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NEWS

# Kogi: 3 Abducted ECWA Worshippers Die After Release



By Tijani Labaran

Mon, 5 Jan 2026 6:38:56 WAT

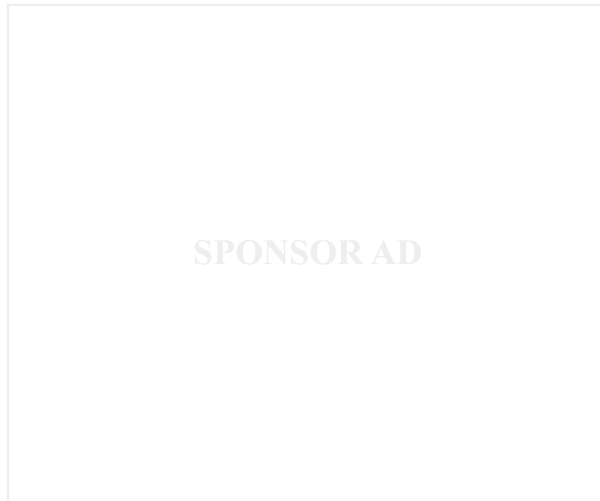


Three of the seven worshippers recently released after being abducted from the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) in Ayetoro-Kiri in Kabba/Bunu LGA of Kogi State reportedly died while returning from their captors' forest hideout.

The victims were among over 38 worshippers, including elderly persons, women and children, abducted on December 14, 2025, when bandits invaded the church during a service, after which the assailants

reportedly demanded millions of naira as ransom.

The community's spokesperson, Mr David Ampitan, said seven abductees were released at the weekend after "painful ransom payments."



He disclosed that three of the freed victims died shortly after their release, including an elderly woman whose corpse was yet to be recovered from the bush, while the remaining four were currently receiving treatment in the hospital.

Ampitan lamented the worsening insecurity in Bunu land, accusing authorities of negligence.

He demanded urgent intervention to secure the release of the remaining 31 abductees and avert a growing humanitarian crisis.

In response, the Kogi State Government reaffirmed its commitment to a sustained crackdown on criminal elements.

In a statement, the Commissioner for Information, Mr. Kingsley Fanwo, said the security agencies were actively tracking the criminals and conducting operations to rescue all the captives.

Meanwhile, youths in Kabba, on January 2, 2026, protested rising insecurity, blocking the Kabba–Obajana–Lokoja highway before being dispersed by the police.

Efforts to obtain comments from the state police command were unsuccessful.

Meanwhile, soldiers from the 12 Brigade of the Nigerian Army, Lokoja, killed three bandits and arrested a logistics supplier during separate operations in Kabba/Bunu and Yagba West LGAs.

The acting assistant spokesperson of the brigade, Lt. Hassan Abdullahi, disclosed this in a statement on Sunday, saying operations were carried out on January 3, 2026, following credible intelligence.

He explained that troops laid an ambush along a known bandit crossing route between the Adankolo general area and Agbadu Bunu community in Kabba/Bunu LGA and that the bandits ran into the ambush and were engaged, forcing them to retreat, with two bandits neutralised.

Lt. Abdullahi added that another bandit was killed during a patrol around Saminaka village in Yagba West LGA after intelligence reports indicated bandits' movements in the area.

He said the troops also arrested a suspected bandits' logistics supplier, identified as Sunday Adedotun, from Odo Eri village in Yagba West LGA, on a farmland in Saminaka village with supplies including cartons of energy drinks, soft drinks, bottled water and farm produce.