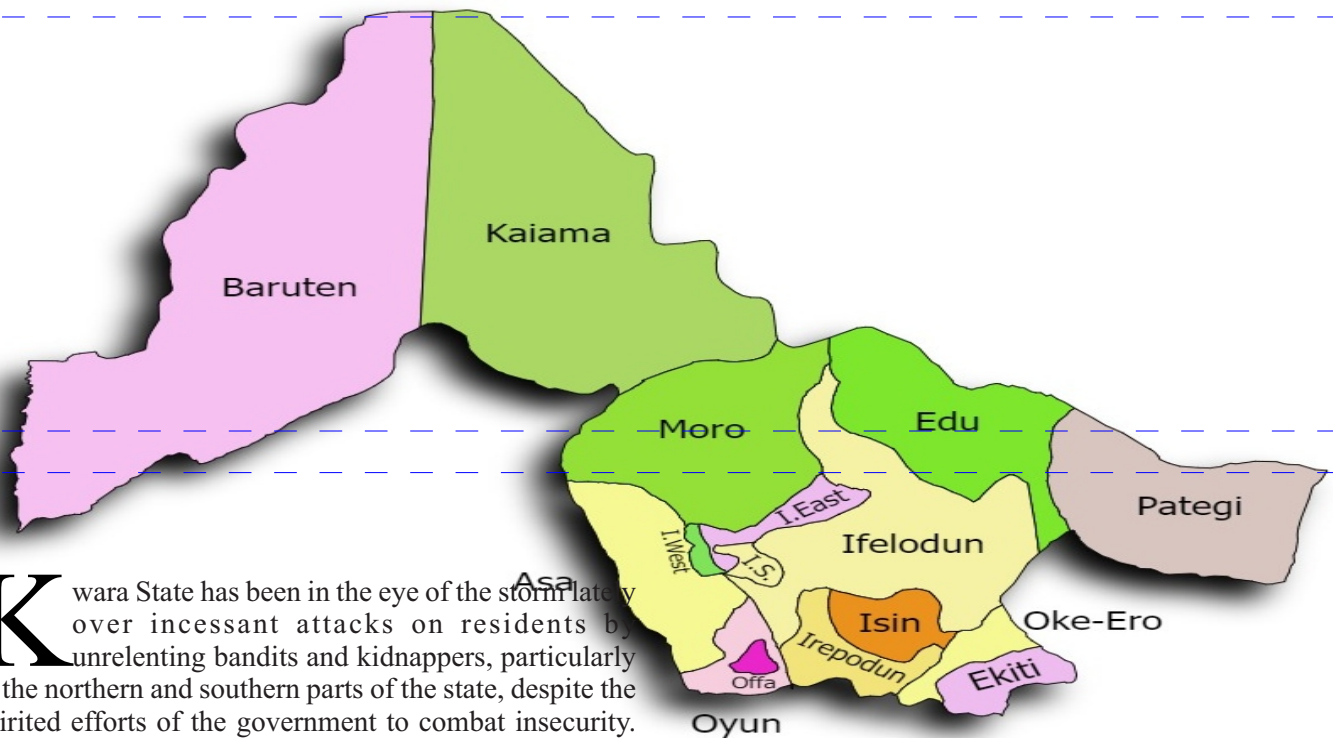


NIGERIA ARMY DEPLOYS FULL BRIGADE TO FLUSH OUT THE KILLERS IN KWARA



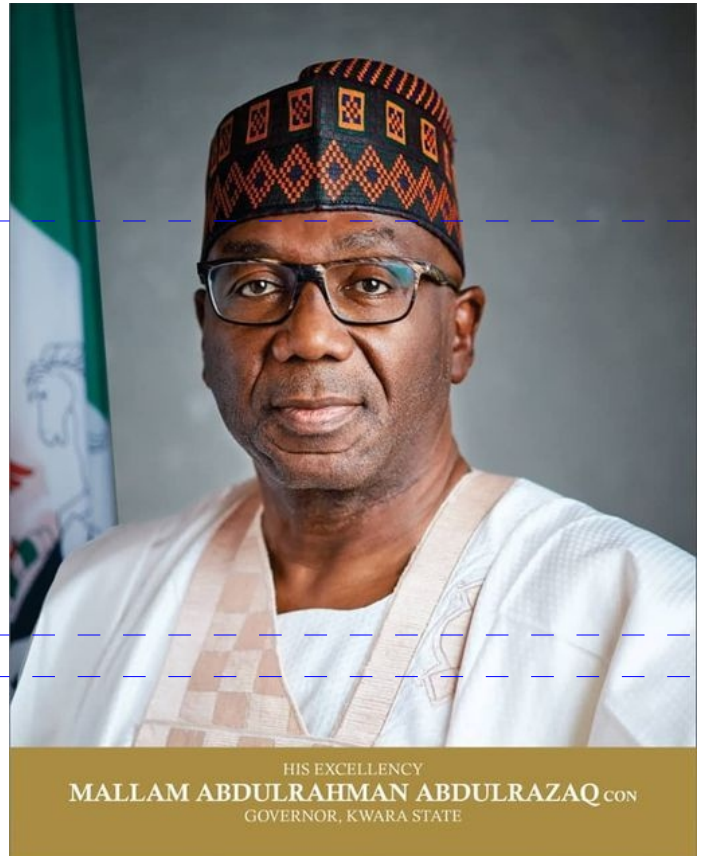
Kwara State has been in the eye of the storm lately over incessant attacks on residents by unrelenting bandits and kidnappers, particularly in the northern and southern parts of the state, despite the spirited efforts of the government to combat insecurity. Among the 16 local governments in the state, the five local governments, otherwise called emirate councils, namely Ilorin East, Ilorin West, Ilorin South, Asa, and Moro, have not been seriously affected by the ongoing insecurity. The same with Offa and Oyun local governments, leaving the remaining nine local governments scattered in the southern and northern parts of the state under siege of killings and abductions by the bandits. It was reliably gathered that the bandits, comprising mostly herdsmen from Zamfara and Sokoto states who infiltrated Kwara through Niger State, in connivance with some locals, have been perpetrating the current criminalities in the state for some time now. It was also gathered that they operate in the thick forest in the northern and southern parts of the state where they have settled for close to 30 years now. Sources said these people residing in the thick forests, in connivance with some locals who provide information, reportedly embraced the business of kidnapping some years back having realized that it is a much easier means of making quick and big money, turning them overnight into billionaires. Reported cases of abductions and killings started in local governments in the northern part of the state, namely Edu, Patigi, Baruten, and Kaiama, about four years ago before it became a regular occurrence. In Kpankanragi village in Edu Local Government, among several other attacks, armed bandits abducted a woman in a late-night assault in August. About the same time in Gamalegi village in the same local government, four people were abducted by gunmen. As if these weren't enough, bandits launched a second brutal attack on

Lataworo community in Edu LGA, forcing residents to flee. Also, a prominent businessman was abducted in Tsaragi, in Edu. In another attack, bandits killed a newlywed and stole hundreds of cows in Bokungi, Tsaragi community in the LGA. There were also unreported cases of the killing of farmers on their farms and abductions in Kaiama Local Government. Similarly, in August, six people were kidnapped in Motokun and Agboro communities in Patigi Local Government while six others suffered gunshot wounds during an operation. In Kwara South, being the immediate neighbors of Kwara North, in September in Babanla community in Ifelodun Local Government, two people were abducted shortly after Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq visited.

