

Nigerian journalist Jones Abiri arrested again in Bayelsa state

Unidentified men arrested Jones Abiri, the editor and publisher of the Weekly Source newspaper, in the Bayelsa state capital, Yenagoa, according to news reports, as well as a local activist with whom CPJ spoke and posts on social media.



Jones Abiri, editor and publisher, Weekly Source.

According to the independent news website [Sahara Reporters](#), Abiri, who was meeting publishing colleagues in Yenagoa, was accosted by unidentified armed men--reported by *Sahara Reporters* to be members of Nigeria's Department of State Security (DSS)--and told that he was under arrest. Abiri was then forced into a vehicle at gunpoint; his whereabouts are currently unknown, according to *Sahara Reporters*. Bayelsa environmental activist and contributor to the *Weekly Source* Alagoa Morris told CPJ that he had received reports of Abiri's arrest from colleagues and community members from Abiri's home village. DSS spokesman Peter Afunanya did not answer his cellphone or respond to a WhatsApp message when CPJ contacted him for comment.



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"Given that Jones Abiri was previously detained by intelligence officers without access to a lawyer or his family for two years, we are deeply worried that he has once again been arrested and that his whereabouts are not known," said Angela Quintal, CPJ's Africa program coordinator. "We call on federal and state authorities in Nigeria to disclose where Abiri is being detained and the reasons for his arrest, and urge that they ensure that his rights are not violated yet again and that due process is respected."

Abiri was [released](#) in August 2018 after two years in detention following a campaign by local and international rights organisations including CPJ who [documented](#) his case during that period. In two separate [cases](#) last year, one court threw out the case against Abiri, saying it did not have jurisdiction, and another ordered the DSS to pay damages for the journalist's illegal detention and violating his human rights.

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