

News

 Guardian Nigeria  GuardianNigeria  08136370421  Guardiannigeria

CAN tasks govt on Boko Haram's abduction of chairman, others

Group condemns kidnap as bandits kill one, seize dozens in Katsina

From Nkechi Onyedika-Ugoeze, Kanayo Umeh (Abuja) and Danjuma Michael (Katsina)

THE Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) has urged the Federal Government to secure the immediate release of Rev. Lawan Andimi, who was abducted last week by Boko Haram terrorists in Michika, Adamawa State.

It also charged the government to deploy all resources within its disposal to ensure that all Christians in Boko Haram and Islamic State of West Africa Province (ISWAP's) captivity were released without further delay.

Describing the latest attacks as evidences of Christian persecution in Nigeria, the body urged the United Nations (UN), United States (U.S.), United Kingdom (UK) and other developed coun-

tries to assist in securing the lives of Nigerian Christians before it was too late.

In a statement issued yesterday in Abuja, President of CAN, Rev. Dr. Samson Ayokunle said, "Although we were told that the troops repelled them, but it was not until they had successfully forced Rev. Andimi into their Toyota Hilux and took him away.

"The cleric, in a video footage released by his captors, has been appealing to the Federal Government, the Adamawa State Governor and leadership of CAN to come to his aid.

"As if that was not enough, there was an attack on Kasaya Village, another Christian community in Chikun Council Area of Kaduna State yesterday at 6:30am where they abducted 41 persons, including a Pastor, Rev. Joshua Samaila.

Up till now, nobody knows what has happened to them.

"On November 27 last year, Boko Haram terrorists abducted a lecturer at the College of Education, Gashua in Yobe State and 10 others, all Christians and Bwala in a short video had cried out for help. Up till now, the government has not secured their freedom or said anything about them," he lamented.

Besides, the Centre for Africa Liberation and Socio-Economic Rights (CALSER) condemned the kidnap of Andimi, who is CAN Chairman in Adamawa State.

In a statement, the group blamed the Boko Haram, ISWAP and withdrawal of 1,200 Chadian troops meant to be supporting the counter-insurgency efforts for the abductions.

CALSER's Director of Communication and Strategy, Roland Okupe, said this was

another plot by the terrorists to whip up sectarian anger targeted at breaking up the country along religious lines.

"Nigerians and the rest of the world should know that Boko Haram and ISWAP are now pursuing the last leg of their agenda to target people of a particular religious group for evil, so as to portray Nigeria and the government as ineffective in tackling terrorism," the statement added.

It, therefore, appealed to Nigerians not to fall for the ploy by ensuring that they take holistic view of issues relating to the new wave of attacks by terrorists.

While demanding the immediate release of Andimi and other abducted Christians, the group urged the military and other security agencies not to leave any stone unturned in bringing

perpetrators of the dastardly act to justice.

Meanwhile, bandits killed a middle-aged man, Yasir Usman in Tsauri Council Area and abducted dozens of people who were traveling along the Jibia-Batsari road in Katsina State yesterday.

The incident occurred at 7:34pm when dozens of armed bandits stormed the community, shot sporadically to scare away residents, searched homes, carted away cash and other valuables before shooting Usman at close range.

Usman's relatives were said to have rushed him to the Orthopedic Hospital in the state metropolitan area for treatment, but he died yesterday morning.

Also, the bandits blocked the Jibia-Batsari road where they abducted several persons traveling in two vehicles.