

Vigilante Leader, Suspect Killed as Police Rescue Kidnap Victim in Oyo

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The vigilante community of Igbo Ora in Oyo State has been thrown into mourning following the loss of one of its leaders, Tajudeen Ayanwale, during a rescue operation of a kidnapped victim.

The victim identified as Bakare was abducted by a five-man gang of suspected kidnappers on Tuesday last week at about 8p.m. in the suburbs of Eruwa in the Ibarapa area of the state.

He said he was made to face the gruelling task of walking through a dense forest spanning over 42 kilometres before his abductors ran out of luck.

The police assisted by some vigilantes had caught up with the suspects while an exchange of fire ensued between the security operatives and Bakare's abductors.

This led to the rescue of the kidnapped victim with paying the ultimate price while a member of the gang was killed.

"I saw a touch flashing at me with some people shouting stop. There were five of them and I tried to manoeuvre but they eventually caught up with me," Bakare told reporters after he regained his freedom.

He further narrated, "As I fell off my bike, they started tying me up with rope and marched me through the forests. We nearly got into Ogun State when I heard gunshots.

"It continued for a while until my abductors left me and scampered for safety. I also ran to hide then I heard a vehicle arrive and picked up someone then left."

"Shortly afterwards, the vehicle returned with many motorcycles; then I cried out that I was the man abducted. They asked if I was hurt but I said I was fine but one of my kidnappers was hit.

"We searched for a long time but couldn't find him until the next morning when we saw his body. They also told me that the kidnappers shot one of the vigilantes who came to rescue me," he added.

Meanwhile, the Commissioner of Police in Oyo, Mr. Shina Olukolu, led some top officials of the State Police Command to condole with Ayanwale's family.

He conveyed the message of the Inspector General of Police to the deceased's family, as well as his friends and colleagues.

Olukolu, however, stressed the need for the renewal of courage and commitment to achieving a peaceful society against the odds.

He urged security agencies and allied groups not to allow the incident loss to deter them in the fight against kidnapping, banditry, and other criminal activities.

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