

# Militants kidnap 7 expatriates ...free Shell workers

From ANDREW ISIBOR,  
Port Harcourt and PATRICK  
TITUS, Uyo

SEVEN expatriates working  
for various oil servicing  
companies at Eket in Akwa

Idom State have been kid-  
napped by a group suspected  
to be Niger Delta militants on  
Tuesday night.

The militants said to be 18  
of them, invaded the residence

of the expatriates at Esa Akpan  
Estate-at about 8.15p.m as the  
expatriates relaxed in a bar.  
Their whereabouts were still  
unknown as at last night.

During the operation, two  
security guards attached to the  
Estate were reportedly killed  
by the militants while a gen-  
erator operator was seriously  
injured.

Akwa Idom State Police  
Public Relations Officer

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# Militia

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(PPRO) Mr. Suur Chafer who confirmed the kidnap gave their names as George Mechean, a Scottish national who worked with Oceaneering Company and Graham Bucham, also a Scottish national with Sparrow Offshore Aberdeen/Thompson and Grace Investment Company.

Others are Paul Smith and Sandy Gruden a Scot both of Sparrow Offshore Aberdeen/Thompson and Grace Investments Company, Eddy Purwono an Indonesian, Louis Ghien, a Malaysian and Emile, A Romanian who were attached to Bristol Helicopters.

Meanwhile, 21 oil workers kidnapped last Sunday by the militiamen who attacked a tugboat and a barge at Krakrama area of Rivers State were yesterday released.

The hostages, who are mostly Shell employees, looked hale and hearty at the time of their release.

*New Nigerian* learnt on good authority that five other employees and 14 soldiers, who were also in the boat were still missing.

Army Public Relations Of-

ficer in 2 Amphibious Brigade Major Musa Sagir said the army "suffered casualties in the attack," but he could not however, give precise details on the nature of the casualties, whether killed or injured.

According to him, two out of the 15 soldiers attacked are already in a military hospital for treatment. He also confirmed that the army was carrying out a search and rescue operation to ascertain the number of soldiers killed by the militants.

Major Sagir said the attack on the soldiers on guard duty was sudden, and that there was no exchange of gunshots between the soldiers and the militiamen said to number about 70.

He said the soldiers were escorting the tugboat pushing a barge in the mid-sea when the militiamen arrived in speed boats.

A source told *New Nigerian* that the militiamen allegedly shot and killed some soldiers and five civilians who resisted on the spot.

They allegedly spared one soldier and kidnapped the remaining Shell workers who were released yesterday.