

# 4 Bandits block roads, kill two, kidnap many after GOC's visit to Kaduna

- Man seized after delivering N7m ransom
- Gunmen demand N90m to free Ondo victims

**T**HE Birnin-Gwari Emirate Progressives Union (BEPU) has said that bandits blocked roads, killed two persons and abducted many people in their area after the visit of the new General Officer Commanding (GOC) 1 Division of the Nigerian Army Kaduna on Thursday.

In a statement by Ishaq Usman Kasai, the chairman of BEPU) noted that bandits blocked Birnin-Gwari-Funtua Road, following the surveillance visit by the GOC and his team.

The bandits blocked the road since Thursday, September 1, killed a commercial driver and kidnapped many travellers. The road is still a no-transit zone, it was said.

They also said the bandits attacked Damari community on Saturday, killing one person and looting shops.

The statement reads in part: "The Union witnessed that the new General Officer Commanding (GOC) of 1 Division of the Nigerian Army Kaduna personally led a team of gallant troops and went on ground

**From AbdulGafar Alabelewe, Kaduna and Osagie Otabor, Akure**

surveillance on Wednesday 31st August, 2022 through Kaduna to Birnin-Gwari and Birnin-Gwari to Funtua roads where some successes were recorded including neutralising and arresting some bandits.

"The effort is commendable and we sincerely appreciate and commend the Government and the Nigerian troops for this achievement and renewed move in combating insecurity in the area.

"Regrettably, BEPU observes that the armed bandits blocked Birnin-Gwari to Funtua Road following the earlier surveillance by the GOC and his team. The bandits blocked the road since Thursday, 1st September, 2022 which coincide with Birnin-Gwari Market Day, killed a commercial driver and kidnapped scores of

travellers who are yet to be freed. The road is still a no-transit zone."

BEPU also said other communities have been attacked since the GOC's visit.

The association called for more troops in the area.

Friends and relations of the Divisional Police Officer (DPO) who was kidnapped by terrorists on his way to assume duty at Birnin-Gwari have raised the alarm that the terrorists threatened to kill the police officer in captivity if their demand was not met.

They said that despite paying N7 million to the hoodlums, the terrorists have continued threatening to kill the DPO.

It was said also that the gunmen kept asking for more money and even demanded a motorcycle and N1 million GSM airtime in one instance.

"Now, the person who took the money has also been kidnapped," the DPO's relative

said.

Kidnappers, who abducted some burial guests in Ondo State, have demanded N90m to release them.

The victims were returning from a burial ceremony in Ewatto, Edo State, when they were attacked at Ifon, a border town with Edo State.

Ondo State Commissioner for Information and Orientation, Mrs Bamidele Ademola-Olateju, who disclosed this at a press briefing in Akure said the state government was not involved in the ransom negotiation.

Mrs. Olateju stated that payment of ransom empowered kidnappers to do more harm.

She said, "The victims went for a burial at Ewatto town. They were returning in a 32-seater Coastal bus hired from Rufus Guwa Polytechnic when they were attacked by suspected kidnappers. The kidnappers shot into the air and took 18 of the passengers."

6 Building collapse: Lagos Physical Planning commissioner quits