

Militants kill two naval officers in Rivers

**Ibanga Isine,
Port Harcourt**

BARELY hours after Vice-President Goodluck Jonathan inaugurated a committee to reconcile the warring militant groups in the Niger Delta on Monday, naval officers clashed with a militant group in the area with two officers feared dead.

Our correspondent learnt that the leader of the Niger

Delta Vigilance Movement, Mr. Ateke Tom, was returning from a peace meeting in Okrika when he ran into the naval officers, who were on patrol.

Tom's aide, who spoke to our correspondent on the telephone on Tuesday, claimed that the naval officers, who were in seven gunboats, attempted to kill his boss and other loyalists.

The aide, who gave his

name as Aninaka, further said that Tom was in Okrika on the invitation of his people for a peace meeting.

On their way back from the meeting, Aninaka said the naval men, who waylaid his boss in one of the creeks, opened fire on the militant's convoy, a situation which led to a reprisal attack on the naval gunboats.

In the ensuing crossfire, some naval officers were drowned and three of their boats were destroyed.

He said, "None of our men was hurt during the fighting. We were able to dislodge them from the scene of the hostility."

Describing the attack as unwarranted, Tom's aide said such action on the part of the naval men made a mockery of the peace initiative of the Federal Government.

But the Director of Naval Information, Captain Obiora Medani, debunked the claim that the Navy had lost two men.

Medani, who spoke to our correspondent on the telephone, however, confirmed that the militants, who were in 12 speedboats opened fire on a lone naval patrol boat that was on a routine patrol near Port Harcourt.

Court gives RMAFC nod to join CBN in suit against FG

Tobi Soniyi, Abuja

JUSTICE Binta Murtala-Nyako of the Federal High Court, Abuja, on Tuesday gave the Revenue Mobilisation Allocation and Fiscal Commission the nod to join the Central Bank of Nigeria in the suit it filed against the Federal Government over alleged deduction from the Federation Account running into over two trillion naira.

Other defendants in the case are; the

Attorney-General of the Federation, Federal Ministry of Finance, the Nigerian Customs Service and the Federal Inland Revenue Service.

In the suit, the Commission accused the agencies of the executive arm of the cur-

tions with immediate effect, while also asking for the illegal withdrawals to be refunded.

The commission is asking the court for relieves which include;

*A declaration of the court that having regard to sections 7(6), 80(3), 162(3), 165-167 and item A (1) (a)-(iv) of part 11 of the second schedule of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999, the 1st and 2nd defendants are not entitled to deduct monies directly from the Federation Account running into billions of dollars and billions of Naira for any of the purposes listed above.

Two robbers arrested during