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# Kidnappers: Why We Killed Briton, Italian Hostages

**LE** Tue, 13/03/2012 - 3:21am | AGENCY REPORTS,  
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Suspected kidnappers of the two European engineers – a Briton, Mr. Chris McManus, and an Italian, Mr. Franco Lamolinara-have explained that they decided to kill the duo because they [kidnappers] came under attack and would be killed by security agents who stormed their hideout.

The suspects were moved to Abuja last Friday by security agents for interrogation:

The suspects, reports said, told their interrogators that they were under instruction of their leaders to shoot the hostages whenever they came under any attack from security agents.

“We had a standing instruction to kill the hostages immediately we sighted security agents around the building. We were to kill the hostages since we were not

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sure of being alive after an encounter with security men,” one of the suspects was quoted as saying.

Heavily armed soldiers and men of the State Security Service (SSS), backed by British security operatives, in a commando-like operation last Thursday stormed a criminal hideout at Mabera area of Sokoto to free the two expatriates.

Both men had been kidnapped by the suspects in Kebbi State since May 2, last year. They remained in captivity until their death last Thursday in Sokoto.

The failed rescue operation was said to have started around 10am on Thursday when the securitymen sneaked into Mabera, a sandy suburb in Sokoto metropolis, without attracting the attention of the residents of the area. Soon, they cordoned off the un-tarred road leading to the detached building where the abductors were hiding.

Sensing the presence of the security personnel whose operation was heralded by an aerial patrol of the area with a military helicopter, the abductors opened fire on them.

They shot sporadically into the air. Consequently, the security men who had laid ambush on the abductors from all sides then reciprocated by shooting at the house where the abductors were with the abducted expatriates.

It was gathered that before the soldiers engaged the kidnappers in the gun duel, they asked residents who were attracted to the area by the gunshots to leave. Witnesses told our correspondent that the operators of a block factory opposite the abductors' residence had to lie face-down.

Residents who were watching the operation from afar, said the kidnappers killed the British and Italian engineers when the soldiers were about to overpower them. “They killed the foreigners and threw their lifeless bodies outside the gate. But before then, a woman who was among the kidnappers came out from the house and, from afar, we saw her talking to the soldiers. She had a gunshot injury on her leg,” Kabir Mohammed who resides in the area said.

According to him, the soldiers took the woman aside and the gun battle continued. He said the gateman was shot shortly after the woman left when he was trying to close the gate from inside. At the end of the operation, he said,

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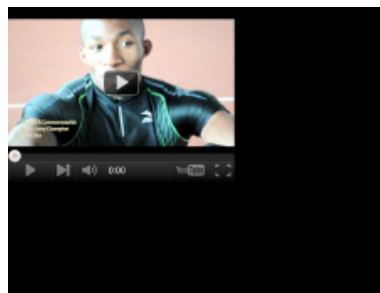


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he saw the soldiers carrying the lifeless bodies of two of the abductors and that of the gateman.

The people I saw in the compound were more than 10. A civil servant, Mani Abubakar, who resides in the area said his attention was attracted to the house when a helicopter was patrolling only the building. "I was in my house when I noticed the helicopter and some minutes later I started hearing gunshots from the house," he said. "I was peeping from my compound and, throughout the operation, I did not see any military or security operatives."

Four hours into the gun battle, the kidnappers jumped the fence of their house to an uncompleted building near them. From there, they were shooting and the soldiers set tyres ablaze and were throwing them to them."

Residents besieged the area a day after the failed rescue operation. From across the state, residents of Sokoto yesterday trooped to the house out of curiosity; as early as 7am, spectators continued to troop to the destroyed building. When our correspondent visited, people were seen moving from room to room in the house.

There were numerous gunshot holes in the building close to the house. Tyres were seen in an uncovered soak-away pit in the building. At the main house of the abductors, also, gunshot holes could be seen on the walls. After entering the gate of the house, our correspondent saw a two-bedroom flat.

Inside the compound, our correspondent saw three rooms each with a toilet. In one of the toilets, there was blood splashed all over. Spectators said it was where the expatriates were believed to have been killed.

Efforts to get the landlord or caretaker of the house yielded no result as the occupant of the only house facing the building refused to talk to the press.

### Explosions, gunshots rock Mubi

Bomb explosions yesterday night rocked different parts of Mubi, Adamawa State, followed by sporadic gunshots.

At the time of filing this report, the account was sketchy but the attackers were suspected to be Boro Haram members

Meanwhile, earlier in the evening, angry youths in Mubi had trooped to the streets, protesting the killing of six youngsters who were found murdered in the early hours



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yesterday.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the murdered youths, aged between 18 and 25, were found dead in the town with bullet wounds.

The protesting youths, who staged a march to the Emir's palace after burying the bodies in the afternoon, accused security operatives of perpetrating the act.

The incident led to beefing up of security in the commercial border town while business premises were closed.

Meanwhile, the Adamawa State Commissioner of Police, Mr. Aderale Shinaba, confirmed the discovery of six dead bodies in Mubi, saying the police were investigating the incident.

### **ACF to Nigerians: We Must All Stand Against Terrorism**

The apex socio-cultural organization, Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF), yesterday appealed to Nigerians to stand up against terrorism in the country.

While condemning the current suicide bombing that led to the death of more than 10 people and destroyed property worth millions of naira at St. Finbarr's church in Jos on Sunday, the ACF said all Nigerians of all religions, regions and of all ethnic extractions must stand up against the plans to plunge the country into religious and ethnic crises.

The ACF, in a statement signed by its spokesman Anthony Sani, added that "if Nigeria fail to realize that tackling the problem of insecurity across the nation is a collective responsibility aimed at checkmating the attackers, then, we are helping them to succeed in their aspiration to destroy the country".

"The Forum is seriously disheartened by a situation whereby innocent men are indoctrinated to kill themselves and innocent others. The ACF and northern leaders reiterate that all Nigerians of all religions, all the regions and of all ethnic extractions must stand up and deny the common enemy the pleasure of knocking our heads and unleashing religion conflict –which will do no one any good," the statement read.

The ACF charged on all Nigerians to try and prevent terrorist activities through community policing by keeping eye on people with suspicious movements.

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