

# Militants kill two policemen, kidnap three EPCL managers

**D**aring Niger Delta militants on Friday stormed the residence of Indians working for the Elеме Petrochemical Company and took away eight persons to an unknown destination.

The militants, according to police sources, put up a fierce gun battle with security agents guarding the premises and killed two policemen before disappearing with their victims.

Eyewitnesses said the incident, which occurred around

## **Soni Daniel, Port Harcourt**

2am, shook the residents of Elenwo, near the police station, which the militants bombed on April 14, 2007 and killed a policeman. Friday's victims included three top managers of the EPCL, three women and their two children, who were forced out of their homes.

Rivers State Deputy Commissioner of Police, Mr. Bassey Inyang, confirmed the attack in a telephone inter-

view with our correspondent and said that investigations into the matter had begun.

The two Indians, who were seized from the same compound by militants on May 19, 2007, are yet to be freed despite pleas by the workers of the Indorama EPCL.

The militants stormed the residence and detonated bundles of dynamite on the gate before moving in to abduct the two management Indian workers of the company. They were about to kidnap more when soldiers drawn from the Joint Task Force arrived and engaged them in a gun fight.

The latest kidnap forced the workers of the company to embark on a street protest to press for the release of the foreigners. The Chairman of the Workers Association, Mr. Kriss Natti, said they were

worried by the latest attack on the company's management staff.

Natti said that the motive of the attack was unclear since the new management of the company had brought back the dead company to life and created employment for the people of the Niger Delta. No fewer than 200 oil workers have so far been kidnapped and freed since 2006.

Also on Friday, the intervention of community elders in Ogoniland in Rivers State helped oil prices slip back below \$68 a barrel as supply concerns eased. BBC Online reports that protesters, who were occupying a major export pipeline in Niger Delta, were expelled by the elders, allowing valves to reopen and for crude oil to flow.

## or appoints **SSG, others**

### **Olamilekan Lartey, Ado-Ekiti**

nominees into local government caretaker committees. The state government had presented the names to the House for consideration and subsequent approval.

Former administrator of the

sented to the lawmakers was the name of the former chairman of Ado Local Government Area, Mr. Taye Fasuba, who escaped an assassination attempt in 2005 and was later impeached by his councillors during the era of ex-governor Ayodele Fayose.