

Landslide kills 30 in FCT, 19 kidnapped

2 By Hussein Yahaya

At least 30 people were recently killed by a landslide caused by illegal mining in Kuje Area Council of the Federal Capital Territory while 19 persons were kidnapped early yesterday in Bwari Area Council.

Chairmen of the six area councils disclosed these yesterday evening at a meeting with the FCT Minister, Nyesom Wike, in Abuja, where they lamented the level of insecurity in the rural communities of the FCT.

The minister, who was miffed at the developments, said he would summon the FCT Director of State Services as well as the

commissioner of police to receive adequate briefings on the kidnap and facilitate rescue operations.

While he asked the council bosses to set up a surveillance taskforce in their areas to monitor mining activities, Wike said he would meet with his counterpart in solid minerals, Dele Alake, to eliminate illegal mining in the FCT.

Kuje Area Council Chairman, Abdullahi Sabo, blamed insecurity partly on indiscriminate mining licence approval.

"There is indiscriminate mining licence given out and this has led to insecurity. They give letters of consent to Chinese people. Just a

few days ago, there was a landslide that took the lives of 30 people as a result of the activities of illegal miners. We appeal to you to engage the Minister of Mines to stop mining in the FCT."

On his part, the Chairman of the Bwari Area Council, John

Gabaya, advocated greater inclusion of council chairmen in land allocations.

Speaking on the challenges confronting the councils, Kwali Area Council chairman, Danladi Chiya appealed to Wike and the Minister of State, Dr Mariya

Mahmoud, to address the inadequate funding of the local government system.

"We have the major challenge of insecurity across the six area councils. Just today (Thursday), about 19 people were kidnapped in Bwari Area Council. I just received about five

in my council who were in captivity for about six days.

"Then there is the issue of land allocation. You sit in your council, and your backyard will be allocated to someone you don't even know. Your graveyards and worship centres would be allocated and we are saying that we should be carried along in terms of land allocation," he said.

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