Sunday Vanguard gathered that more than 90% of the families and relations of the abductees since the crisis of insecurity started have been put under financial pressure by raising hundreds of millions of Naira demanded by kidnappers, a development that made kidnappings unstoppable in the state. "No sane person would fold his arms when kidnappers demand ransom to free their loved ones. Today, aside the millions they demand, they have added drinks, foods, etc. to their list", Emmanuel Ayeoribe, a former Chairman of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) in Kwara State, who contributed money towards releasing an abducted friend, told Sunday Vanguard. "Many businesses and lives have been ruined financially in the process of securing family and friends from the jaws of bandits. "This is very unfortunate in a

country where we have governments that have powers to do and undo. It is their responsibility to protect lives and properties of citizens, so the ball is their court.” But the state government hasn't folded its arms as several actions were being taken to stop the menace. For instance, Governor AbdulRazaq supported security agencies with logistics like vehicles and motorcycles to fight these criminals. With the bandits unrelenting in their actions, he has, however, called for increased military presence. In the meantime, the police, the military, and local vigilantes have been involved in joint searches for attackers and rescued some abducted victims, while several others are still left with kidnappers. But since government was not winning the battle anytime soon, or so it seems, it took key decisions to mitigate the impact among which were the forced closure of cattle markets in Kwara South and relocation of the NYSC Orientation Camp from Yikpata in Edu Local Government to Ilorin, the state capital. In the same vein, the 2025 Medical and Surgical Outreach in Ifelodun was relocated from Oke-Ode to Omupo following the Oke-Ode attack. It would be recalled that despite government's efforts, bandits have persisted in attacking Oke-Ode, Ndanaku, and Lataworo, leading to deaths, abductions, and displacement. The latest attack was the massacre last Sunday morning in Oke-Ode where no fewer than 11 forest guards and a community head were killed by suspected bandits. The suspected bandits allegedly took advantage of the Department of State Service (DSS) withdrawal of ammunition from the forest guards to launch the fatal attack, a claim that government disputed. While the attack lasted, an unspecified number of residents were also reportedly kidnapped. A member of the forest guards, who escaped the attack and simply identified as Ajetunmobi, told Sunday Vanguard that government was engaging in propaganda over the incident. “We have been hearing that the bandits were around the community since Saturday night and we sent out messages to security operatives to be prepared”, he narrated. “But to our surprise, this morning, the attackers started the attack from the duty post, targeting vigilantes”.

According to him, among those killed were community members identified as Oji, Saheed Metubi and Baale Ógba Ayo, among others. He said the corpses of the victims had been taken to the police station in the area while the injured were rushed to the General Hospital in Share. The survivor particularly accused government of failing in its primary duty of protecting citizens, noting that intelligence about a possible attack had circulated days earlier. “The government failed in its primary duty. Information had been circulating for some time now that they were planning to attack Oke-Ode. Why were the soldiers withdrawn?” he asked. In a viral video that trailed the attack, a lady, who appeared distressed, was seen mourning her dead husband and his brother. She also accused the DSS of disarming the town's vigilantes prior to the attack, a move she claimed gave the assailants undue firepower advantage. But the state government, in a response, dismissed the claims that the DSS disarmed the vigilantes otherwise known as forest guards in Oke-Ode.



In a related development, it was gathered that about 800 vigilantes were trained at the military barracks in Sobi, Ilorin on security tactics and how to handle guns, in complementing efforts of the military and other attached security agencies in dealing with the criminals causing terror in the state of harmony. Sources said the challenge of the forest guards recruited by the state is their inability to access AK-47 rifles which the bandits and the kidnappers are reportedly using to overpower them. Furthermore, it was learnt that the bureaucracy of getting the military and officers of NAF to quickly come to the rescue of the state government at the nick of time had been a major challenge to the state government, causing a lull in the speed with which it wanted to eliminate the bandits from the state. It was further gathered that, despite the available information provided by the forest guards about the locations of the bandits in the thick forest, efforts by the state government to get the actionable support of the Air Force and military in neutralizing the bandits according to Sunday Vanguard are being sabotaged as they're not always forthcoming. “This therefore makes it easy for the bandits with superior weapons and information from the local saboteurs to overrun the forest guards and even the police officers at strategic times”, a local in Oke-Ode who pleaded not to be named said A security expert, who also craved anonymity, said in an interview that the recent security lopsidedness in Nigeria whereby the police, army, and even Air Force are not under the state government, but federal, at times like this make all the actionable efforts of the state government to effectively fight criminalities a nullity. Governor AbdulRazaq, after a security meeting on Tuesday in

Ilorin, vowed that he will fight insecurity with every resource at his disposal, assuring that Kwara will not be a hiding place for criminals.

