

13th August, 2013

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One dies as kidnappers seize four expatriates in Rivers

AUGUST 10, 2013 BY CHUKWUDI AKASIKE, PORT HARCOURT 3 COMMENTS

One Nigerian lost his life when kidnappers struck in Buguma, Asari-Toru Local Government Area of Rivers State on Friday, abducting four Thai farm workers.

The Thai workers were said to have been whisked away while they were on their way to the state government-owned fish farm in Buguma.

It was gathered that the expatriates were with two Nigerians when the incident happened as the victims were forced into a waiting vehicle and taken to an unknown destination.

One of the two Nigerians, according to a source, had, out of fear, jumped into a river as soon as they were released by the kidnappers. He was said to have drowned immediately.

The state Commissioner for Agriculture, Mr. Emma Chinda, told Saturday PUNCH that the body of the deceased had been retrieved from the river.

Chinda explained that six employees of Omida Farms, an Israeli company managing the government-owned fish farm, were accosted by bandits about 7.30 am as they (victims) were going for the day's work.

"They were six in number; four expatriates and two Nigerians. The six of them were kidnapped while the two Nigerians among them were released almost immediately.

"Out of fear, one of the Nigerians jumped into the river and drowned. His body has been retrieved from the water and we have informed the police about the incident.

"As I speak with you, efforts are being made to secure the release of the expatriates as the local government chairman of Asari-Toru and I are taking steps to ensure that the workers are released," Chinda added.

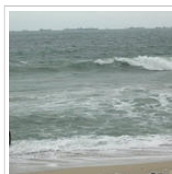
The commissioner, however, attributed the development to the worsening state of security in Rivers, adding that hoodlums had been emboldened by the level of insecurity in the state.

"The hoodlums have before now discontinued all these acts of aggression and criminality until they became emboldened by the fact that they believe that security is out of the state government's hand.

"They (criminals) now believe that they have superiority over the security agents. Now, the danger is that they are all coming out of their hiding and terrorising people of the state," the commissioner observed.

However, efforts made to reach the state Police Public Relations Officer, Mrs. Angela Agabe, were unsuccessful as his mobile phone was switched off when our correspondent called.

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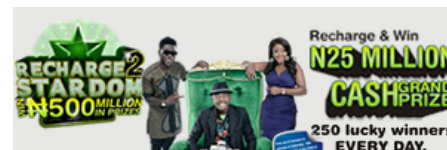


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