

# Terrorists kidnap catholic priest in Kaduna, demand N60m ransom

- As soldiers foil attack, rescue 7 persons

**Baba Negedu,**  
KADUNA

**T**he Catholic Diocese of Kafanchan, Kaduna State has confirmed the abduction of one of its Reverend Fathers by gunmen.

The abducted priest, Rev. Fr. Joseph Shekari, is of the St Monica's Catholic Church, Ikulu Parish in the southern part of the state.

Ikulu parish is in Kauru Local Government Area of Kaduna State.

However, sources in the area

told our correspondent that the kidnappers are demanding the sum of N60 million as a ransom for the release of the clergy man.

~~The kidnappers were also said to have killed the cook who resides in the parish house.~~

In a statement yesterday, the Chancellor of the Diocese, Rev. Fr. Emmanuel Okolo, said Shekari was kidnapped at about 11.30pm on Sunday from his residence.

Okolo solicited prayers from everyone, saying the Church would do everything legally

possible to secure the quick and safe release of the priest.

"May Jesus crucified on the cross, listen to our prayers and hasten the unconditional release of His priest and all others kidnapped," he prayed.

But in a separate incident, the Kaduna State Government has disclosed that soldiers fighting insurgents in the state have foiled an attack and rescued seven persons in Chikun Local Government Area of the state.

Samuel Aruwan, Commissioner of Internal Security and Home Affairs in Kaduna State said, "Security agencies have reported to the Kaduna State government that troops foiled

an attack by bandits in Ungwan Garama, located in the Maraban Rido general area of Chikun Local Government Area.

According to the report, "a distress call was received from the area and security forces swiftly responded, mobilizing to the location and engaging the bandits. After an intense exchange, the superior firepower of the troops forced the criminals to flee in disarray."

He said the "security forces exploited the withdrawal route of the bandits, and were thus able to rescue seven persons who had been kidnapped. All of the rescued have been reunited with their families."