

Kebbi Abduction: How Bandits Attacked Our School – Student



Some of the abducted students

By Daily Trust

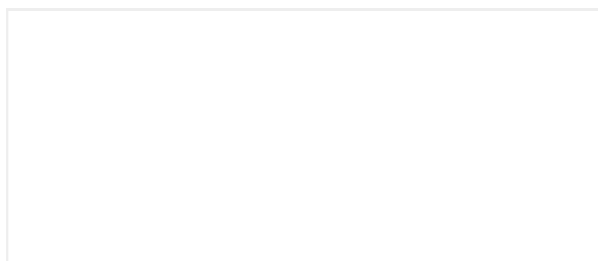
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Khadijat Lawal, a Senior Secondary School 3 student of the Government Comprehensive Girls Secondary School, Maga, Danko Wasagu Local Government Area of Kebbi State, which was attacked on Monday morning, said the experience of that day will remain etched in her memory for a long time. On that morning, Daily Trust gathered that gunmen attacked the school and abducted dozens of girls.

The student, who went into hiding shortly after the bandits arrived their school, spoke to Daily Trust through her father, Malam Lawal Altine, yesterday. Malam Altine has three children in the school.

Narrating her experience, she said on that day, she and other students were sleeping in their hostel when they heard people talking outside and attempting to force the door leading to their hostel open. She said this was a few minutes to 5am.



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Khadijat added that a few minutes after that, they started shooting sporadically into the air and she and her two sisters rushed to hide in one of the school's toilets.

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“She added that when the bandits burst into the hostel, her two sisters panicked and came out from where they were hiding in the toilet and they were immediately marched out with other girls who had been taken from other hostels in the school. She remained where she had locked herself up in the toilet until when parents and other people came to the school shouting and asking about the whereabouts of their children.

“My daughter refused to open the door until she heard my voice. She was lucky, but her other sisters are still missing. I'm worried and sick about their whereabouts,” Mal. Altine said.

About 24 hours after the abduction, parents were still gathered at the school premises hoping for the return of their children. The mother of one of the abducted girls, Hajiya Rani Maga has not left the school premises since Monday morning when she heard of the incident. She told our correspondent that she will not eat until her daughter returns home.

Hajiya Rani, who could not control her tears, said she still finds it difficult to believe that her daughter had been abducted by the bandits.



Amina, wife of the head of security, Hassan Yusuf Makuku, who was killed by the bandits

She said, “I don’t think I can return home without my daughter. Every minute my mind is with her. I don’t know what is going on with her or where they took her and I’m afraid because she is in the hands of bad people. I know government has intervened and given us hope that our daughters will return to us; but how soon? I appeal to both the state and federal government to urge security agents to find our daughters as soon as possible. The longer they stay with captors the more dangerous the situation will be.”

Also, Amina Hassan, who is the wife of the school’s head of security, Yakubu Makuku, who was killed during the attack, said she was still in shock as her husband was shot in her presence.

She said, “It was around 4 am on Monday and my husband and I were in bed when we heard the entrance door being forced opened. I woke my husband up but he thought it was the goats that were there. But suddenly, armed men burst into our room and they asked him to take them to the girls’ hostel. He refused and they shot him. I rushed to hold him, but they pushed me aside and moved on to the hostel. I don’t know how they managed to abduct the girls, but I heard them screaming and crying. It’s still a nightmare to me,” she said.

She added that another man, Ali Shehu, who was the school’s gateman, was also shot dead by the bandits.

Since the incident, the community has been quiet with most people remaining indoors, Daily Trust gathered.

A member of the community and relative of the father of one of the abducted girls, Abubakar Dabai, said people of the community are still in shock.

“Everyone is scared. We can’t even go to our farms as we don’t know what will happen next. But the governor was here yesterday and he assured us of our safety. He said government would deploy more security agents to find the girls. We want to believe him. We will also continue to pray for the quick return of our girls,” he said.

Aminu Usman Lawal, father of Hauwa, one of the abducted girls, said he was preparing to go to the farm in the early hours of Monday when someone came to inform him of the incident. He said, “I just continue to wonder why this happened to me, but I know Allah will secure my girl and others. Since the incident happened, people in the community have been living in fear; everyone feels insecure. Government should help us by deploying more security agents here so that people can feel safe enough to go to their farms and engage in their daily activities.”

