

Kidnapped Nigerian schoolgirls have been released and are 'safe'

From [BBC](#)

A group of girls who were abducted from a boarding school in Nigeria have been released and are "safe", reports say. Dozens of the girls were seen gathered at a government building in Zamfara after they were taken there in a fleet of mini-buses.

The men who ransacked the school had also attacked a nearby military camp and checkpoint, preventing soldiers from intervening. Lawani Adali, the security man on duty on the day, said policemen and vigilantes could not get inside because the gunmen had blocked all entrances. He said there was heavy firing as they were shouting "Allahu akbar" – "God is great".

"Most of us got injured... and we could not carry on walking," one of the girls told the BBC. "They said they [would] shoot anybody who did not continue to walk," she added. "We walked across a river and they hid us and let us sleep under shrubs in a forest."



The group's release was secured through negotiations between government officials and the abductors, authorities in Zamfara state told the BBC. The government has repeatedly denied paying ransoms.



But President Muhammadu Buhari issued a statement on Friday in which he urged state governments "to review their policy of

rewarding bandits with money and vehicles, warning that the policy might boomerang disastrously”.

Sky News' Africa correspondent John Sparks said the latest incident prompted more questions on the ransom debate. “Was money paid? This is becoming a growth industry in Nigeria. Such kidnappings in Nigeria were first carried out by jihadist group Boko Haram, and later its offshoot Islamic State West Africa Province, but the tactic has now been adopted by other criminal gangs.

The Chibok girls kidnapped by Boko Haram in 2014 were mostly Christian girls. According to those who were released many are still in captivity, either living as slaves or having submitted to islam as 'wives' which is slavery with a certificate. It hasn't been said what religion these girls are, but those uniform grey hijabs pinned over their own cheerful coloured clothes have the same look about them as the uniform grey hijabs from the Boko Haram propaganda videos of the Chibok girls. They don't have the look of the personal hijab of a Muslim girl who wears it ordinarily somehow. Anyway I'm glad they are safe and released promptly.