

Gunmen kill 15, abduct many along Kaduna-Abuja road

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At least 15 people were killed yesterday and many others abducted when kidnappers blocked the Kaduna-Abuja expressway around 5 pm, witnesses said.

The incident happened around Gidan Busa, a village not far away from Rijana, which is 133 kilometres to Abuja.

It was gathered that nearly 20 vehicles were forced to stop at the bushy and sloppy location when the gunmen laid siege. The location had no security presence at the time of the attack, witnesses told the *Daily Trust* on phone.

They said apart from the over 15 people reportedly killed by the gunmen, many others including women and children were kidnapped and taken to the bush. When contacted, the Kaduna State Police Public relations Officer, ASP Mohammed Jallge, said the Divisional Police Officer (DPO) in charge of the area was working on the situation report and will communicate as soon as it was done.

How the attack was launched

Witnesses said the kidnappers armed with sophisticated weapons stormed the highway and opened fire on unsuspecting travellers who were heading to Abuja from the Kaduna axis.

The attackers blocked the traffic after firing shots at speeding vehicles, which forced them to stop. It was learnt that some people who attempted to flee were shot.

"The first vehicle to be attacked was an 18-seater bus, which was fully loaded," a witness who gave his name as Mamman, told the *Daily Trust* on phone. He said he was on his way to Abuja from his home town in Katsina.

"I am among the survivors; I saw everything that happened. I participated in evacuating the death from the road," he said.

While giving a graphic description of what happened, Mamman said bullets hit the driver of the first hummer bus and killed him instantly, forcing the vehicle to wobble for seconds and then stopped across the road.

"There were three vehicles in front of ours when the kidnappers suddenly appeared on the road and started shooting sporadically.

"The two buses and a wagon in the front were the first to be attacked. They opened fire on them. The first one moved unsteadily from side to side before it stopped.

"The second hummer bus and a saloon car were also affected. Our vehicle, a Volkswagen Golf car was the fourth in the line facing the gunmen and when our driver noticed what was happening, he veered off the road," Mamman said.

According to him, "Many vehicles coming from behind, I think nearly 20 of them were forced to stop also. Many



■ Abubakar Isah Musa and Ibrahim Suleiman, two friends killed by the police in Kano Saturday

passengers, who have the agility, including those in our vehicle, took to their heels.

"I didn't run away and I don't know why; I only moved closer to the median of the road and squad. I saw when the attackers shepherded some of those kidnapped into the bush," he said. Mamman said after some time, the police arrived at the scene.

"Some policemen came to the rescue and I also participated in recovering some of the people killed and those who sustained injuries from gunshots.

"The vehicles that blocked the road were cleared by the police and some good Samaritans and that was when people started moving. I dropped on the way to Abuja because I was heading towards Bwari," he said.

Malam Mu'azu, who lives around the area, confirmed that kidnappers have resurfaced along the Abuja-Kaduna expressway.

"I was not at the scene of the attack but an acquaintance who passed through the location said he saw what happened.

"This (Abuja-Kaduna road) is a dangerous route once again. There was a respite some months ago when security operatives took serious action against the kidnappers but it seems they have gone to sleep again.

"The whole stretch from Jere, which is little over 70 kilometres from Abuja is no longer safe. Kidnappers now lay siege around Kurmin Kare, Gidan Malam Mamman up to Rijana," he said.

Daily Trust reports that there is a big security hub at Katari, a village located 92 kilometres from Abuja.

Different security operatives including anti-kidnap squad, other police operatives, the army, civil defence and road safety personnel, among others, had been stationed around Katari.

They were meant to act with dispatch whenever the need arose.

Locals said there was the need to check the resurgence of breaches along the highway, which is the only artery that takes people from the South and the FCT to the North West and parts of the North East.

In the last few years, hundreds

of people have been killed on the road while families of those kidnapped had to pay ransom to free their loved ones.

Man abducted at Mpape

One of our correspondents report that a prominent figure was on Saturday night kidnapped at Mpape, one of the upcoming highbrow districts in the FCT.

A source said the man was on his way home and unknown to him, the kidnappers were targeting him.

"When it was discovered that the man had been kidnapped, some DSS operatives stormed the area," the source said.

