

Soldier feared dead as gunmen kidnap German

One soldier was on Friday feared dead and two others wounded during an early morning attack on the Julius Berger road camp in Rumuji, Emuoha Local Government Area of Rivers State.

The incident occurred at about 8.30a.m. shortly after three expatriates were brought into the site, located near the Rumuji Divisional Police Station. The German construction firm is currently working on the Rivers State wing of the East/West Road, re-awarded by the Federal Government last year.

According to a witness, the attack was carried out by over 30 heavily armed men, who arrived at the site in three buses. Before the buses came to a halt, the source said, the gunmen hurriedly disembarked and took up positions near the main entrance to the camp. The gunmen spotted military camouflage and bandied weapons ranging from pump action rifles, General Purpose Machine Guns to several Ak

Ibanga Isine, Port Harcourt 47 rifles.

He said, "The situation was like warfare. Even before the three busses could stop, over 30 heavily armed men had jumped down and started shooting consistently in every direction. There were three soldiers at the camp at the time. The one, who was near the entrance, was shot at close range but the two others resisted the attack. The gunmen sprayed bullets everywhere. People fled from their shops and houses to avoid being hit by stray bullets. The two remaining soldiers fought and stopped them from taking the other expatriate white engineers away."

But a security source indicated that the three expatriates escaped into a nearby bush and ran to an undisclosed location where they took refuge. Afraid that they might be attacked by policemen from the nearby station, the source said the gunmen withdrew from the

constriction site and headed towards Agba Ngele waterside.

He said, "They abandoned one of the buses they came with by the creek and ran into the mangrove swamp. Others escaped through the village road." When contacted on the telephone, the Police Public Relations Officer in the Rivers State command, Mrs. Rita Inoma-Abbey confirmed the attack, saying, however, that the command was yet to get a clear picture of the casualties.

She said that none of the expatriates at the camp was taken away. She said, "We have a report that the Julius Berger construction site came under attack early this morning near out station in Rumuji. The expatriates were evacuated immediately the incident occurred and are taking refuge in an undisclosed location. We cannot confirm if there were casualties during the attack."

The spokesman of the Joint Task Force in the state

Lt. Col. Sagir Musa, also corroborated the police account of the attack. He said that the command was still monitoring the situation at Rumuji and promised to supply additional information on the matter as events unfolded. Although it was feared that two of the Germans were kidnapped, Musa confirmed that the gunmen seized only one.

Meanwhile, another report indicated that two passenger boats capsized along the Bonny Waterway in the early hours of the day with over 20 passengers feared dead.

...JTF increases checkpoints in Yenagoa

The Joint Military Task Force in the Niger Delta has increased the number of checkpoints in Yenagoa, the Bayelsa State capital.

The News Agency of Nigeria reports that soldiers have been deployed in strategic locations in the town and are stopping and searching vehicles and pedestrians. NAN gathered

A source told our correspondent that the boat was conveying Bonny residents who fled from the crisis that had ravaged the area over the past two months.

Crying aloud, she cursed those behind the crisis in the community, saying that over a hundred lives had been lost since gunmen started invading Bonny. Still sobbing, she said, "My brother called from home to tell me that two passenger boats capsized this morning and all the persons on board died. They were running

away from Bonny because of the crisis caused by militants. God will punish those, who are causing problem in the town. Those people would not have died if the community had been at peace."

Contacted, Inoma-Abbey also confirmed the boat mishap but noted that the command was yet to be properly briefed by the Divisional Police officer in Bonny on what happened. Bonny is only accessible through the waterway and boat drivers carry as much as 15 passengers on each trip.

that the measure was not unconnected with the threat by the Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta to resume hostilities in the area.

A military officer, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, however, said the heavy military presence had nothing to do with the threat. The officer said it was part of the military's mandate to protect lives and property

secure the lives and property of the citizens. As you can see, the soldiers have been very polite in their dealings with the public."

MEND had, in an e-mail to NAN, threatened to renew its campaign of terror in the region, especially against British interests. It said its decision to call off its ceasefire was because of the military support the British government was planning to give to the Federal

Akintola Williams, Ashaye warn FG on Vision 20/2020

The doves of the

Daniel Ochefu

of any nation

2020 might only be a