In recent weeks, reports have emerged of coordinated assaults across parts of Patigi and Ifelodun local government areas, with victims ranging from villagers to security personnel and political leaders. At least 12 forest guards were killed in Oke-Ode, Ifelodun Local Government Area, after unidentified gunmen invaded the forest. Four others survived with injuries and are receiving treatment in hospital. Eyewitnesses said the attackers stormed the area with heavy weapons, firing indiscriminately and forcing residents to flee. In another incident in Matogu, Patigi LGA, suspected Fulani bandits killed 10 people, including a pregnant woman, and abducted seven villagers. The attackers reportedly struck around 6 a.m. and operated for about four hours without resistance. Villagers recounted how the community was left helpless until the gunmen departed. Elsewhere in Patigi, a ward chairman of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), Alhaji Abdullahi Kpotun, and his son were killed



when suspected kidnappers attempted to seize them from their home in Lile village. Also in Motokun and Agboro villages, bandits struck again, killing a police officer and a woman while abducting six residents and injuring several others. The series of killings and abductions have heightened tension across the state, with many residents now fearful of going to their farms or traveling to markets. Community leaders have appealed to government and security agencies to step up protection, warning that confidence in the state's ability to defend its people is at breaking point. A resident of Oke-Ode expressed the community's frustration: "If security personnel themselves are being killed, who is left to defend us? We are begging the government to send more soldiers and provide equipment so that we can live without fear." Analysts say the attacks underscore the fragility of Nigeria's security architecture, particularly in northern

states where banditry and kidnapping have become rampant.

They urge authorities to invest in intelligence gathering, modern equipment, and better coordination to prevent such tragedies. As residents mourn, the unanswered question remains: if forest guards, police officers, and even political leaders can be cut down so easily in their own communities, who is truly safe in Kwara or anywhere in Nigeria? From Government source, Eleven Forest Guards and a community Head were shot dead in Okeode Ifelodun local government area of Kwara state by rampaging bandits who took the community by storm on Sunday, September 28, 2025. The deceased Forest Guards and vigilantes have been positioned to provide security for the community before they met their untimely death. Consequently, Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq, who expressed deep grief over the tragedy despite his efforts to stamp out banditry in the state, called for increased security deployments to the community and the state in general to rout the criminals involved in attacks in parts of the state. According to a statement issued by his press secretary, Rafiu Ajakaiye, to journalists on Sunday, the Governor said the state requires more military deployments to roll back the activities of criminals in parts of Kwara South and Kwara North. He particularly regretted the loss of innocent civilians and the forest guards who mounted a spirited resistance to the assailants in the early morning incident on grounds of patriotism and love for their communities. "My heartfelt condolences go to the families. No word can adequately capture the depth of my sadness, and nothing can compensate the bereaved families for these incidents, in spite of our efforts and the investments in enlisting and training the forest guards to bolster the conventional forces. "Our people are understandably concerned about the situation, and I wholeheartedly share in this grief," the Governor said in the statement on Sunday. "While we appreciate the efforts and unquantifiable sacrifices of the security forces as well as the successes so far, we definitely need to do a lot more until we are completely out of the woods. "Finally, I urge our brave residents to remain calm and avoid the temptation to turn on ourselves. I equally commend all the forest guards and the local hunters who, though lost five of their compatriots, equally neutralized several of the attackers. We will forever be grateful to all of them as our heroes The Army Headquarters, meanwhile, has directed the General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the 2 Division of the Nigerian Army in Ibadan to relocate immediately to Kwara to further coordinate and enhance the military response to the development. Similarly, the state police command in a statement by the Spokesperson Ejire Adetoun Adeyemi issued on Sunday, while confirming the development, stated that: "The Kwara State Police Command informs the public of an unfortunate incident that occurred in the early hours of today, 28th September, 2025, in Oke-Ode, Ifelodun LGA of the state. "At about 7:00am today, armed men invaded the Ogbayo area of Oke-Ode, shooting sporadically. A combined team of police operatives and members of the National Forest