Also, mother of one of the girls, Fatima Ibrahim said, “I just want my daughter back. I don’t care about anything else. Please, just bring her back home safely.”

26, not 25 students abducted – Kebbi govt

The Kebbi State Government on yesterday clarified the number of students that were taken by bandits at the Government Comprehensive Girls Secondary School Maga.

The Commissioner for Basic and Secondary Education Dr. Halimatu Muhammad Bande, while addressing journalists on the school abduction incident in Birnin Kebbi, said 26 students not 25 as reported in the media were taken by the bandits.

“Two of them, Salmat and Hauwa escaped from them. We now have 24 of them with the bandits,” she said.

She said the clarification became necessary because there have several misleading reports by the media on what happened at the school.

She said Governor Nasir Idris and federal government have put every measure in place and have deployed security personnel to secure the girls.

“Let us continue to pray for them. We don’t know where they are and what they are doing to the girls but God will bring them back to us safely,” she said.



Lawal Altine, father of the student, who escaped the attack

Failure is not an option, Chief of Army Staff tells troops

The Chief of Army Staff, Lieutenant General Waidi Shaibu, visited Maga yesterday, where he met the District Head of Danko, Alhaji Abubakar Ibrahim and the Principal of the school, Hajiya Rabi Musa Magaji. He pledged that everything possible will be done to rescue the girls. He ordered troops of Operation FANSAN YANMA to step up efforts to rescue the abducted girls.

He charged frontline commanders and troops to carry out intelligence-driven operations and maintain a relentless pursuit of the abductors, stressing that rescuing the school girls must remain a top priority while urging the troops to act decisively and professionally.

The army chief also met with local vigilantes and hunters, describing them as vital partners in the mission.

He said, “We must find these children. Act decisively and professionally on all intelligence. Success is not optional.”

He told them to work closely with the troops and use their knowledge of the terrain to track down the bandits.

Senate asks Tinubu to recruit 100,000 military personnel, to probe safe school funds

The Senate, on Tuesday, raised concerns over the country's security situation and called on President Bola Ahmed Tinubu to immediately approve the recruitment of at least 100,000 youths into the armed forces to reinforce Nigeria's security architecture.

The lawmakers also resolved to set up an ad hoc committee to investigate the utilisation of funds allocated over the years for the Safe School Programme, amid renewed concerns that Nigerian schools remain vulnerable to attacks.

The resolutions followed a motion sponsored by Senator Abdullahi Yahaya (APC, Kebbi North), who warned that insecurity had reached an alarming level, requiring urgent and decisive national action.

Contributing to the debate, Senator Abdul Ningi (PDP Bauchi Central), described the situation as “an existential threat,” urging colleagues to rise above politics.

“We shouldn't be political or lackadaisical about it because eeeethose children are not our own,” he said.

Senator Aminu Tambuwal (PDP, Sokoto South) said the nation had “fallen into the trap of its enemies,” cautioning that failure to unite against insecurity would jeopardise Nigeria's future.

Former Senate President Ahmad Lawan (APC, Yobe North) lamented that despite massive budgetary allocations to the security sector, attacks and killings persist.

“These children are the leaders of tomorrow. We must do everything possible to protect them,” he said.

Senator Orji Uzor Kalu (APC, Abia North) accused state governors of neglecting their constitutional role in security management.

“Security is not only the responsibility of the federal government, governors must be engaged,” he said, adding that during his tenure as Abia governor, he “took the challenge” rather than blame the centre.

Senator Victor Umeh (LP, Anambra Central) called for advanced technology-driven intelligence to track and rescue abducted children, while Senator Simon Lalong (APC, Plateau South) questioned why schoolgirls continued to be targeted.

“Where has the girl-child gone wrong? Are we saying we don’t want girls to go to school? This is a national emergency,” he said.

The Senate then adopted an additional prayer moved by Senator Adams Oshiomhole (APC, Edo North), demanding the recruitment of 100,000 youths into the armed forces.

Oshiomhole stressed that the new intakes must be adequately trained and equipped to confront bandits, terrorists, and other violent groups terrorising citizens.

The Senate also advocated increased deployment of modern surveillance and intelligence technology to combat insecurity and assist in locating the abducted Kebbi schoolgirls.



