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SHOOTOUT IN OGUN: Four policemen rescued, others missing in gun duel with oil thieves

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BY CHRISTOPHER OJI ON MAY 26, 2014 ·

COVER



Fear yesterday gripped residents of Arepo community in Ogun State as some policemen were missing after one of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) pipelines went up in flames.

The incident occurred during a gun duel with pipeline vandals. However, four policemen were rescued, but some were still missing as at press time.

It was learnt that during the shoot-out, some bullets hit one of the pipelines which exploded, resulting in fire outbreak.

Some policemen attached to the Inspector-General of Police Anti-pipeline Task Force had stormed Arepo after a tip-off.

Eyewitness account said that at about 12am yesterday, suspected vandals stormed the area with about 12 boats containing not less than 30 heavily armed men each.

are still trapped in that area. The place is swampy and cannot be easily accessed.

Confirming the incident, Force Public Relation Officer, Frank Mbah, told Daily Sun last night that the fire was still raging and cannot ascertain the number of policemen allegedly trapped in the inferno. He said

investigation is ongoing.

<http://sunnewsonline.com/new/?p=65092>



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Although the casualty figure was yet to be ascertained as at press time, eyewitnesses claimed the explosion may have injured both the policemen and the vandals as they were still within reach of the pipeline when it went up in flames and only four out of the policemen had come out from the inferno.

Also confirming the incident, the South-west zonal spokesman of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), Mr. Ibrahim Farinloye, said the pipeline probably exploded as a result of heavy fireballs.

He said: "Although we are yet to ascertain what actually transpired, but we learnt that the explosion must have been caused by fireballs during the shoot-out.

"The police were alerted late Saturday night that vandals had again struck at Arepo. The team set out to investigate but the hoodlums tried to resist the police by shooting at them, but the police frustrated them.

"However, due to the ruggedness of the terrain, we have not been able to carry out rescue operations there at the moment, we can't ascertain the casualty figure," he said.

Farinloye said four policemen have been rescued alive, adding that although the terrain was hampering operations, the emergency team on ground were mapping out strategies to salvage the situation.

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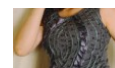
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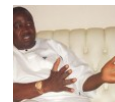
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