Security Service responded swiftly to the scene, where they discovered 12 lifeless bodies of vigilante members, including the Baale of Ogbayo. It added, "the victims sustained multiple gunshot wounds. Additionally, four persons who sustained injuries were immediately taken to Hospital for treatment, while the deceased were evacuated." It further stated that, "the Kwara State Police Command, in collaboration with the military and NFSS, has intensified efforts to track down the perpetrators of these heinous crimes. Manhunt operations are ongoing, and the Command assures residents that those responsible will be brought to justice. The Commissioner of Police, CP Adekimi Ojo, deeply commiserates with the families of the victims, praying for the repose of their souls. He assures the people of Kwara State of the police command's unwavering commitment to their safety and security.

Facing increasing criticisms over his government's handling of the worsening insecurity, Governor AbdulRazaq sought to redirect public attention toward Saraki and the People's Democratic Party (PDP). Amid the growing wave of kidnappings and killings across Kwara State, Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq has shifted blame to former Senate President, Bukola Saraki, linking the 2018 Offa bank robbery — which claimed 33 lives — to the state's current security challenges that have reportedly left over 100 people dead.

Speaking to journalists in Oke-Ode, the Governor accused Saraki of hypocrisy, saying the former Senate President must "first take responsibility" for the tragic 2018 Offa robbery before questioning his (AbdulRazaq's) competence in dealing with the present crisis. The Governor's remarks, which were captured in a viral video shared by the state government's media handlers, have drawn mixed reactions. According to AbdulRazaq, "It was under PDP. Let me put it in this context: Bukola Saraki bears a court statement and his own statement was that he is the leader of PDP in Kwara. Under his leadership, 33 people were killed in one day," the Governor said. He further alleged that the armed robbers behind the massacre were loyalists of Saraki. "The boys that went there were his boys. They went with Aso Ebi of Saraki's wedding to rob Offa. Not only that, they also went with vehicles bearing number plates marked 'Saraki'," AbdulRazaq claimed. The Governor, who was reacting to fresh criticism from the PDP after its recent congress in Ilorin, insisted that Saraki and his party lacked the moral grounds to accuse him of incompetence in handling the state's worsening security crisis. "Thank God the culprits have been sentenced to death now. Saraki himself is in court because the families of Offa victims have taken him to court. So PDP should go and answer that case in court before talking about security in Kwara," AbdulRazaq added. The comments are already generating controversy across Kwara, where residents continue to decry government's slow response to bandit attacks, kidnappings, and killings. However, residents say the Governor's attempt to weaponized the Offa robbery saga against Saraki only underscores his lack of concrete solutions to the insecurity ravaging the state. Meanwhile,

