

Nigerian editor missing since last week

The Committee to Protect Journalists holds Nigerian authorities responsible for the safety of an editor who was seized by armed men on Tuesday, 1 July and has not been seen since.



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Thomas Thomas, Editor of the thrice-weekly *Global Concord* newspaper, was seized by three men in plain clothes in Uyo, the capital of the oil-rich state of Akwa Ibom, according to news reports. The journalist was handcuffed and forced into a waiting car, the report said.

Unyime Ekwere, Chairman of the *Global Concord's* editorial board, told CPJ that Thomas was being detained by the State Security Service, but did not elaborate on the identity of his source. He said no reason had been given and that the SSS denied having him in custody.

In separate telephone calls with CPJ, SSS Director Toma Minti and Etim Dickson, police spokesman, declined to comment on Thomas' whereabouts.

Critical of Akwa Ibom state government

Global Concord has been very critical of the Akwa Ibom state government, according to news reports and local journalists. Ekwere told CPJ that Thomas' disappearance could be connected to a recent story published in the paper that alleged plans by the Akwa Ibom state government to assassinate traditional chiefs ahead of the 2015 general elections over their refusal to support a government-chosen candidate. The story was based on a press release from the traditional chiefs, Ekwere told CPJ.

"CPJ is alarmed by the seizure of Thomas Thomas and calls on Nigerian authorities to do all they can to ensure his safety and well-being," said CPJ Africa Program Coordinator Sue Valentine from Cape Town, South Africa.

Source: CPJ

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