

Metro

Gunmen kill bus driver, abduct The Guardian correspondent, 17 others in Delta

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[FILES] Delta State. Photo/facebook/DSGovernment/

Police nab three as abductors demand N5 million for Osahon's release

Gunmen have kidnapped 18 passengers, after killing the bus driver at the Evwreni axis of the East-West road in Ughelli North Local Council of Delta State.

One of the abducted passengers is The Guardian reporter in Yenagoa, Julius Osahon.

The incident happened on Sunday when gun-wielding men attacked the bus.

It was learnt that the bus belonged to Sunny Eru Motors, and was waylaid near

Patani when the abductors emerged from the bush and began to shoot directly, killing the driver in the process.

They later forced the bus to a stop and marched all 18 passengers into the bush.

Five victims were said to have regained freedom on Monday morning, while the gang is still holding on to Osahon and others.



Osahon

A source disclosed that a female passenger, who was among the five freed victims, came to Osahon's neighbourhood in Yenogao to break the news of the abduction.

"The incident happened along Patani axis of the East-West road. The gunmen suddenly came out from the bush and started shooting directly at their bus. The bullet hit the driver and he died instantly.

"The lady recognised Osahon as someone she knew at Punch road and they boarded the same bus.

"She said about five of them (three from Delta, two from Yenagoa) among the passengers in the bus were miraculously released by the kidnappers on Monday morning around 8:30 a.m., while the rest of the passengers including Osahon were still held in captivity," the source said.

Also, a Warri-based lawyer, Mr. Lucky Egboyi, told journalists, yesterday, that he escaped the scene by sheer luck.

He explained that he was returning from Bayelsa State when they ran into the gang, operating on the road.

He said he and other motorists narrowly escaped and ran into the bush, saying that policemen who came to the scene immediately ran away with their vehicle.

It was confirmed that the kidnappers have contacted the journalist's wife, who is based in Benin, and demanded N5 million ransom for his release.

Wife of the abducted Journalist, Mrs. Jennifer Osahon, confirmed her husband's abductors were demanding N5 million for his release.

Mrs. Osahon said the Kidnappers asked her to send in the money by Tuesday evening (yesterday) or she would regret what would happen to her husband.

MEANWHILE, Delta State Police Command, yesterday, said it arrested three people with AK47 in connection with the incident in Patani axis of the East-West road of the state.

The State Police Commissioner, Mr. Ari Mohammed Alli, who confirmed the incident, told The Guardian in Asaba yesterday, that the police had since Sunday swung into action, and had recovered some of the victims and their items, noting that efforts are on to rescue other victims.

He assured of rescuing the abducted passengers, stressing that three of the gang terrorising the area were arrested with AK 47 rifles, a day before the abduction.

ALSO, Bayelsa State Council of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), has condemned the abduction of Osahon, who was on his way to Delta State from Yenagoa.

The Council's Chairman, Comrade Samuel Numonengi and the Secretary, Comrade Ogie Ipigansi, in a statement, yesterday, called for the immediate and unconditional release of Osahon, who is only discharging his responsibilities as a journalist.

The statement enjoined security agencies in Delta and Bayelsa states as well as the Inspector General of Police (IGP) to intensify action to rescue the said journalist and others without delay.

SIMILARLY, the leadership and members of the Federated Correspondents' Chapel (FCC) of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), Bayelsa State Council, has condemned the abduction of Osahon by unknown gunmen.

The chapel, in a statement signed by its Chairman, Christian Eze and Secretary, Bassey Willie urged security agents both in Bayelsa and Delta states to collaborate and ensure that Osahon and all those abducted in the ill-fated bus are rescued unhurt.

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