

Bandits demand 46 new motorcycles as ransom for 46 abducted villagers

• Captive woman's one-yr-old child dies of malnutrition in IDP camp

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BANDITS have demanded the supply of 46 new motorcycles for the release of 46 hostages they abducted on March 14 from Adunu, a village in Paikoro Local Government Area of Niger State.

Saturday Tribune learnt on Friday that the demand followed the inability of the relatives of the kidnap victims to pay the N100 million which the abductors originally asked for.

A source at Kafin Koro, a community near Adunu village, said the bandits had initially abducted 57 persons but released 11, including men, women and children, to the people of the community who brought to them, the sum of N10 million out of the N100 million ransom.

The source disclosed that the abductors changed their cash demand into 46 motorcycles in the course of negotiation for the balance of N90 million for the remaining 46 hostages in their custody.

As part of the fallout of the abduction saga, an infant at an Internally Displaced Persons camp at Kafin Koro, one-year-old Christopher Yusuf, whose

mother is said to be one of the remaining kidnap victims in the bandits' captivity, has died of malnutrition.

It was learnt that the nursing mother was told to leave her child behind when she was being abducted by the bandits who had attacked Adunu and other adjoining communities on March 14.

Saturday Tribune gathered that the little boy's death came at a time occupants of the IDP camp were complaining of malnutrition among children due to lack of food, drugs, mosquito nets and medical personnel.

Coordinator of the Justice, Development and Peace Commission (JDPC), Reverend Father Bahago Dauda Musa of the Catholic Diocese of Minna, confirmed to newsmen that the boy died on Thursday after suffering from malnutrition since his mother was abducted, as he couldn't take solid foods.

He said: "We lost him. We did our best but we couldn't save his life. And the mother is still in captivity. He was born prematurely but had survived before his mother was kidnapped, leaving him without

breast milk since March 14.

The cleric explained that urgent humanitarian support was needed from the state government and well-meaning individuals, adding that the lives of many other children and adults at the IDP camps in the state were being endangered by lack of food and other basic needs.

Sources at one of the camps said that two weeks after a meeting with the affected communities with a pledge to provide medical personnel and relief materials, especially food and medications, they were yet to receive any support from the government.

The Commissioner for Internal Security and Humanitarian Affairs, Mr Emmanuel Umar and Director General of the Niger State Emergency Management Agency (NSEMA), Malam Ahmed Ibrahim Inga, said recently that a directive had been given by the Secretary to State Government, Malam Ahmed Ibrahim Matane, to respond to the humanitarian crisis in the affected communities through provision of items such as food, medications, clothing and treated mosquito nets.