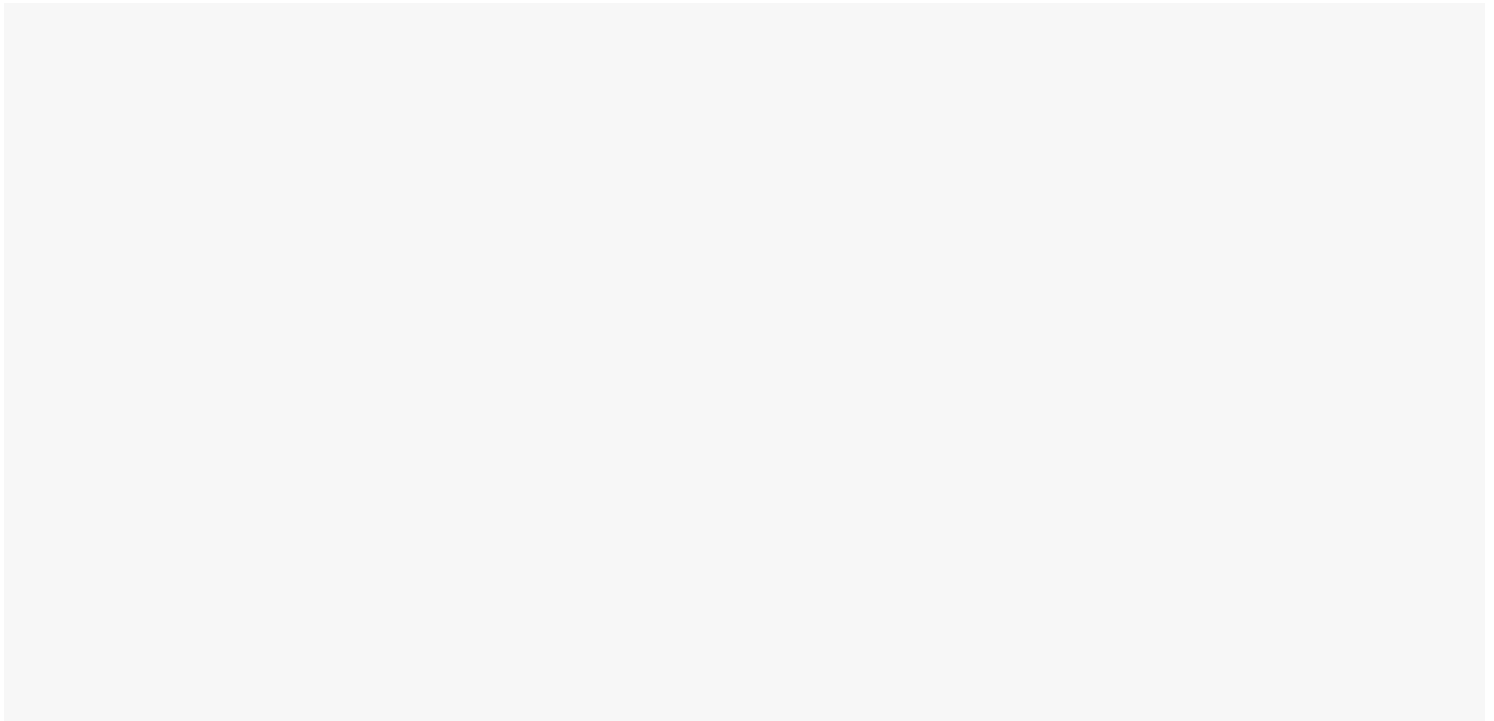


Sea pirates kill 2 soldiers, steal rifles in Bayelsa

24th July 2019



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Femi Folaranmi, Yenagoa

Tension is building in Azagbene community in Ekeremor Local Government Area of Bayelsa State over the killing of two soldiers and abduction of another one attached to a flow station by suspected sea pirates on Monday night.

Already armed soldiers on the orders of the military leadership have invaded the community in search of the suspected killers and to rescue the abducted soldier.

Investigations revealed that the suspected heavily armed sea pirates stormed the flow station in two speedboats and opened fire on the soldiers guarding the facility and shot two soldiers dead, kidnapped one and took away their rifles.

A source in the community, who craved anonymity, said there is palpable tension as armed soldiers are combing the community searching for the suspected killers and forcing many of the villagers to flee for fear of reprisal.

He said he and his family have left because the soldiers have warned that those that refused to leave would have themselves to blame. He said: “When the soldiers entered our community, they directed us to leave because they

were going to burn everything to the ground and that anybody that fails to comply with the directive would be killed.

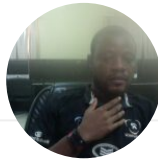
“Before some of us left the community, I saw the building of our paramount ruler on fire. Even my family house has been burnt to the ground. As I speak with you, we are suffering for a crime we didn’t commit.”

The spokesman of the 16 Brigade of the Nigerian Army, Major Jonah Danjuma, however, denied the invasion, burning of buildings and harassment of villagers by soldiers.

Danjuma, who confirmed the death of two of its personnel, said soldiers were searching the community for the suspected killers, the missing soldier and the rifles carted

“Our men did not burn down houses in Azagbene community. We are only combing the community and neighbouring towns in search of one soldier that is missing as a result of the attack that led to the death of two soldiers.

And we are carrying out the search for the missing soldier in conjunction with leaders of the community,” he said.



Rapheal