

## 6 oil thieves shot dead in Lagos

BY CHRISTOPHER OJI

**S**ix suspected oil thieves were shot dead Wednesday night by security operatives at the Owutu area of Ikorodu, Lagos.

The hoodlums believed by the police to be militants, were killed after several hours of gun battle with the joint security forces consisting of the Navy and the Police in Abule Oba, a suburb of Owutu in Ikorodu.

Police Commissioner, Mr. Cornelius Aderanti, had detailed his crack team led by an Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) Igbiazaka Ugowe, to the creek on 24 hours surveillance.

A source told *Crime Watch Today* that on sighting the security agents, residents fled the village for fear of being hit in the cross-fire.

It was gathered that some of the fleeing villagers quickly alerted the militants of the presence of the police and Naval personnel.

The militants were said to have laid ambush for the police and started firing machine guns at the agents, who equally responded with more sophisticated weapons.

The suspected leader of the gang was said to be chanting war song during the gun duel, but escaped when the battle became too hot, by then, six members of his gang were shot dead.

The agents also destroyed two of the bunkering boats.

A senior police officer who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the police recovered 750 jerry cans filled with petroleum products.

"Our men killed six of the hoodlums who fell inside the river after they were shot. The guys were too desperate to kill our men, but we were lucky to have the upper hands."

As at press time, the villagers who have since deserted the place, were yet to return to their various homes.

When contacted, the state Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Mr Kenneth Nwosu, said there was a gun battle. The PPRO said: "When the hoodlums sighted the security agents, they opened fire on them and a gun fight ensued.

"You know we know the terrain very well so, our men were able to come out successfully alive. We want to warn illegal bunkers that we have declared total war on them. They should stop sabotaging the economy or risk the wrath of the security agents," he said.

## Jonathan has improved security