

Rituals: Kidnapped Airforce Officer Rescued In Benue

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• As Mob Kills Army Officer In Bauchi

An Airforce officer who was kidnapped penultimate week in Benue State was rescued from the jaws of death as an Army sergeant was killed by a mob in Bauchi.

It was learnt at the weekend that the Airforce Officer (names withheld) was rescued by a team of police detectives in a shrine at Kanshio, a suburb in the outskirts of Makurdi, the Benue State capital.

Force Public Relations Officer (PPRO) and Deputy Commissioner of Police, Haz Iwendi, who confirmed the development, described the operation as an intelligent one and assured that the rescued officer is in good health.

Speaking in a telephone inter-

view with *Daily Independent* on Sunday, in Abuja, Iwendi said: "It was an intelligence led operation and the officer is in good health. The suspects would soon be arraigned in court.

The Command Public Relations Officer, at the Tactical Air Command, Makurdi, Wing Commander, Sadiq Shehu, also confirmed the incident in a telephone interview on Sunday. He said the officer was in good health.

"The officer is hale and hearty," he said, while explaining the circumstances under

which the officer was kidnapped, adding: "He came to the Tactical Air Command in Makurdi for a course. After the course, he was going to deliver a message when he joined a vehicle at Wurukum roundabout. That was the last he knew of himself. Apparently, they sprinkled some substances on him, which made him oblivious of his surroundings."

A source close to the rescue operation told *Daily Independent* that two females and a male suspect were arrested during the operation.

He added: "The Flight Lieutenant was rescued in a shrine in Kanshio, near Makurdi on Thursday night at 9 p.m. after intelligence information led us to where he was taken after he was kidnapped.

"He was tied up when we arrived the shrine and from what we have gathered so far, both from the suspects and the victim, he was to have been sacrificed at the shrine. Investigations are on to determine whether the suspects were working in concert with others or were just on their own," he said.

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