in September 2024, SaharaReporters reported that a Kwara State High Court sentenced the five suspects involved in the Offa robbery case to death by hanging. This was pronounced by the court after it was satisfied that the prosecution had successfully proved its case against the defendants. The defendants were convicted by Justice Haleema Salman on three count charges: illegal possession of firearms and ammunition, conspiracy to commit armed robbery and conspiracy to commit culpable homicide punishable by death. SaharaReporters learned that the court allowed the convicts to take the plea of allocutus (Plea of mercy) but eventually sentenced all of them to death by hanging. "The five of you shall be hanged on your neck until you are dead to serve as a lesson to others," the presiding judge stated in her ruling. In April 2018, some daredevil robbers stormed Offa town of Kwara State and robbed at least five commercial banks in the ancient town. Many people, including nine policemen, were killed in the incident which involved the stealing of an undisclosed sum of money from the banks. The convicted suspects are; Ayoade Akinnibosun, Azeez Salahudeen, Niyi Ogundiran, Ibikunle Ogunleye, and Adeola Abraham. SaharaReporters previously exposed how Governor AbdulRazaq's aides attempted to downplay insecurity by circulating old photographs of Nigerian Air Force strikes in Borno State and passing them off as fresh operations in Kwara. On September 22, the governor's aide, Olayinka Fafoluyi (aka Solace), shared images of airstrikes on his Facebook page, claiming they were deterrence operations against bandits in Oke-Ode. A fact-check traced the pictures to Operation HADIN KAI in Borno on October 25, 2024. Residents had dismissed the spin as insensitive, given the wave of killings that claimed at least 12 vigilantes and the Baale of Ogbayo during a dawn raid in Oke-Ode. From Oke-Ode to Patigi, villagers continue to flee en masse amid repeated raids. In Essanti, two sons of a youth leader were abducted in daylight, with kidnappers boasting that the move would "reduce the need for night invasions." In Marri village, assailants struck under heavy rainfall, killing one, injuring another, and carting away motorcycles before soldiers intervened.

In Oke-Ode, Kwara State, blood flows where leadership has failed and the people are agitated and saying enough excuse and urging the Governor to confront the ongoing massacre in the state. Few weeks back, bandits stormed villages, killing at least a dozen forest guards and terrorizing helpless families. The BBC captured what words alone cannot: a grieving woman filming herself beside the corpses of her husband and his brother, crying out against a state that has abandoned her. Her anguish is not just personal—it is a symbol of a country where citizens die while leaders trade blame. This is not just another tragedy. It is a mirror of a broken covenant between the governed and those who swore an oath to protect them. When villagers, in their grief, blocked roads to demand security, the least they deserved was urgent reassurance. Instead, Abuja stayed mute. No swift presidential directive. No emergency plan. Not even a mention of the massacre in the President's Independence Day speech. The silence was deafening. Even more

troubling are the woman's accusations, raw and unfiltered: that authorities disarmed one group while arming another. Whether true or not, the very existence of such a perception exposes the erosion of trust between citizens and government. Insecurity thrives where faith in leadership collapses. And today in Kwara, both trust and security are in dangerously short supply. Yet, while Kwara bled, the President was at a book launch in Owerri—joined by Governor Abdulrahman AbdulRazaq, whose state was under siege. At the very moment he was needed most, Kwara's chief executive chose optics over duty. And when the state government finally spoke, it was not to mourn the dead, comfort the grieving, or present a plan. Instead, the governor's media aide attacked former governor Bukola Saraki, accusing him of “cheap politics.” This is worse than silence. It is betrayal. The duty of a governor is simple: protect lives and property. On this, Governor Abdulrahman has faltered. His people did not elect him to trade insults; they elected him to ensure farmers can return safely to their fields, children can sleep without fear of gunmen, and widows are not left clinging to corpses while pleading for justice. Kwara does not need excuses. Kwara does not need political score-settling. Kwara needs security, leadership, and courage. The governor must rise above petty quarrels and confront the killers head-on. He must deploy resources, demand federal reinforcements, strengthen local vigilance groups, and prove to his people that their lives matter more than partisan battles. History will not remember how well Abdulrahman sparred with Saraki. It will remember whether he stood firm when Kwara cried out for protection. Enough is enough.

