

Kidnappers kill driver, abduct journalist, others

GUNMEN suspected to be kidnappers have killed a Bayelsa State-based transporter's driver and abducted the Guardian Newspaper's correspondent in the state, Mr Julius Osahon, and other passengers.

The incident occurred on Sunday night at Evwreni community near Ughelli in Delta State.

The bus was headed for Warri.

The suspected kidnappers reportedly shot at the commercial bus conveying Osahon and other passengers, killing an unnamed driver of Sunny Eru Motors instantly.

After capturing Osahon and other passengers, the gunmen forcibly took them into a forest near Ughelli where they robbed them of money and other valuables before taking them

From Simon Utebor,
Yenagoa and Elo Edremoda,
Warri

to their den.

Some ladies, who were on board the ill-fated vehicle, were said to have been let off the hook while the men were held hostage and given the beating of their lives.

One of the ladies, who was released by the kidnappers, came to Osahon's residence in Yenagoa, the state capital, to confirm that the Guardian journalist was one of the victims of the abduction.

Our correspondent, who spoke with Osahon's wife, Grace, was informed that the kidnappers had reached out to her.

Osahon's wife said the kidnappers demanded a ransom of N5m, warning that if

the family failed to pay the ransom quickly, Osahon would be killed.

The Bayelsa State government, through the Commissioner for Information and Strategy, Ayibaina Duba, has expressed shock over the abduction of Osahon, saying that the government would collaborate with the relevant agencies to ensure the release of the victims.

A Warri-based lawyer, Mr. Lucky Egboyi, who narrowly escaped the kidnappers, told reporters in Warri that they ran into herdsmen on the road.

He said the bus driver was shot in the head, while the passengers abducted may have been up to 18.

Delta State police spokesman Bright Edate confirmed the incident to *The Nation* yesterday.