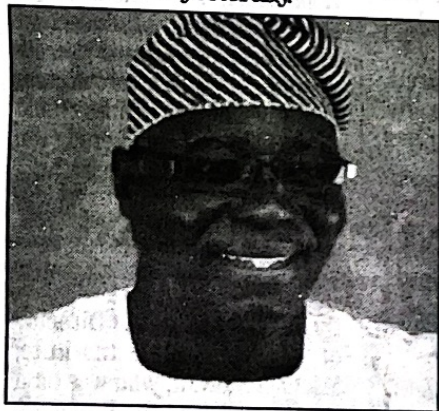


Anayo Ezugwu

Chairman of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), in Lagos State, Philip Aivoji, has regained freedom after spending four days with his abductors.

The Party's Publicity Secretary in the state, Hakeem Amode, disclosed the release of the PDP chief in a statement yesterday.



Philip Aivoji

Lagos PDP chair, Aivoji, 8 others regain freedom, one dead

While also confirming the release, the Ogun State Police Command said, besides the chairman, eight others among the 10 members of PDP in Lagos on Thursday have been released.

The Ogun State Commissioner of Police, Mr Abiodun Alamutu, who confirmed the release at a news briefing in Abeokuta yesterday, however regretted, that one of the abductees, Bilikisu Kazeem, lost his life during exchange of gunfire between police and the hoodlums.

Alamutu said he was not aware of any ransom paid to the hoodlums before the release of the PDP chieftains.

He commiserated with the family of the 37-year-old Bilikisu

Kazeem, who died as a result of the bullets wound he sustained during the incident.

Amode had said: "Hon Philip Olabode Aivoji, the Lagos State PDP chairman, is free at last after four days in the kidnappers' den. We use this opportunity to appreci-

ate your prayers most importantly because God's mercies were visible all the way."

Aivoji was kidnapped by unidentified assailants last Thursday, January 25, at about 6:00 p.m. on the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway as he was leaving a stakeholders' meeting con-

vened by Governor Seyi Makinde of Oyo State and Governor Ademola Adeleke of Osun State in Ibadan.

The kidnappers had demanded N200 million as ransom to release him. However, Amode refused to say whether or not ransom was paid before Aivoji was freed.

NAF strike kills over 30 kidnappers on 15 motorcycles in Kaduna ... as Army hands over 35 rescued kidnap victims to Gov. Radda in Katsina

The Air Component of Operation Whirl Punch has eliminated no fewer than 30 terrorists and kidnappers in an air strike along Kwiga-Kampanin Doka axis in Birnin Gwari Local Government Area of Kaduna State.

This is contained in a statement by the Director, Public Relations and Information of the Nigerian Air Force (NAF), AVM Edward Gabkwet, yesterday in Abuja.

Gabkwet said that the strike followed intelligence received on the movement of the criminals along the axis.

He added that the intel also revealed that the same syndicate was responsible for the ambush on troops at Kwanan Mutuwa on Jan. 27, as well as several attacks and abductions of innocent civilians in Birnin Gwari.

According to him, a deliberate and detailed scan revealed a trail of terrorists moving in a convoy of about 15 motorcycles, each with at least two armed terrorists.

This is just as the Army handed over 35 kidnap victims rescued from their captors in a Katsina State forest to Gov. Dikko Radda yesterday. Commanding Officer, 17 Brigade

of the Nigerian Army, Katsina, Brig. Gen. O.A. Fadairo, who handed the victims to the governor said they were kidnapped by bandits in Tashar Nagulle and Nahuta in Batsari Local Government Area of the state.

Fadairo explained that the victims were rescued at Dumburum Forest after an intensive gun battle between soldiers and the bandits.

Responding, Gov. Radda, thanked God for aiding the rescue operation which went without casualty either on the part of the victims or the security operatives.

Osun prince arrested over murder of US-based professor

Ayobami Agboola, OSOGB0

An Ejigbo Prince, Eniola Oyeyode, who allegedly

Hammed Abdul Jelili to fire his double barrel gun into the air to confirm the good condition of the gun.

Opalola said: "Osun Police Command is using this medium to

Navy hands over 11 suspected oil thieves to NSCDC in Rivers