

GOOD FRIDAY TRAGEDY

Five Feared Dead In Port Harcourt Explosion

By Ofonime Umanah,
Bureau Chief, Port Harcourt

Relatives and friends of security officials, among them men of the Nigerian Navy, wept uncontrollably on Friday at the Nigerian Navy Pathfinder Base in Port

Harcourt where some five people were feared dead during a Good Friday explosion.

The explosion was said to have caused a serious stir around the neighbourhood and resulted in a

furnace that consumed some boats and barges there.

Those feared dead were believed to be either in the burnt boats or around the boat yard. Some of them were burnt beyond recogni-

tion.

It was not clear if fire fighters were brought in to check the fire, which started around 9 a.m. Neither was it certain if those that rushed to the hospital survived the burns.

Although there were specula-

tions that the explosion may have been the handiwork of militants in the state, the Joint Task Force (JTF), however, said the fire was caused by an electrical fault.

Spokesman of the JTF, Musa Sagir in confirming the incident admitted that there "was an accident this morning at the NN Pathfinder. It was purely an accident caused by electrical mishap.

He also confirmed that some boats were affected by the incident, although he was quick to add that the actual casualty rate was yet to be ascertained as at press time on Friday.

•Continued on A2

INDEPENDENT

Five Feared Dead In Port Harcourt Explosion

Continued from page A1

Sagir, however, confirmed that two members of the JTF might have died as a result of the incident. He said in a text message that the incident would not affect the operations of the Task Force.

Police Shield Prophetess Over Stolen Baby

Continued from page A1