

# Navy kills 3, herdsmen 4 in Delta

From **BEN DUNNO**, Warri and **PAUL OSUYI**, Asaba

PROTEST in Ifiekporo, Warri South Local Government area, Delta State, has claimed the lives of three youths. They were shot dead by naval personnel attached to the facility of the Nigeria Petroleum Development Company (NPDC) operating in the area.

The protest, which was carried out by the community youths in conjunction with some youths from the neighbouring Ekpan community in Uvwie Local Government area of the state started at 2pm yesterday, when the protesters laid siege on the NPDC entrance demanding contract renewals and employment slots for indigenes.

An indigenous contractor to NPDC, who had a disagreement with the officials of Warri Refining and Petrochemical Company (WRPC), over the a failed contract to carry out the repair of the company's jetty, was alleged to have mobilised the youths to protest the withdrawal of the contract.

Sources close to the scene of the incident said the youths numbering over a hundred also took advantage of the failed contract protest to challenge the company for not creating jobs for the teeming jobless youths.

The protest later degenerated into violence when the youths were denied access to the premises of the company by the naval security personnel on duty.

An account said attempt by the youths to forcefully overpower the guards and gain entry saw the naval personnel opening fire on some of them.

One of the victims simply identified, as Agbolu is an Ifiekporo community indigene and liaison Officer (CLO) to A&E Petrol, a company owned by a prominent Itsekiri Chief, Ayiri Emani.

However in a swift reaction, Naval authority at the Warri Base, NNS Delta, said the personnel who were on official duty as security guards at the premises of NPDC shot two of the protesters who tried to disarm him dead in self defence.

In another development, four persons