



Recent Mass Abductions in Nigeria Highlight Major Insecurity

This week, an image has been circulated on social media depicting a group of concerned women surrounding a pile of mismatched shoes and sandals. The shoes belong to the **more than 100 students abducted** from Bethel Baptist High School in Kaduna State, Nigeria on July 6th. In the days following the incident, authorities have placed the number of missing students at 125, with 28 having since returned to their families safely. But the search for those remaining in captivity continues.

During an overnight ambush on the school in Damishi, a group of unidentified bandits stormed the school wielding guns, swiftly overwhelmed the building's security officers, and kidnapped 140 students total, though some were able to escape during the incident. Local residents began receiving phone calls that their children were among the kidnapped, and many family members have been waiting outside the school for any news regarding the abducted students.

Now, the kidnappers are asking for something in exchange for the release of the children; typically, abductors ask for large sums of money as ransom. However, this time the request is rather interesting - **the kidnappers are demanding food**: rice, beans, palm oil, salt, and stock cubes. Reverend I.A. Jangado reassured the families that "search and rescue operations (are) ongoing and we strongly believe that these students will safely return to their parents soon."

While Jubilee Campaign warmly welcomes the search operations for the swift and safe return of the abducted students, we urge that the Nigerian government take stronger action to provide extra security to schools across the country. This incident is far from being an anomaly; mass kidnappings occur in Nigeria on a monthly basis:



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On 17 February 2021, a group of armed men ambushed the Government Science Secondary School in Kagara State, abducting 27 students and 15 others; one student was killed during the incident. After 9 days in captivity, the kidnapped students and individuals were released on 27 February.

On 26 February 2021, over 100 armed bandits stormed the Government Girls Secondary School in Jangebe, Zamfara State, kidnapping 279 schoolgirls (ages 10-17) before escaping in pick-up trucks and motorbikes. The captors released all students on March 2. **During the reunion celebrating** the return of the children to their parents which took place on March 4, Nigerian armed forces allegedly opened fire after parents became disgruntled at the length of the ceremony and expressed their urgency to leave before the roads became dark and unsafe.

On 11 March 2021, gunmen ambushed the Federal College of Forestry Mechanization in Kaduna State by boring a hole into the school's perimeter wall, kidnapping 39 students. Another 180 students were rescued by Nigerian military forces before they were abducted. Captors released five of the students on April 5, another five on April 8, and the remaining 29 on May 5.

On 20 April 2021, armed men violently entered Greenfield University in Kaduna State and kidnapped "an unspecified number" of individuals, though later estimates revealed that now fewer than 20 students and 3 staff were abducted. In the days following the incident, the captors killed a total of 6 students, before releasing the remaining 14 in late May.

On 24 April 2021, armed individuals kidnapped three students at gunpoint from the Federal University of Agriculture in Makurdi, Benue State. The students were returned three days later on April 27.



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The United Nations **Convention on the Rights of the Child** guarantees the right of every child to an education. The government of Nigeria, as a signatory to the Convention, has the obligation to take more action to reinstate security in schools across the nation, particularly the north-west, so that children are able to freely exercise their right to education without fear and so that parents can send their children to school without worrying about their safe return. Where the government identifies insufficient capabilities to protect its own civilians, it must request foreign assistance in order to provide more comprehensive training and resources to security forces. Furthermore, Jubilee Campaign echoes **Open Doors' urgent calls upon the Nigerian government** to "ensure children's safe return to school, provide support to the victims of abductions and their families, [and] investigate the attacks and hold those responsible to account."

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