

Gunmen kidnap passengers in Edo ...kill vigilante, abduct mother, baby in Kano

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Anxiety heightened yesterday in parts of Edo State as armed men siezed all the passengers of an 18-seater commercial bus on the Benin-Auchi-Abuja Road.

Bandits also abducted a nursing mother and her baby in the Tudunwada Local Government Area of Kano State.

The Edo bus belongs to a popular transporter in Benin, the state capital.

The passengers were taken into a nearby bush on the busy single lane expressway.

The bus was said to be going to Abuja in the early hours of yesterday when the gunmen swooped on the passengers be-

tween Ehor and Iruekpen communities.

Witnesses said several of the passengers "were forcibly taken into the bush".

The state Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), SP Chidi Nwabuzor, refused to pick his calls to confirm the story.

There has been worry by motorists and travellers plying Benin-Auchi Expressway as gunmen have laid a siege to the road.

Investigations show that gunmen always take over the road as soon as policemen on stop-and-check leave the checkpoints from 4pm daily.

At press time, the whereabouts of the passengers and driver of the bus were unknown.

Meanwhile, there was palpable fear among motorists plying Kano-Jos Road as bandits, who abducted the nursing mother, killed a vigilante at Falgore Forest of Tudunwada Local Government Area of Kano State.

The Chairman of Rogo Local Government Area, Malami Rogo, said the gunmen attacked the village at midnight on Sunday killed a vigilante who went with a security team to accost them after they abducted the the nursing mother.

The said the gunmen invaded the residence of a man, Yusuf Falgore, where they abducted the woman and her baby.

He said the slain vigilante had been buried, according to Islamic rites.

Rogo is a border town between Kano and Katsina states on the border of the Niger Republic.

The state Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Abdullahi Kiyawa, confirmed the incident.

He said: "The police have received a security report that about 1.30am in Falgore town, some criminals abducted a 40-year-old nursing mother."

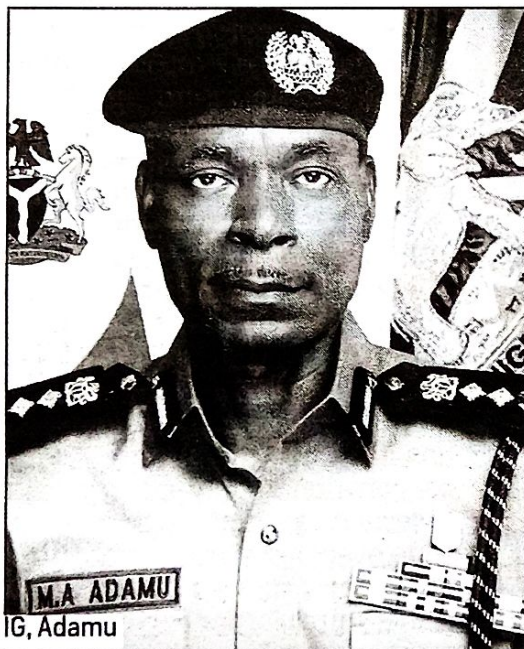
However, Kiyawa did not mention the baby in his statement.

The PPRO said the police mobilised a team and local vigilantes to pursue the gunmen.

He said: "The bandits shot one of the vigilantes. Upon reaching hospital, a doctor on duty pronounced him dead."

Kiyawa said the police "mobilised the team of Operation Puff Adder to rescue the abducted woman and arrest the kidnappers".

The killing and abduction added to the worsening security situation in North-West as well as several other parts of the country.



dead -Palace

They claimed that the monarch had a contact with the General who died of the disease recently in Abuja.

But Maleghemi, who expressed worry that unconfirmed report made pages of some national dailies in Warri yesterday, said it was unethical and misleading.

He said: "The attention of the palace of His Royal Majesty, Ogame Ikenwoli II, the Olu of Warri, has been drawn to news/social media publications announcing the sudden demise of His Majesty.

"We wish to notify the general public that His Majesty is indisposed and currently receiving medical attention by a team of qualified medical specialists."