

will touch their heart to free all the victims. The police are also assuring us that they are on top of the situation."

A police source also confirmed the ransom to our correspondent, saying, "I learnt they have also contacted the school."

But the spokesperson for the school, Cemal Yigit, denied any communication with the kidnappers, stating that the management was relying on the efforts of the security agencies.

He said, "There is no update of such (negotiation). We are in collaboration with security officials. We are being guided by them and we are doing whatever they ask us to do. We are not acting on our own."

"There are security officials everywhere around the school. We have security light. Everywhere is fixed with cameras. Every single step of

a serious security company. We have also learnt to increase the security measures from the

Abimbola Oyeyemi, said the command was not aware of any demand for ransom, stating that

those hoodlums arrested. we are working towards that and we believe that very soon we are going to get them."

## Gunmen kill American returnee, abduct Malaysian-based man

Chidiebube Okeoma,  
Owerri

**T**HERE is palpable fear in Imo State as some gunmen, who kidnapped and subsequently murdered an American-based Nigerian, Chuks Okebata, struck again on Saturday - two days after the first attack - and abducted a Malaysian-based Nigerian.

While Okebata was kidnapped in Mbieri town, in the Mbaitoli Local Government Area of the state on Thursday, the Malaysian-based, who had yet to be identified, was kidnapped in Akokwa town, in the Ideato North LGA on

Saturday.

Okebata, who hailed from Umuduruorie in Umuomumu Mbieri, in the Mbaitoli LGA, was reportedly bundled to Atta Junction in the Ikeduru LGA, where he was shot dead on Thursday.

A source said the Malaysian-based had returned home for the Christmas and New Year celebrations, and was abducted in his Lexus RX 330 Jeep with number plate, BDD69 DV.

The source said, "The Malaysian-based man was relaxing with his brothers when the suspected kidnappers struck around 10pm on Saturday.

"The men, who were armed, bundled their victim into his Jeep and drove off while the people around took to their heels because of the bullets the kidnappers fired into the air."

As of the time of filing this report, the source said the gunmen had yet to establish contact with any member of the family of the kidnap victim.

When contacted, the Police Public Relations Officer in the state, Andrew Enwerem, confirmed the killing of the American returnee, adding that the command had commenced investigation into the case with a view to bringing the perpetrators to justice.

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