

Lagos, Ogun police kill 4 kidnappers, rescue 5 victims

28 June 2026 5:24 am WAT



By Chris Oji



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Weapons recovered from the joint operation and some of the suspects arrested

•84 others nabbed as police launch Operation Kosaye

By Christopher Oji and Laide Raheem, Abeokuta

Four armed kidnappers have been neutralised by police operatives during a joint operation between the Lagos and Ogun State Police Commands, codenamed Operation Kosaye.

The operation, an initiative of the Inspector-General of Police (IGP), Olatunji Disu, and supported by the governors of Lagos and Ogun states, also led to the arrest of four suspected kidnappers after operatives stormed the Area J4 Forest in Ogbere, Ogun State, on Friday night.

During the rescue operation, which involved more than 300 police officers, five travellers abducted along the Ogbere axis of the Lagos-Sagamu-Benin Expressway on Thursday evening were rescued unhurt.

The operatives also recovered sophisticated firearms, including AK-47 rifles, pump-action guns, locally made pistols, ammunition, mobile phones, communication equipment and other items.

Addressing journalists during the official launch of Operation Kosaye at the Nigeria Police Training School, Iperu-Remo, Ogun State, on Saturday, the Ogun State Commissioner of Police, Bode Ojajuni, said the joint operation was a security initiative of IGP Disu handed over to the Lagos and Ogun State Police Commands.

He explained that the operation, whose name literally translates to “there is no hiding place for criminals” in Yoruba, was initiated by the Inspector-General of Police with the full support of the Lagos and Ogun State governments, which provided the logistics needed for its success.

Flanked by his Lagos State counterpart, CP Tijani Fatai, Ojajuni said the primary objective of the operation was to eliminate kidnapping and other violent crimes across the two states.

According to him, “It is also aimed at clearing forests, hideouts and other criminal enclaves across the vast border communities shared by Lagos and Ogun states.

“We are here to reassure members of the public that the police are fully committed to restoring confidence and ensuring the safety of lives and property.

“From the operations conducted so far, many criminal hideouts have been dismantled. As I speak, there is no known victim currently being held captive by kidnappers within the operational areas covered by this exercise.

“Our operatives have combed and cleared several forest corridors and border communities stretching across both states. The police tactical teams conducted extensive bush-clearing operations from Lagos through Ogun State, covering Ikeja, Kara Bridge, the Redemption Camp, the Sagamu corridor, Owode-Apa, Ogere, Ijebu-Ode, Epe, Ikorodu, Ogijo, Etokin, the Long Bridge corridor and other adjoining communities extending into Ikorodu and neighbouring border settlements. We have also dismantled criminal camps, cleared illegal shanties used as hideouts and arrested several suspects.

“One of the major breakthroughs recorded during the operation was the rescue of five kidnapped victims along the Ijebu-Ode corridor following the directive of the Inspector-General of Police.

“During the rescue operation, four suspected kidnappers were neutralised, while four others were arrested. In addition, no fewer than 84 other criminal suspects have been apprehended across Lagos and Ogun states during the on-going operation.

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“We therefore urge members of the public not to panic whenever they notice heavy deployment or movement of police personnel. The operation is still on-going, and our officers will continue to sustain the offensive against criminal elements.

“We also appeal to members of the public to report anyone seen with suspicious gunshot wounds or provide any information that could assist on-going investigations.

“The Nigeria Police Force remains fully committed to protecting residents of Lagos and Ogun states and ensuring that criminal elements have no safe haven within our communities,” Ojajuni said.

In his remarks, the Lagos State Commissioner of Police, Tijani Fatai, expressed delight that the joint operation had already begun yielding significant results.

He said that before the operation commenced, criminal elements had established camps in thick forests and border communities linking Lagos and Ogun states, with some of the locations serving as hideouts for kidnappers and other violent criminals.

“This joint operation was designed to deny criminals the opportunity to use these forests as safe havens. Our personnel have systematically combed these areas, dismantled criminal camps and restored security to the affected corridors.

“This exercise is not a one-off operation. It is continuous and will be sustained for as long as necessary to ensure that residents of both states can go about their lawful activities without fear.

“We want to reassure the people of Lagos and Ogun states that the Nigeria Police Force remains fully committed to securing every part of these states. The Inspector-General of Police has provided the necessary leadership and operational support to ensure the success of this initiative.

“I also wish to sincerely appreciate the governors of Lagos and Ogun states for their unwavering support, particularly in providing the logistics required to make this operation effective.

“The results speak for themselves. You have seen the rescued victims, the suspects arrested, the firearms recovered and other exhibits displayed here today. These achievements demonstrate that this is a serious and coordinated effort to tackle insecurity.

“This collaborative approach among neighbouring state police commands will continue and, I believe, will be replicated across other parts of the country facing similar security challenges.”

CP Fatai assured travellers along the Lagos-Ogun corridor of their safety, stressing that police operatives would continue combing the forests until criminal elements were completely flushed out.

“I want to use this opportunity to dispel the rumours making the rounds that bandits have infiltrated Lagos and Ogun states. There are no bandits in our forests. Any criminal element found there will be arrested. There is no hiding place for criminals, whether on the highways or in the forests.

“It is the directive of the Inspector-General of Police that criminal elements must not be allowed to operate in the two states, and we are committed to carrying out that directive to its logical conclusion,” he said.