

SHARES VIEWS

Four ratings, who were part of a six-man naval rescue squad, are feared killed in a gun duel with suspected sea pirates.

The deceased are Petty Officer, Able Seaman, Seaman and an Ordinary Seaman. The other two personnel survived unhurt, a source explained.

The bodies of the victims are believed to have been moved to the navy hospital in Warri, Delta State.

“Efforts are ongoing to rescue the kidnapped victims,” our source said.

The firefight occurred at about 11pm on Thursday, January 2, a top Naval source said. The source asked not to be named, as he was not permitted to talk to journalists.

The attack occurred in the jurisdiction of the NNS Delta, an operations base in Warri, one of the seven units under the jurisdiction of the Central Naval Command.

The sea robbers were said to have attacked one of Nigeria’s dredgers, MV AMBIKA, a Sterling Oil dredger close to Ramos River entrance, before the six-man troop of the Nigerian Navy were sent to neutralise their threat.

Before the team arrived, the source said, the suspected sea robbers had “boarded the vessel and abducted three crew members (two Russians and one Indian), leaving behind five other crew members.”

Upon the arrival of the rescue team at the scene of the incident, a gun duel ensued between the armed ratings onboard the vessel and the sea robbers.

Four of the six naval ratings deployed onboard the vessel were killed. The vessel was also reportedly stolen by the pirates.

A spokesperson for the Nigerian Navy, Suleman Dahun, said he is not aware of the attack.

“I’ll confirm and get back to you tomorrow,” he said.

