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## Kidnappers kill victim after collecting N1.7m ransom

JUNE 19, 2014 BY STEPHEN UKA 2 COMMENTS

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Residents of Umuahia, Abia State, were on Monday thrown into confusion when the lifeless body of a 72-year-old business man, abducted by yet-to-be identified gunmen, was found on the road at Olokoro, a suburb of the town.

The victim, Elder Alex Okonkwo, a native of Akata in Oru East of Imo State, was the owner of a popular supermarket in Umuahia from where he was abducted on Sunday June 8, 2014.

Speaking with our correspondent on Wednesday at their residence, one of the sons of the deceased, Ndubueze, said his father was abducted by unknown gunmen numbering about four around 8am on the fateful day.

According to him, the kidnappers shot sporadically into the air before cramming his diabetic father into the boot of their (abductors') waiting Toyota Camry and zooming off.

He said that the abductors later established contact with the family and demanded a huge sum of money as ransom, but after many negotiations, the family agreed to pay N1.7m.

Payment of the agreed ransom, according to him, was made to the abductors on Sunday, June 16, only for the family to be contacted by the police the following day (Monday) that an unidentified corpse was found somewhere around Olokoro town; requesting them to confirm whether it was their father or not.

He said, "I was the first person to get to the place when the police informed us about it, and behold, the corpse was my father."

He said the family had contacted the police immediately their father was kidnapped, but noted that all efforts made to rescue the old man alive were fruitless.

Ndubueze added that the family had spoken with the deceased on the telephone while in the captors' den few days before the corpse was dumped on the road. He wondered why the kidnappers would kill his father after collecting the ransom.

The Police Public Relations Officer, Abia State Police Command, Mr. Geoffrey Ogbonna, confirmed the incident, but said no arrest had been made.

He said investigations were ongoing and appealed to members of the public to volunteer information to the police that could lead to the arrest of the culprits.

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