

Police rescue kidnapped surgeon, 9 others in Benue



By Peter Duru, Makurdi

Men of the Benue State Police Command, yesterday, rescued a kidnapped surgeon with the Federal Medical Centre, FMC, Makurdi, and nine others after spending 10 days in captivity at Gaya village, Utange Council Ward of Kastina-Ala Local Government Area of the state.

Meanwhile, the command in a special operation has foiled another kidnap attempt on Makurdi-Lafia Road in Guma council as well as apprehended the suspected ritual killers of 29 years old professional footballer, Babatunde Moses, in Otukpo Local Government Area of the state.

Parading the suspects at the Command Headquarters in Makurdi, the new Police Commissioner for the state, Mr Julius Okoro, said the Medical Doctor, Obadiah Etito, was whisked away by armed men in Zaki Biam while on a trip from Makurdi on May 13, 2023, and thereafter, opened negotiations with his family for ransom.

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He said: “But during the investigation, a team of Operation Zenda JTF trailed the kidnappers to their hideout in Gaya Village, Utange Council Ward, Kastina Ala Local Government Area and on sighting the Police, the kidnappers engaged them in a gun battle that claimed the life of one of the kidnappers.

“Three of the suspects were arrested while others escaped into a nearby bush with bullet wounds. 10 kidnap victims, including the doctor, were rescued unhurt.

“Some of the items recovered from them include one locally fabricated AK-47 rifle with 10 rounds of 7.62mm live ammunition; two single barrel rifles, one locally made barrette pistol loaded with three rounds of .9mm live ammunition and two military uniforms.”

He explained that another kidnap attempt was foiled by his men after information was received by the team on patrol on Makurdi-Lafia Road on Sunday.

He said: “Some gunmen had accosted a vehicle conveying passengers to Enugu at Daudu with intent to move the passengers to an unknown destination and request for ransom.

“The Police swiftly moved to the scene. On sighting the Police, the suspects abandoned their victims and took to their heels. They also abandoned a bag containing military camouflage uniforms and wooden guns.”