Inside one of the hostels where the bandits abducted the girls

Condemnations trail attack

The First Lady, Senator Oluremi Tinubu has described the abduction of the Kebbi school students as an assault on the values of safety and learning that schools embody.

Mrs. Tinubu, in a message on Tuesday, begged God to grant quick rescue to the abducted girls and also grant a peaceful repose to the soul of the departed.

The message read: “I am deeply saddened by the news of the abduction of the 25 students of the Government Girls Comprehensive Secondary School, Maga, Kebbi State.

“This heart-breaking incident is not only an attack on innocent girls and dedicated educators, but an assault on the values of safety and learning. Mr President has already ordered our security agencies to ensure the quick and safe return of the abducted girls and to bring the perpetrators to justice.”

The First Lady said her heart and prayers were with the families, friends, loved ones and schoolmates at this time.

The Northern States Governors’ Forum (NSGF) also condemned the attack. The Chairman of the Forum and Governor of Gombe State, Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya, described the abduction as tragic, senseless and utterly unacceptable.

A statement issued yesterday by his spokesman, Ismaila Uba Misilli, stated that the continued targeting of schools poses a grave threat to the region’s stability and the nation’s educational future.

Governor Yahaya, on behalf of his colleagues in the NSGF, commiserated with the government and people of Kebbi State, especially the families of the abducted students and those who lost their lives in the attack.

He assured Governor Nasir Idris of Kebbi State of the Forum’s solidarity and support during this difficult moment.

The governor added that schools must be sanctuaries of learning, not targets of violence, warning that continued assaults on educational institutions threaten to reverse gains made in improving school enrolment and curbing the out-of-school crisis in the region.

He expressed concern over the trauma the abducted schoolgirls may be facing and called for an immediate and well-coordinated operation by security agencies to ensure their safe rescue and the arrest of the perpetrators.

The National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) also issued a statement on the matter. In the statement by its president, Olushola Oladoja, the association described the attack as devastating, adding that it was broken beyond measure by the tragedy.

The body stated, “The incident occurred on a day set aside globally to mark International Students’ Day.”

NANS said it planned a series of national recognitions and awards for outstanding students as part of the 2025 International Students’ Day celebration but was instead thrown into mourning.

It said the attack had reopened painful memories of previous mass abductions, including the 2014 Chibok schoolgirls’ kidnapping in Borno State and other incidents in Katsina, Niger, Yobe and Kaduna states.

NANS warned that the recurring assaults on schools, particularly in northern Nigeria, were becoming a disturbing pattern that required urgent and proactive intervention.

“Nigeria cannot continue to deploy reactive measures only after lives have been destroyed and families shattered. Our schools must never be playgrounds for terrorists; our daughters must never again be turned into bargaining chips in the hands of criminals,” it said.

The association urged the federal government, Kebbi State Government and security agencies to deploy all available resources to ensure the immediate rescue of the abducted students.

It also called for high-end security measures around all schools, especially girls’ boarding institutions, and for intelligence-driven operations to dismantle criminal networks involved in mass abductions. (NAN)

UNICEF calls for stronger measures to protect schools

The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) on its part called for stronger protection measures for children and educational institutions across the country.

This was contained in a statement issued and signed by UNICEF’s Communication Specialist, Sussan Akila.

The statement said the organisation finds it very vital to highlight Nigeria’s 2015 endorsement of the Safe Schools declaration, which is a global commitment to safeguard schools from attacks and military use, and urged government agencies and all relevant stakeholders to intensify efforts to fully implement the declaration to guarantee safer learning environments nationwide.

According to the statement, the attack has renewed widespread concerns over the safety of schools and the increasing vulnerability of students in conflict-affected regions.

“This tragic incident is yet another stark reminder of the urgent need to protect children, schools, and the personnel they rely upon to learn safely.

“We stand with the affected community at this difficult time,” it said.

UNICEF called for the swift and safe release of the abducted children, stressing that students, teachers, and education facilities are protected under international law and should never be targets of violence.

It urged authorities to ensure that those responsible for the attack are held accountable in line with national and international legal standards.

From Ismail Adebayo (Birnin Kebbi), Ibrahim Musa Giginyu (Kano), Haruna Gimba Yaya (Gombe), Saawua Terzungwe & Baba Martins (Abuja)