

2 kidnapped Kaduna clerics regain freedom, one dead

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By Luka Binniyat

KADUNA—Ten days after being abducted at gunpoint along the Kaduna – Abuja Expressway, President of the United Church of Christ in Nigeria, Rev. Emmanuel Dzigga and one Rev. Yakubu Dzarma, have regained freedom, but in tattered health, Church officials said.

Rev. Iliya Anto, who was also a victim in the kidnap saga, however, did not make it alive, according to Church sources.

After his kidnap, Anto took ill, and when it became too severe, he was abandoned in the bush by the criminals, ultimately leading to his death, churches sources reveal.

“Dzigga and Dzarma were freed Wednesday night while the corpses of Rev. Anto were found, almost decomposing in the bush,” the church source said.

He said: “The two clergy men were immediately taken to a private hospital in Kaduna after they were brought to our church on Katsina Road, Kaduna.

“They were not looking too good and as soon as they brought them, a decision was taken that they needed to see a doctor, so they were taken to a private hospital in Kaduna for medical check up, but I will not tell you the hospital because they need some rest.”

“ We don’t want people to disturb them until they are psychologically and physically fit to see people,”, he added.

“The person who went to collect them drove them on a bike from where they dropped them for four hours before they could reach a motorable road. This is very traumatic and they need some rest.

“Anto’s corpse was found in the bush after he was abandoned by the

kidnappers because of his ill health.

“A day after their abduction, the kidnappers called to inform us that Anto was not well and they had dropped him at a location in the bush.

“But when we dispatched people to the location to take him, we couldn’t get him after combing the area. The kidnappers who may have been watching us from their hideout said we sent too many people to pick him, so they refused to give further description of the location and we thought they must have gone with him” he said.

It was not clear if ransom was paid for their freedom.