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Nigeria: Controversy Trails Explosion in Rivers

This Day (Lagos)
14 December 2007

Posted to the web 14 December 2007

THIS DAY

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Ahamefula Ogbu
 Port Harcourt

Conflicting reports are trailing explosions in two different oil installations in Rivers State where over 65 people allegedly died from fires arising from bunkering activities in the creeks.

A report confirmed by Spokesman of the Joint Military Task Force in the State, Lt. Colonel Sagir Musa said that at least four persons died from explosions that rocked Andoni when oil thieves stormed there.

He said that when the report came in, relevant authorities rushed to the place to contain the situation and assured that investigations have already begun.

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While the Police Public Relations Officer, Mrs. Ireju Barasua said they had information that about seven persons died but was not sure of the locations where the incidents took place.

A local source however said that there was a big explosion in Soku which is the oil and gas hub in Nigeria but it was not clear whether the magnitude was as much as would have killed 60 people.

There has been a new policy within the security circles in the Niger Delta to blow up any vessel caught in bunkering activities as a measure to deter them from the nefarious activity.

Two weeks ago, there had been a similar explosion in Soku where oil thieves ignited a fire which then claimed the lives of about five people.



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