

ABUJA METRO

Kidnappers flee with victims as vigilantes comb FCT communities

- Sleeping tents, cutlasses, food stuffs recovered from forests
- Families bury 3 victims killed by kidnappers

By Abubakar Sadiq Isah

Kidnappers, who early this week invaded some communities in the Federal Capital Territory, have reportedly relocated with the two abducted victims in their captivity after a heavy gun battle with the vigilantes at a forest that borders Nasarawa State.

A member of the vigilante group, who was part of the operation, Tanimu Yakubu, said his members had been in the forests since Monday evening, tracing the kidnappers' hideout when they encountered them.

He said the vigilantes had almost located their hideouts at a thick forest but some of the kidnappers hid on top of a tree and started to open fire on the vigilantes.

According to him, the vigilantes, upon hearing the kidnappers' gunshots, replied, which made some of the kidnappers to quickly relocate the two victims in their captivity.

He said, "The vigilantes have been mobilising into the forests since Monday evening in order to trace the location of the kidnappers and rescue the two victims in their captivity. Upon getting to a thick forest, which borders FCT and Nasarawa State, two of the kidnappers hid on top of the trees and started shooting on sighting the vigilantes."



■ FCT vigilante commander, Yabo Maji Micha

According to him, the vigilantes engaged them in a shootout, saying before they could locate where the victims were kept, the other kidnappers fled with them to another location.

He said the vigilantes were still trailing the kidnappers to find out their next hideout, adding that the two victims were abducted at Huni Gwari and Gudun - Karya communities under Kuje Area Council of the FCT.

Vigilantes recover sleeping tents, cutlasses, food stuffs at forest

The vigilante member further disclosed that some items such as sleeping tents, two cutlasses, clothes, two empty Jerry cans of water as well as food stuffs were found at the kidnappers' hideout

after relocating with the two victims.

He said one of the vigilantes sustained a minor bullet injury and was taken on a motorcycle to the hospital in Gadabuke under Toto LGA of Nasarawa State for treatment.

Abductors demand N20m ransom from family

The abductors of the two victims have demanded for N20 million ransom from their family before they will be freed.

A relation of one of the victims, who preferred anonymity, told our reporter through telephone on Wednesday.

He said the demand for the ransom came after a contact was established with the leader of the kidnappers on Wednesday, at about 10:12 am.

He said the relatives of the victims were still begging the kidnappers to bring down the ransom to a level they could afford, even as he said the families were still hoping that they would be rescued by the vigilantes and other security operatives tracking them.

"Despite the fact that the vigilantes engaged the kidnappers in a fierce gun battle, their leader still summoned courage to call one of the relatives of the victims to demand for N20 million ransom after they had relocated the

victims," he said.

Families bury 3 victims killed during the attack

Our reporter also learnt that the two villagers shot to death during the attacks on the villages and the injured one that died in the hospital had been buried by their families on Wednesday at Huni Gwari village.

A relative of one of the deceased, Ayuba Gambo, confirmed to our reporter through telephone on Wednesday that the victims had been buried.

He appealed to the security operatives to work with the vigilantes to rescue the two other victims.

It would be recalled that the kidnappers had on Sunday night, invaded Huni Gwari village and killed two villagers and abducted one person.

Prior to the invasion of Huni Gwari village, the kidnappers had earlier on Saturday night invaded the neighbouring Gudun - Karya village and abducted two women but one of them escaped from their den.

The spokeswoman for the FCT Police Command, SP Josephine Adeh, who had earlier promised to find out the details of the incident and revert to our reporter was yet to do so as at the time of filing the report.