

From Abubakar Akote,  
Minna

# Bandits attack Niger hospital, abduct doctor, nurses, patients

At least two persons were shot dead while many were abducted when bandits broke into Abdulsalami Abubakar General Hospital, Gulu, Lapai Local Government Area of Niger State, on Monday night.

The Chairman of the local government area, Mu'azu Hamidu Jantabo, who confirmed the attack, said law enforcement agencies had been fully mobilised to bring the situation under control.

A former staff whose house was opposite the hospital was reportedly killed while attempting to run.

Among those abducted were a medical doctor, a pharmacist, nurses as well as patients and their relations.

Daily Trust gathered that

among the hospital staff abducted were the Head of Clinical Services simply identified as Dr. John, the Head of Hematology, Usman Zabbo, and a staff member of the medical lab, Awaisu Bida.

Also abducted was the wife of the head of nursing services and his daughters, the wife and daughter of the chief pharmacist, and many other relations of the patients.

The attack was believed to be a targeted operation to get health personnel to treat some of the injured bandits in the forest.

A staff member who was not on duty during the attack told

our correspondent on telephone that patients whose cases were not severe were kidnapped.

"This is one of the most devastating experiences. To be honest with you, Gulu General Hospital has collapsed because we cannot stay here any longer. Every staff on duty last night was taken. They just left a few patients whose cases were severe. This is heartless," he said.

One of the locals who did not want his name in print told our correspondent via telephone that "Kidnappers in their large numbers came to Gulu around 2:30am and in the process, raided General Hospital. They killed

two people whose houses were directly opposite the hospital and many people including the hospital Doctor, Dr. John and the pharmacist were kidnapped."

He said the attackers who operated for several hours shot sporadically throughout unchallenged as vigilantes ran for their lives.

Another source said several people, especially women and children from the community had fled to the neighbouring villages and Lapai town, the headquarters of the local government area.

Reacting to the attack, Governor Abubakar Sani Bello

of Niger State tasked the Joint Security Taskforce to urgently put an end to the incessant armed banditry, kidnappings and wanton attacks on several communities at Gulu in Lapai Local Government Area.

The police, however, said two persons were killed while eight others were kidnapped.

The Niger State Police Command's Public Relations Officer, DSP Wasiru Abiodun, said the abductees including a medical doctor were abducted from the quarters while one of the female victims was later abandoned with her two-year-old baby by the abductors.