

# Gunmen attack vessel

GUNMEN yesterday attacked a security vessel off the coast of Akwa Ibom State in an oilfield operated by Canadian oil firm Addax Petroleum.

Two private security sources working in the oil sector said a gang in two boats attacked the vessel at about 3 a.m.

A source said the captain of the vessel, a retired army major, had been killed and another crew member wounded. But this could not be confirmed as at press time.

The attack took place in OML 123, a 370 sq km licence area operated by Addax. Other similar attacks took place in the area last year and there have been at least 10 such raids offshore since the beginning of the year.

Some industry executives say if the rise in piracy is not checked, smaller oil services firms, which are vital to the smooth operations of the offshore industry may consider withdrawing.

"If they pull out, it will cripple the industry," a source said.