

Militants kill 7 in boat attack

By DENNIS NAKU, Yenagoo

At least seven persons, including three soldiers have been killed, when suspected militants reportedly attacked the boat in which they were travelling in, on Nembe waterways in Nembe Local Government area of Bayelsa state yesterday.

Sunday Champion

Govts should enhance living standards—Osunbor

EDO state governor, Prof. Oserheimen Osunbor has said that the well-being and the living standards of the people should be the central concern of the three tiers of government in the country.

Senator Osunbor made the assertion while receiving a delegation of the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) led by the National Coordinator, and Senior Special Assistant to the President, Dr. Magnus Kpakol at Government House, Benin City.

The governor explained that a major approach to eradicating poverty and enhancing the quality of life of the people is to promote programmes that would subsequently create jobs in order to keep the people employed.

Stating the administration's effort to, eradicate poverty

leant that the remains of the soldiers and other passengers killed on board the speed boat are yet to be located, although more operatives of the Joint Military Task force (JTF) have been drafted to the spot, along with local divers.

Contacted, JTF Commander in the state, Lt. Col. Chris Musa said three of his

men were involved in a boat mishap on their way to Yenagoo, after leaving Nembe this morning, and that he could not ascertain whether it was an attack by the gunmen or boat mishap.

Musa explained that although the affected soldiers were dressed in mufti, they were on official assignment to Yenagoo, Bayelsa State capital.

On the identities of the affected soldiers, he said it was too early to give such details as his men were still combing the creeks and waterways for their remains.

He also noted that the disclosure would be done after the families of the deceased have been properly briefed.

But Sunday Champion reliably gathered that the boat was attacked near Obioku in Nembe local area of Bayelsa state in the early hours of Saturday, where

six passengers on board the boat including the soldiers were heading to Yenagoo.

Even though there were other casualties whose number could not be ascertained as at the time of going to the press, the death statistics show that three soldiers, two other passengers and the boat driver lost their lives.

Shortly after the incident, Sunday Champion gathered that people from the nearby communities stormed the scene in a bid to rescue the victims shortly after, but they were taken back as none of them could be traced after an intensive search that lasted for several hours.

It was reliably gathered that the boat was attacked near Obioku, rustic community in Nembe local area of the state in the early hour of Saturday, where passengers on board including the soldiers were heading to Yenagoo.

FG approves measures to enhance PHCN operation

By DENNIS UDOMA, Uyo

THE Federal government has approved intervention materials to boost the operations of Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) in Akwa Ibom.

PHCN, Uyo Business District Manager, Mr. Abrasheed Shittu said this in the state capital last Friday during the customers consultative parley with electricity consumers in the state.

He said that the materials apart from strengthening power distribution in the state would go a long way to

assisting in the switching-on of the state's Independent Power Plant (IPP) at Ikot Abasi this year.

Shittu also maintained that, in readiness for the start-up of operations at the plant, the company has been mandated by the headquarters to identify areas of weakness and to provide data for the overhaul.

He noted that the exercise would be continuous until the best was achieved for the consumers.

Shittu, however, lamented the unreliability of power supply to the state in recent times, attributing it to low

out demolitions

where they stopped when the owners of House no 177 Niger Street mobilised thugs to throw bottles and heavy pebbles at my team, forcing them to beat a retreat."