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Militants kill 2, abduct 1 expatriate in P.H.

•2 kids kidnapped

TONY ITA ETIM, Port Harcourt

GUNMEN yesterday killed a soldier and kidnapped a German engineer with Julius Berger Plc in Port Harcourt, Rivers State capital.

An employee of the construction giant whose identity could not be ascertained was also wounded in the attack.

Also yesterday's morning, two children of a former local government council chairman and a Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) stalwart, Mr. Ephraim Nwuzi, were kidnapped on their way to school.

The expatriate was on inspection of part of the East West Road under construction by the company when the unknown gunmen abducted him.

The incident took place just before mid day as the gunmen stormed the construction camp of Julius Berger in Oduoha, Emuoha Local Government Area and took away the site engineer.

A soldier on security duty at the camp was injured though some sources claimed that three soldiers were fatally wounded during the attack by the gunmen.

But the Reuters reported that the soldier was killed while a driver was wounded.

Wisdom and Allwell Nwizu [eight and five years respectively] were riding to school in their family car when they were abducted at the Government Reserved Area (GRA), Phase Two in Port Harcourt about 7:00 am.

Sources said the unknown gunmen blocked Nwuzi's vehicle and moved the children into their vehicle after showing the driver of the car their weapons.

Though no shot was fired, the gunmen forced the driver to give up the children after displaying their weapons.

A source narrated "Immediately after they succeeded in stopping the driver, the bandits displayed their arms apparently to warn the driver against trying to escape.

"They then forced the two children out of their father's car and pushed them into their own and took off almost immediately. The whole thing was so fast that people were dazzled at the precision of the attack."

He said that because of the speed and heavy bombardment by the invading gunmen at the Julius Berger site, it was difficult for security operatives guarding the camp to launch a counter attack on the assailants.

He said, "In a war situation, it is the person who first corks his gun that has the advantage. The kidnappers came with their guns ready for the attack and they did not pretend that it was

Countryman

a joke."



Spokeswoman for Rivers State Police Commander, Mrs. Ireju Barasua, confirmed the kidnap of the two children in a chat with our correspondent at the Civic Centre, Port Harcourt.

Barasua said the command has commenced investigation into the abduction of the children and that of the expatriate.

When contacted too, the spokesman of the Joint Task Force in the state, Lt. Col. Musa Sagir, confirmed the two incidents.

Sagir in a telephone chat said he was at the scene of the expatriate abduction when our correspondent called and asked Daily Champion to call back.

Several calls later made were not answered.