Also a social pressure group. MEN, The Movement for the Emancipation of Nigerians (MEN) has raised alarm concerning the deterioration of security in Kwara State, where terrorists have unleashed carnage through kidnappings, rapes, and the displacement of communities. In a statement signed by Comrade General of MEN, Barr Solomon Dalung noted that the development is worrisome given that Kwara has historically maintained a peaceful atmosphere. “Equally troubling are reports that youths who staged peaceful protests against violent criminals were arrested by security operatives, allegedly on the directives of some traditional rulers. MEN commends the courage and resilience of these young Nigerians for drawing national attention to this ominous development, which has already inflicted untold trauma on other Northern communities. We find it unacceptable that security agencies often prove incapable of combating terrorism but act with swiftness to clamp down on unarmed citizens at the prompting of vested interests. This unfolding scenario further justifies, more than ever before, the urgent and indispensable need for the establishment of state police.” He stated. The group made the following demands: Deployment of Troops: The Commander-in-Chief must, without delay, deploy troops to address the worsening security situation not only in Kwara but also in Kogi, Niger, Kaduna, Katsina, Zamfara, Sokoto, Kebbi, Benue, and Plateau States.; Unconditional

Release of Youths: All youths arrested for peacefully protesting insecurity in Kwara State must be released unconditionally within the next 24 hours; Constitutional Amendment for Policing: The National Assembly must urgently amend the 1999 Constitution to provide for state, local government, and community police, as a sustainable framework for tackling insecurity at its roots.; Right to Bear Arms: The National Assembly should, as soon as practicable, pass constitutional amendments permitting responsible Nigerians to bear arms for self-defense in the face of government's inability to provide security.” MEN while reiterating commitment towards the protection of lives and property remains the primary responsibility of government lamented what it described as “continued failure of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu and the APC-led government to rise to this obligation cannot be excused by endless blame games. “Nigerians deserve safety and security, not excuses. Enough is enough. “He added. MEN while reiterating commitment towards the protection of lives and property remains the primary responsibility of government lamented what it described as “continued failure of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu and the APC-led government to rise to this obligation cannot be excused by endless blame games. ” Nigerians deserve safety and security, not excuses. Enough is



enough. “He added.

The Senator Representing Kwara Central Senatorial District Saliu Mustapha, has called for collective efforts by all and sundry to tackle insecurity in the State. Mustapha in a statement signed and released to journalists in Ilorin, expressed deep disturbance by the recent security challenges in parts of Kwara South and Kwara North Senatorial Districts. According to him, for decades, Kwara proudly enjoyed an enviable reputation as one of the most peaceful State in the Federation but sadly, the recent wave of banditry and kidnapping is capable of eroding that record, “thereby unfortunately drawing our dear State into the wider national security concerns. “I extend my heartfelt sympathy to fellow Kwarans and families who have fallen victim to this senseless carnage, especially those who have paid the ultimate price. I send my deepest condolences to the families of the vigilantes, forestry guards, and others who lost their lives during the recent attacks in Oke-Ode, Ifelodun Local Government Area, as well as in Edu and Patigi LGAs of our State. “I must acknowledge the immense efforts of the Federal

Government under the leadership of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR; the Kwara State Government under His Excellency, Governor AbdulRahman Abdulrazaq, CON; and the gallantry of our security agencies who continue to put their lives on the line to protect us all.

Meanwhile The Nigerian Air Force (NAF) has eliminated a notorious kidnap kingpin, popularly known as Maidawa, along with several of his fighters, in a series of sustained air bombardments on criminal hideouts in Kwara State. The Kwara State Government, through a statement by the Chief Press Secretary to the Governor, Rafiu Ajakaiye, confirmed that Maidawa and his gang members were neutralized in the Isanlu-Isin forests during coordinated security operations on September 30. According to the statement, intelligence gathered from intercepted communications among the criminals confirmed Maidawa's death. The news was reportedly relayed to other gang members by another wanted kidnapper, identified as Baccujo, during a conversation along the Igboro-Idofin road. The communication was later traced to a wider criminal network based in Marabar Maigora, Sabuwa Local Government Area of Katsina State. "Security forces, spurred by renewed calls from the state government for urgent intervention, have intensified efforts to dislodge kidnappers who frequently attack communities and abduct civilians for ransom," the statement noted. The government added that the ongoing operations are being phased to cover all areas affected by recent bandit attacks, including Ekiti, Ifelodun, Isin, Edu, and Patigi local government areas. The military offensive, which also extends into parts of neighboring Kogi State, forms part of a broader push by security agencies to dismantle bandit and kidnap networks across north-central Nigeria.

