

B/Haram kills abducted aid worker in Borno

From Ibrahim Sawab & Olatunji
Omirin, Maiduguri

Boko Haram militants were yesterday reported to have killed an aid worker with an international aid group, Action Against Hunger (AAH). The killing was discovered through a video purportedly released by a faction of Boko Haram, the Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP) on social media. The aid worker was one of the six humanitarian volunteers working for the aid group who were kidnapped in Borno State in July.

It would be recalled that the Action Against Hunger (AAH) was banned from operating in Borno State by the military last week.

Six staff of the group, while traveling to deliver humanitarian assistance to IDP-

returnees at Damasak town in July, were abducted by a Boko Haram faction, the Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP).

Meanwhile, the group has condemned the killing, saying, "Action Against Hunger condemns in the strongest terms this assassination and urgently calls for the release of the hostages".

The group in a statement obtained from their website, yesterday reminded the insurgents that they were in the North-east only to help the most vulnerable.

According to the international NGO, the deceased was among six humanitarian field workers that comprise an employee of AAH, two drivers and three health personnel of the Ministry of Health.

"Action Against Hunger is extremely concerned and is

fully mobilised to ensure that the remaining hostages can be quickly and safely reunited with their families.

"Action Against Hunger also requests that the public and journalists respect the dignity of the victim and privacy of the families by not sharing images or videos that may circulate on the internet," the statement added, saying, "Action Against Hunger does not have more comments at this stage."

The United Nations also called on authorities in Nigeria to ensure that the perpetrators are brought to justice.

"I am appalled and deeply saddened by the news of the horrific execution of an aid worker this morning. My heartfelt condolences go to his family, friends and colleagues," said a statement by the UN Humanitarian Coordinator in

Nigeria, Edward Kallon.

"The United Nations also calls for the immediate release of all aid workers who are still in captivity," the statement said, quoting Mr. Kallon as saying, "I am also extremely concerned about the increasingly dangerous and restrictive operating environment for implementing humanitarian assistance in crisis-affected areas, where humanitarian aid workers continue to face challenges as they strive to deliver urgent, life-saving assistance."

"I renew the call for all parties to the conflict to ensure the protection of aid workers and to respect international humanitarian law according to the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, independence and impartiality."

"The humanitarian

community in Nigeria is working in line with the 2019-2021 Humanitarian Response Strategy, jointly agreed with the Government of Nigeria, to provide life-saving assistance to 6.2 million of the most vulnerable people in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states," the statement added.

Our correspondent had in July this year reviewed a short video clip that went viral on social media, showing a woman alongside five men appealing to their employer - AAH and other relevant authorities to help rescue them from their abductors. It was then confirmed by another volunteer working for AAH at an IDP camp in Maiduguri, that the six persons showed in the purported Boko Haram video were real volunteers working for the Borno-based aid group.