



11 kidnappers killed during fight over custody of fleeing victim

- FIB-IRT arrests victim's relative who masterminded the kidnapping
- I wanted her kidnapped, killed because I didn't want to pay N1.4 owed her-suspect

By Evelyn Usman

There was a violent clash between two kidnapping syndicates recently, in a forest in Galadimawa Town, Giwa Local Government Area of Kaduna State, over attempt by both camps to take custody of a female victim who escaped from one of the gang's den.

At the end of the bloody fight, 11 members of both warring gangs were killed, while the victim, identified as Binta Abusafyan, managed to escape unhurt in the process.

She reported the incident at the Force Investigation Bureau-Intelligence Response Team, FIB-IRT, Ragachigun base in Kaduna.

She explained how she was kidnapped by a kidnapping syndicate and taken into the forest, where she managed to escape. But in her bid to find her way back, she said members of another kidnapping syndicate kidnapped her.

As her new captors were taking her to their camp from where calls would be placed to her family for payment of ransom, members of the first gang stumbled into her and their attempt to take her back to their camp was resisted by the new captors thereby leading to an altercation that degenerated into the free use of firearms by both parties.

The surprise

Crime Guard gathered that operatives of the FIB-IRT on Operation Puff Adder with the aid of Tactical Intelligence Unit, TIU swung into action and arrested one Abubakar Haliru, a native of Magume, Zaria, Kaduna. The suspect, who was discovered to be related to Binta, disclosed that he connived with the duo of Nuhu Ibrahim and Rashidu Muntari, both from Tundungaudi, Zaria to kidnap her, collect ransom from her and thereafter kill her.

In an interview with the suspect who was paraded by the Force Public Relations Officer, CP Frank Mba at the FIB-IRT office in Abuja, he revealed how he deceived his cousin to accompany him to his friend's place to collect money owed him. He further disclosed how he drove his cousin in her Honda Accord 2008 Model car into the waiting hands of the kidnappers, at about 5pm, on August 15, 2021.

Mba explained that Haliru confessed during interrogation to be owing his cousin N1.4 million and instructed the kidnappers to kill her so as not to pay the money he owed her. He said, "during investigation, the victim's car key which the suspect drove her that fateful day, was found in his possession".

Suspect's confession

Narrating how the planned kidnapping was executed, Haliru said, "Binta is my cousin. My father and her mother are related. We don't live together. I took her to bandits in Galadimawa to kidnap her. She didn't know I was going to kidnap her. I owe her

N1.4 million. I am a tricycle operator. She bought some tricycles and gave them to me on hire purchase at the rate of N3.9 million. I ought to have finished payment by December 2020 but I have only paid her N2.5 million with an outstanding balance of N1.4 million.

"When she called to ask for the balance, I told her I was going to collect some money from a friend who was also owing me. I deceived her to accompany me to collect the money from the person with a promise to pay her balance but I took her to the bandits in Galadimawa. I met members of the kidnapping gang at the farm where I was working at the Kubu area. I knew they were kidnappers, they were a five-man gang. Immediately we arrived at the spot where they would strike, they came out of the bush, kidnapped both of us and marched us into the bush, while I abandoned the car at the junction. I asked them to take the car to the expressway in order to make people conclude we were kidnapped. But they left it at the junction saying it would be easy to locate where it was.

"The arrangement was that after collecting ransom for her release, I would be given my own share. I asked them to collect N100 million as ransom because my cousin is a business woman, she has a provision store".

Asked if he also instructed that she should

be killed, he kept mum and bent down his head. By the time he raised his head, he spoke in a low tone, causing this reporter to strain her ears. He said, "my plan was that they should kill her so that I would not pay the money I owed her".

The twist

Continuing, the Senior Secondary School Certificate holder said, "We were kept in different huts. I spent five days with them. While in the camp, my cousin managed to escape because she was not bound. A stranger came to carry me where I was kept and took me to another camp. That was when it dawned on me that I had been genuinely kidnapped. My cousin also fell into the hand of another gang and I do not know how much she paid because I don't know members of the new gang. It was the members of the gang who instructed me to call someone to come

and pay for my release. Inside the bush they have about 50 different kidnapping gangs with different camps. They have different huts where they keep kidnapped persons.

"I managed to escape from the second hut on the day the ransom was to be paid for my release. On that day, my abductors had gone out. As I was escaping, I begged a farmer I met on a farmland to give me his phone to contact my people that was after I explained to him that I was kidnapped. I told my people on the phone not to bother to pay ransom to anybody. I asked them to come and meet me at Iredachi junction. When my brothers came, they handed me over to IRT operatives. I regret my action", he said.



• Abubakar Haliru