

One student dies as troops rescue 7 Kebbi abductees

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The Nigerian Army yesterday said its troops of Operation Hadarin Daji have rescued two teachers and five students of the Federal Government College, Birnin Yauri, Kebbi State.

Bandits abducted some students and teachers from the college on Thursday.

The authority said that one of the students — a female — was rescued dead due to exhaustion.

The Director, Army Public Relations, Brig.-Gen. Onyema Nwachukwu, in a statement yesterday, said that the victims were rescued after an exchange of

fire with the criminals.

Nwachukwu said that the troops had been on a hot pursuit of the kidnappers and bandits following the abduction.

He said that the rescue followed an initial encounter with the abductors in the early hours of Friday after trailing the kidnappers through Rijau to Sombo community.

According to him, the kidnappers who had split into two groups, fled with one group conveying the abducted children, while the second group conveyed rustled cattle.

"The land troops in conjunction with elements of the Nigerian Air Force, who provided close air support during the rescue mission, intercepted the two

groups at about 2.30 a.m.

"They engaged them in a fire fight leading to the successful rescue of the teachers and students.

"The troops also recovered 800 cattle rustled by the bandits.

"The troops are still on the heels of the kidnappers to rescue the remaining abductees still in captivity," he said.

Nwachukwu further said that a female student was found to have died.

He said that the rescued teachers and students would be handed over to the Kebbi Government.

Unconfirmed reports said many of the bandits were killed during the operation.

However, the special adviser to the Kebbi State governor, Rabiu

Kamba, yesterday said a teacher and eight students out of those abducted by bandits on Thursday at the Federal Government College, Birnin Yauri, Kebbi State, were rescued.

Kamba, who made the disclosure while speaking with *Daily Trust Saturday* at the school, said the rescued abductees were in the custody of the military and arrangement was on to hand them to the government for onward reunion with their families.

Meanwhile, the police in the state said rescue operation was still ongoing for the remaining students of the college.

This was contained in a statement made available to newsmen by the spokesperson of the police command, DSP Nafiu

Abubakar.

Meanwhile, the Save the Children, Nigeria, has expressed sadness over the abduction of the students.

The group's country director, Mercy Gichuhi, in a statement yesterday, noted that the development was "horrific," especially that the armed attackers also killed a police officer at the college.

"Save the Children is horrified by reports that students have been abducted from the college in Kebbi State. Their safety and wellbeing remain our primary concern. Our hearts go out to them and their families. We call for their immediate and unconditional release and safe return to their families," she said.



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