Meanwhile the Federal Government has deployed a brigade of troops to flush out Kidnappers from forest across Kwara state. The troops were said to have moved in through communities in Ifelodun, Edu and Patigi local government area including Oke Ode and Babanla as part of a renewed security operation. The Governor commended President Bola Tinubu for the support and the Military high command and allied security forces for the renewed intervention to eliminate all threats to public safety in the state. The Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq pledged the states full support for the Military and other security agencies.

In a recent development the Kwara State Governor, AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq, has presented N80 million cheques to the families of forest guards, vigilantes, and an additional N100 million to the families of the 'community fighters' in Kwara. The forest guards and vigilantes lost their lives in recent encounters with kidnappers in Babanla, Oke Ode, and Eleyin communities of Ifelodun and Isin Local Government Areas of the state. The community fighters in Edu and Patigi local government areas were killed in July during an ambush by suspected kidnappers. A statement by the Chief Press Secretary to the governor, Rafiu Ajakaiye, made available to the Press said during the presentation of cheques in Ilorin at the weekend, AbdulRazaq described the fallen heroes as

"brave patriots who paid the supreme price in defence of their people." We pray for the souls of the deceased. It was an unfortunate incident. They died in active service. The government cannot but sympathize with the families. "We will continue to support them and ensure the safety of lives and property in the state. The military has moved in with full force, and we are supporting their operations to chase the criminals out of Kwara," the Governor said. The beneficiaries include families of forest guards and vigilante members who were killed during operations in the Babanla Forest and surrounding communities that have witnessed a resurgence of kidnapping and banditry in recent months. According to the governor, the gesture was part of his administration's broader plan to support security personnel and local volunteers risking their lives to defend rural communities. "The government will not abandon those who laid down their lives for peace to reign," AbdulRazaq added. "Their courage must be remembered and their families cared for." The presentation was attended by top government officials, including the Chairman of the Lower Niger River Basin Development Authority, Alhaji Abdullateef Alakawa; Senior Special Assistant to the Governor on Security, Alhaji Muyideen Aliyu; and Chairmen of Ifelodun, Asa, and Ilorin West Local Government Areas, among others. In separate remarks, Alhaji Alakawa and Alhaji Femi Yusuf, Chairman of Ifelodun Local Government, commended the Governor's gesture, saying it would provide relief to the bereaved families while boosting the morale of security operatives in the field.

"The Governor's support shows that the sacrifices of these gallant men have not gone unnoticed. It will give confidence to those still serving in volatile areas that the government truly values their effort," Yusuf said. The state government also announced new logistics support, including fighting equipment and motorcycles, for forest guards and community vigilantes operating in flashpoint areas across Kwara South and Kwara North. A government source told The Punch that the new logistics will strengthen local intelligence and rapid response capacity, complementing ongoing operations by the Nigerian Army and other security agencies in the state. "We have repositioned our forest guards and vigilantes to better defend their communities," the source said. "This is part of a coordinated effort to restore normalcy and boost rural security." The latest intervention comes amid heightened security operations in Kwara South, where coordinated military and vigilante patrols have rescued several kidnapped victims and dismantled bandits' hideouts in the Babanla axis. Residents of affected communities have repeatedly called for sustained government intervention and better welfare for local security volunteers who often serve as the first line of defence against kidnappers and bandits. Governor AbdulRazaq, who has in recent months intensified rural security investments, reiterated that his administration will continue to prioritise the safety of citizens. "Security is the foundation for development," he said. "We will keep supporting our security agencies, vigilantes, and forest guards to ensure that every part of Kwara is safe."