

# 19 people kidnapped in Bwari Area Council of FCT —Wike

## ·May hold emergency security meeting ·As landslide kills 30

Lawrence Bajah | Abuja

GUNMEN suspected to be bandits on Thursday abducted 19 people in Bwari Area Council of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja.

Minister of the FCT, Nyesome Wike, disclosed this to newsmen during his maiden meeting with the six council chairmen.

He consequently called for local surveillance in the six area councils to curb insecurity.

It will be recalled that about 30 people were few days ago killed in a landslide caused by the activities of illegal miners in Kuje Area Council.

The minister asked the council bosses to set up surveillance taskforce in their areas to monitor mining activities, Wike said he would meet with his counterpart in the Ministry of Solid Minerals, Dele Alake, to eliminate illegal mining

in the FCT.

As of the time of filing in this report, efforts to reach the FCT Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Josephine Adeh, for more details failed, as her line did not connect.

Speaking on the challenges confronting the councils, Kwali Area Council chairman, Danladi Chiya, appealed to the minister and the Minister of State, Dr Mariya Mahmoud, to come to their aide.

He said: "We have the major challenge of insecurity across the six area councils. Just today [Thursday], about 19 people were kidnapped in Bwari Area Council. I just received about five in my council who were in captivity for about six days.

Kuje Area Council chairman, Abdullahi Sabo, brought to the attention of the Minister the menace of illegal miners.

He said: "There is indis-

criminate mining licences given out and this has led to insecurity. They give letters of consent to Chinese people.

"Just few days ago, there was a landslide that took the lives of 30 people as a result of the activities of illegal miners. We appeal to you to engage the minister of solid minerals to stop mining in the FCT."

The chairman of Bwari Area Council, John Gabaya, called for greater inclusion of council chairmen in land allocations.

He said: "Sometime ago in 2017, I was a council staff then. All the council lands department are centralised in Area 11 and since then there is no way of check-mating their activities. If you look at Dutse, you will see unplanned developments and you would be wondering who is controlling them. We only watch. We can't do anything because we can't control them."

In response, Wike assured them that; "I am here to work for the FCT, not to work for any political party. I am here to support the administration of President Tinubu to realise the dreams of the founding fathers. It doesn't matter your political affiliations or religion, I am here to serve all.

"Insecurity is a major problem all over and those of you who are outside the Municipality, you have to work hard. Information is key. The incident of kidnap you talked about, nobody has reported that to me. It is a serious issue and we need to call an emergency security meeting. I have to call the Director of SSS and the CP now to give me more details because it is every embarrassing to me. Though, I am happy you said the SSS official and the DPO in the affected council were informed and on the situation."