



Why we don't kidnap women

Confession of bandits who kidnapped two Rev. Fathers killed businessman after collecting ransom in Kaduna



•Siblings kidnappers (Abubakar Suleiman (I) and Auwal Suleiman)

•Kidnap suspects ((Salisu Abdullahi(I) and Babaginda Usman

By Evelyn Usman

For some time now, communities in Kaduna state and other parts of the Northern region have been under kidnappers' siege. Having succeeded in chasing farmers away from their farmlands, these kidnappers who hide under the guise of bandits, commandeered these farmlands into dens where kidnapped victims are kept until ransom is paid.

Recently, these gangs resorted to storming villagers' homes to kidnap them. They kill anyone who attempts to put up resistance or tries to fight them. They also send text messages to well-to-do residents, demanding for hundreds of thousands of naira, with a threat to kidnap them if they did not meet the demand.

Irked by the brazen effrontery, the Inspector-General of Police, IGP Usman Alkali Baba, directed the Officer-in-charge of the Force Intelligence Response Team, DCP Tunji Disu, to crack members of the notorious gangs down and put an end to their reign of terror.

This led to the arrest of many suspected members of different kidnap gangs by the IRT.

During preliminary investigation, it was discovered that these gangs were also responsible for the series of incidents of stolen cattle and robberies in Kaduna state.

Among those arrested were two suspected members of one of the notorious gangs. The suspects: Salisu Abdullahi (28), from Kagarko area of Kaduna and Babaginda Usman, disclosed during interrogation that his gang was responsible for over ten cases of kidnap in the state.

Among the kidnapped victims mentioned were two Reverend Fathers and two businessmen, one of whom was killed after collecting ransom from his family.

Confession

In this interview with Crime Guards, the suspects opened up on their respective roles in the deadly gangs and their modus operandi.

For Salisu Abdullahi, he said, "I was once a farmer. I began with cattle rustling before graduating into kidnapping. I joined a kidnap gang last year. There are five members in the gang. I voluntarily joined kidnapping because I have no father or mother.

Since I joined, my gang has carried out kidnap operations in Kushemakaranta, Rafinkunba, Kudiliri, Kwei, along Nasarawa express road and Kurumikari, all in Kaduna state.

Victim killed

The first person we kidnapped was Chinedu, a businessman. He was kidnapped in his house. It was our gang leader that brought information about him. Our

gang leader lives in the same area as Chinedu.

He spent three days in the bush before his family paid N500,000 for his release. But on the day he was to be released, he fought with one of us because he wanted to escape and our gang leader ordered us to kill him.

Second victim

The second victim was also called Chinedu, a trader. He was riding his motorbike to Kagaruku. Our leader who had information on him was riding his motorbike behind him. He (gang leader) called us on the phone to inform us that Chinedu was on his way. He gave us a directive on when to strike. We abducted him and took him into the bush. We collected N700,000 from for his release.

Victim lured

"I don't know the name of the third victim. But we collected N700,000 from him too. He was kidnapped in the market. He is a trader and deals in ginger. We told him we had ginger on the farm and he volunteered to follow us. On the way we kidnapped him.

The fourth victim was a Reverend Father. We broke into his house at Kushemakaranta around 3am. We went with three guns. He opened the door when we knocked. He was the only one at home and he didn't put up any resistance. We also took him to the bush and released him after a N1m ransom was paid.

Another Reverend father was abducted and we collected N8 Million from his people before we released him. We kidnapped the sixth victim from the farm and we collected N300,000 for ransom.

My role

"I watch over kidnapped victims in the bush until ransom is paid for their release.

I made N800,000 in all the operations and I used the money to drink and carry women. Nobody knows I am a kidnapper in the community", he said.

On his part, his alleged partner in crime, Usman Babagida, disclosed that his role in the gang was to guard kidnapped victims.

He said, "I have received only N600,000, as my share so far. We don't kidnap women because they are the ones who go to look for ransom for the release of their husbands".

Siblings arrested too

Also arrested were Abubakar Suleiman, 36 and Auwal Suleiman, who confessed to belonging to another kidnap gang terrorizing Kaduna state.

This gang specialized in sending threat messages of kidnap to well-to-do residents, demanding N100,000 and N500,000, as exemption fee. Whoever failed to pay the amount would have his home broken into and kidnapped. They would not be released until double of the demanded amount is paid.

Informant killed

When information of the gang's tyranny reached the Force IRT, it acted on intelligence and arrested Abubakar. Few days after his arrest, his younger brother Auwal, stormed a village in Manufashi Local Government Area of Kaduna state at midnight and emptied 30 bullets on the suspected informant identified as Isah Abdul.

When asked why he killed Abdul, Auwal responded unremorsefully, "I killed him because he was also the leader of a kidnap gang. Why would he expose another kidnapper?"

Explaining how he carried out the mission, Auwal said, "We were three that went to the informant's house: Dogo, Mutari and I, at about 12 midnight. We met him

sleeping. When we forced the door open, we saw him holding a cutlass to attack us. We blew him up with our guns.

He once stole our cows and I suspected he was the one that gave information that led to my brother's arrest."

His elder brother who admitted to being a kidnapper, opened up on those he had kidnapped in the community.

He said, "The first person I kidnapped was Alhaji Abass. We live in the same area. He owns a filling station. Dogo (gang member at large) called him on the phone to bring N300,000. He threatened that if he did not bring it, he would be kidnapped. When he brought the money, we collected it and still kidnapped him. We collected additional N500,000 for his release.

"That is how we threatened people. My gang also kidnapped two Igbo businessmen who sell medicine in that community. I only followed them for operation twice. But the gang has kidnapped many people.

The role I play in the gang is to pick passengers with my bike and when I get to the junction where my gang members are, I will stop, pretending as if the motorbike has developed a fault. While waiting, my gang will come out of the bush to carry the person. I have an AK 47 rifle. I bought it for N470,000", he said.

The suspects were paraded by the Force Public Relations Officer, CP Frank Mba, alongside others who have been terrorizing the northern parts of the country, at the IRT office, Abuja. He informed that efforts were on to arrest other fleeing members of the respective gangs, adding that those arrested would be charged to court.

They kill anyone who attempts to put up resistance or tries to fight them