

# Late kidnapped expatriate identified as Syrian national

By Samuel Oyadongha

**YENAGOA**—THE identity of the expatriate who lost his life in the custody of Niger Delta militants in Bayelsa State has been revealed. He was John Hana-Daher, a Syrian national who until his death was an employee of Googipar Nig. Ltd., a Port-Harcourt-based oil servicing contracting firm to the Italian oil giant, Nigerian Agip Oil Company.

The expatriate whose corpse is still lying at the Federal Medical Centre in Yenagoa at the time of filing this report was reportedly seized two weeks ago by militants in neighbouring Port Harcourt and taken to a location around the Koluama axis of Bayelsa on the Atlantic fringe.

It was however gathered on realising his deteriorating state of health his kidnappers decided to transfer him to one of the numerous militant camps in Bayelsa State where

he reportedly lost his life moments after community leaders succeeded in securing his release weekend from his kidnappers.

The death of the expatriate in the hands of his captors is the first of its kind in the troubled delta since armed gunmen started kidnapping oil workers as a strategy to extract firm commitment from the central government to address the plight of the region.

However, this strategy which was effectively used by Ijaw freedom fighters, MEND to attract global attention to the many years of environmental despoliation and underdevelopment of the region, has been hijacked by some faceless groups who are now kidnapping not only expatriates but relations of politicians for monetary gains thereby making mockery of

the Ijaw struggle for equity and justice.

A staff at the FMC who spoke anonymously to *Vanguard* yesterday said the late expatriate was brought in dead late Saturday by men of the state security services.

According to the source, the security operatives had earlier come to the hospital to demand for a stretcher without stating their mission as well as their identity.

The source added, "it was when the officers at the emergency and causality units insisted on knowing their identity before the stretcher would be release to them that they identified themselves as SSS operatives.

"Shortly after they left with the stretcher they brought in the dead expatriate and deposited his corpse at the mortuary. They did not even disclose the identity of the man and the company he was working for before he met his untimely death."