"There is the likelihood that the kidnappers used the telephone of one unsuspecting Okada rider, which the DSS operatives tracked. They trailed the Okada rider and arrested him. It is not clear whether the abductee had been released," the source said.

Family of Zaria poly lecturer reveal ordeal

Also, gunmen on Saturday night invaded the staff quarters of Nuhu Bamalli Polytechnic in Zaria and abducted the Head of Department, Computer Engineering, Engr. Bello Atiku.

Daily Trust gathered that the gunmen also shot Engr. Atiku's neighbour, Sanusi Hassan who works at registry unit of the institution before they made away with his children.

The Public Relations Officer of the school, Abdallah Shehu who confirmed the incident, said Hassan was shot in the hand and is currently receiving medical attention.

Speaking with our correspondent, Engr. Atiku's wife, Khadija Suleiman said her husband had returned home after 8 pm and put on the generator.

"He then spent a few minutes speaking on the phone with one of his bosses," she said.

Khadija explained that soon after the phone call, her husband ate and both of them settled for a relaxing evening on the TV when she heard someone banged on their door.

"At that time, I asked him if he had locked the door with the key when he came in and he said no.



■ Sympathisers at Ibrahim's family house in Kano

So I told him to check the door perhaps one of our neighbours wanted something; that was a few minutes to 9 pm."

She said unknown to both of them, the gunmen had already invaded their compound, leveraging on the sound of the generator.

"I heard my husband scream and he came back into the house saying Innallillahi Wa Inna laihi Rajiun (from Allah we came and to Him we shall return) while two men with guns trailed him.

"They came to the sitting room and told us to lie on the floor. They took our phones but left the laptop. One of them asked for money and I told them we don't have money and so he slapped me. But the other man told him to leave me alone. They now asked my husband to wear his shoes and they left with him," she said.

Khadija explained that a similar incident had occurred within the quarters about two years ago when a woman was abducted.

She said she never thought they will be victims of kidnapping also. *Daily Trust* reports that the school is exposed to security challenges because it lacked a perimeter fence.

The Rector, Engr. Muhammad Kabir Abdullahi told our correspondent that a security meeting had taken place to find a lasting solution to their predicament including how to fence the school.

"We have had security meetings and we have now stationed mobile policemen to guard hostels and staff quarters and more are being deployed. We have met with the students to calm them and assure them that their security is a top priority but we will not be closing the school," he said.

Kaduna police spokesman, Julge said they were on top of the situation as the entire area had been combed while efforts were ongoing to rescue the victims.

Disquiet in Kano as police kill 2 youths

Operatives of Anti-Daba unit of Kano State Police Command have allegedly killed two persons at Sharada area of the state capital.

One of the youths was shot dead, while the other who was stabbed by the police during a squabble died a few hours later.

The incident took place when the police operatives stormed the area to arrest someone at a tea joint.

The deceased were Abubakar Isah (Banupe) and Ibrahim Sulaiman (Mainasara).

However, the Spokesman for the Kano Police Command, DSP Abdullahi Haruna Kiyawa was yet to respond to calls and text messages sent to his phone about the incident.

Witnesses said that the operatives of the Anti-Daba unit were at Sharada Phase One, close to the Juma'a mosque around 11 pm on Saturday to arrest a suspect at a tea joint popularly called "Indomie Spot" when pandemonium broke out.

It was learnt that Mainasara, who is the owner of the spot, wanted to know why the police went there to arrest his brother, Gaddhafi.

According to one of those at the scene, "In trying to drag Mainasara out of the shop, the policemen stabbed him twice and he started bleeding. Other people at the spot rushed out and the policemen fired gunshots into the crowd... Banupe was hit by the bullet and he died at the spot."

He said the two were rushed to Murtala Muhammed Specialists Hospital in the metropolis where Mainasara also died at about 2 am yesterday.

However, youths in the area had staged a protest demanding justice over the alleged killing of the duo shortly after the deceased were buried.

It could be recalled that a similar incident occurred last month at Kofar Mata area of the state capital at the heat of the #EndSARS protest when a 23-year-old man, Saifullahi Sanl was killed by the men of the Kano Police Command during their routine night patrol.

The incident led to a protest as youth around the area converged and burnt tires on the roads to express their anger against alleged police brutality.