

Bandits execute 5 victims for failure to meet ransom deadline in Niger

• Threaten to kill more, free 3 women

From **John Adams**,
Minna

AFTER about two weeks in captivity, five out of the over 60 people abducted from the Adunu-Koro district of Paikoro and Beni in Munya Local Government Areas of Niger State have been executed by their abductors for failing to meet the deadline for the payment of N100 million ransom they demanded.

Among those killed is a retired police officer, Mr. Moses Tanko, aka Arada System, and another serving police officer whose name was not immediately ascertained at the time of filing this report. The two victims were among those abducted from the Adunu village two weeks ago.

A source close to the District Head of Adunu, Mallam Kabiru Bawa, told Daily Sun that three women, who were set free by the bandits after being raped, came back to the community to tell the news of the execution of the five people. They also disclosed that the bandits threatened that more victims would be killed if their demand of the N100 million was not met.

The three others, one Igbo, Yoruba and a Gbagy were among those abducted from the Beni community in Munya local government area of the state. The gunmen, numbering about 100, invaded the Adunu and Beni communities in broad daylight and sacked the two communities, killing a medical practitioner, while over 60 people, including women and children, were taken away.

A source close to the communities said those who could afford between N10,000 to

N20,000 cash, in old or new naira notes, were set free by the gunmen during the raid. It was further gathered that eight people, including a son of the District Head and three women, escaped when the

bandits ran into an ambush by the Joint Security Task Force at the Itu village in Munya local government on their way to their destination with their victims.

Our source said the bandits had earlier demanded N200 million for the release of their victims who were moved from

Birnin Gwari forest to Zamfara forest, but later reduced it to N100 million and last Sunday as deadline. Five of the victims were, however, executed on Monday evening, while the women were released on Tuesday to go and inform the community about the execution.

The state police command

was yet to issue a statement on the latest development at the time of filing this report, and all efforts to get confirmation from the Commissioner for Internal Security and Humanitarian Affairs, Mr. Emmanuel Umar, could not yield any result as his phone was not going through.

Court fixes April 25 for judgment in suit by airline operators against Ethiopian Airlines, CJ, others

From **Godwin Tsa**, Abuja

THE Abuja division of the Federal High Court has fixed April 25 to deliver judgment in a suit seeking to quash the letter by the Chief Judge of the court, Justice John Tsoho, directing the transfer of the suit by the registered trustees of the Airline Operators of Nigeria (AON) against the Minister of Aviation and others pending before the Lagos division of the court to Abuja.

Justice James Omotosho fixed the date yesterday after taking arguments canvassed by counsel to both parties for and against the suit.

Other plaintiffs in the suit are Azman Air Services Limited, Air Peace Limited, Max Air Limited, United Nigeria Airline Company Limited, and Topbrass Aviation Limited. The plaintiffs listed the Chief Judge of the Federal High Court, Justice John Tsoho, Nigeria Air Limited, Ethiopian Airlines, Sen. Hadi Sirika (Minister of Aviation) and the Attorney General of Federation (AGF).

While making his submissions, counsel to the plaintiffs, Nureini Jimoh (SAN), argued that the letter by the Chief Judge, Justice John Tsoho, for the transfer of the substantive suit marked FHC/L/CS/2159/2022, filed by his client and pending before Jus-

tice A.L. Allogoa of the Lagos division of the court is invalid, improper and an unlawful interference with the judicial process.

Jimoh further argued that by the provisions of 22 (1) of the Federal High Court Act, 2019, and order 2 rule 4 along with order 1 rule 5 of the Act, the power to transfer the suit resides solely with the presiding judge, Justice A.L. Allogoa. It is also the contention of the plaintiffs that section 19 (3) of the Federal High Court Act, 2019 and order 2 rules 1 (2)

(c) and 3 of the Federal High Court (Civil Procedure) rules do not permit the transfer of the substantive suit from Lagos judicial division to Abuja.

The plaintiffs also claim that the action of the Chief Judge, through his letter dated February 16, 2023, is an abuse of process and complete usurpation of, as well as interference with the judicial process and an infraction of the plaintiffs' fundamental right to fair hearing.

The plaintiffs are, therefore, seeking an order remitting

the substantive suit marked FHC/L/CS/2159/2022, to Justice A. L. Allogoa of the Lagos judicial division of the Federal High Court.

However, counsel to the defendants, represented by J.U.K Igwe (SAN) for the Chief Judge of the Federal High Court, Dr. Alex Izinyon (SAN) for second, fourth and fifth defendants and Basil Atup for third defendants, vehemently challenged the competence of the plaintiffs' case and urged the court to dismiss same.

(Continued on www.sunnewsonline.com)

151 Nigerians repatriated from Libya

By **Christopher Oji**

A total of 151 Nigerians have been repatriated from Benghazi, Libya.

The distressed Nigerians were received at the Cargo Wing of the Murtala Muhamad International Airport, Ikeja, Lagos, on Tuesday, by the National Emergency Management Authority (NEMA). The returnees were received by the Director General of the agency, Mustapha Habib Ahmed, at the airport.

Spokesman of NEMA, South West Zone, Mr. Ibrahim Farinloye, said: "The statistics of the returnees, after profiling, indicates that 71 adult females, including two with

medical issues, 10 female children, and seven female infants, were brought back through the Assisted Voluntary Repatriation by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

"Also, the statistics shows that 54 adult males, four male children, and five male infants were among the repatriated distressed Nigerians. They arrived at the airport aboard Al Buraq Air Boeing 737-800 with registration number 5A-DMG at about 7.30pm.

The director general was represented by Chief Executive Officer, Mrs. Adenike OgunKunle, who admonished the returnees to turn a new leaf by taking advantage of

the second chance to make a meaningful life upon their safe arrival in the country.

OgunKunle enjoined youths to tread softly on the urge to rush out for greener pastures where it no longer exists. She assured the returnees of the continuous assistance by the Federal Government and other international partners in helping them with the reintegration programme, to enable them recover fast.

Other agencies that participated in the exercise are: The Nigeria Immigration Service, National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), Refugee Commission and Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN).