

We killed mastermind of Benue abductions, arrested 2 during rescue of medical students — IGP

By Kingsley Omonobi

THE Inspector General of Police, Mr. Kayode Egbetokun, has said a notorious kidnap kingpin was killed and two gang members arrested with two rifles recovered from them during the operation to rescue the abducted medical students.

He added that President Bola Tinubu gave a marching order that the students must be rescued and brought out alive, hence the Office of the National Security Adviser, NSA, and himself have had sleepless nights.

Speaking while handing over the 20 students and seven other rescued victims to the Vice Chancellors of University of Jos and University of Maiduguri in Abuja, last night, Egbetokun said the arrested kidnappers were in custody.

He said: "This success was made possible through the support received from the office of the NSA, the activation of the security network, intelligence, synergy with other security agencies, community engagement, and deployment of our highly skilled and

tactical officers whose dedication, bravery, and precision in executing their duties are truly commendable

"Today, it is with a deep sense of relief that I brief you on a successful operation conducted by the Police, which resulted in the rescue of 27 innocent citizens on August 22, 2024, who had been abducted by a dangerous criminal gang in Benue State.

"Among those rescued were 20 medical students of the University of Jos Teaching Hospital, comprising 16 males and four females, who were abducted while in transit to a conference in Enugu on August 15, 2024. Five other passengers and two other victims who had also fallen victim to these heinous criminals were also freed.

"The successful rescue of these 27 individuals was achieved without the payment of any ransom.

"During the operation, our officers engaged the kidnappers in a well-coordinated tactical offensive. I am pleased to inform you that the kingpin of this notorious gang was neutralized during exchange of fire with our

operatives and his weapon recovered, while two other members of the gang were arrested.

"It is pertinent to state that rescue operations of this magnitude are painstakingly difficult and complex, requiring not only deployment of resources but also meticulous planning and coordination. In this regard, I must extend my heartfelt appreciation to the Office of the NSA, whose support was instrumental in this operation.

"We remain resolute in our commitment to rid our nation of criminal elements who seek to disrupt the peace and security of our society. The Police will continue to employ every lawful means at its disposal to protect the lives and property of all Nigerians while strongly determined to ensure that those who choose to engage in criminal activities will be brought to justice."

A goodwill read by Dr. Simon Ogenyi on behalf of the Vice President, Nigeria Medical Association, NMA, Dr. Ushakuma Anenga, said: "We are excited by the news of the release of the 19 kidnapped students and doctors."