

2 Naval Ratings Killed as Gunmen Attack Boats

Two naval ratings were killed and another one thrown overboard in two separate attacks at Bonny, Rivers State when gunmen attacked a naval boat escorting a Nigerian flagged Natural Gas boat. The second incident which took place at bouy 35 Bonny area also involved

From Ahamefula Ogbu

in Port Harcourt

the attack of a supply vessel belonging to Texaco where a gun belonging to one of the security men was stolen and personnel thrown overboard.

Eyewitness accounts said the NLNG boat being escorted was chased by the gun men

who immediately opened fire close to the jetty with high caliber weapons prompting those on land to take to their heels.

When the naval escort boat sent from the NNS Pathfinder, Rumuolumeni sent a distress call over the attack, the distance from Rumuolumeni to Bonny

could not allow help to come until the gunmen left.

Commenting on the incident, Navy spokesman, Lt. Way said: "We have the report of the attack. We are however collating the facts and within an hour, I will be able to confirm the details to you."

In the second incident, the attack was said to be on a Total oil vessel, MV Patience where some gunmen in the same style overtook it at the Bonny waterways and opened fire on the vessel, wounding some of the crew members in the process. After boarding the vessel, they also threw a crew member overboard.

He was said to have been rescued about 25 minutes later by another boat. The gunmen sped off into the deep seas immediately after the attack while the vessel sent a signal to alert other sea-going vessels.

Press Council Office Guttled By Fire

The Nigerian Press Council office located within the premises of the National Art Theatre was yesterday set by fire. The incident brings to about ten major fire disasters that have occurred in the metropolis in the last four weeks. The Mandilas fire disaster which razed goods worth over N1 billion leaving four 3-storey building destroyed is still fresh in the minds of the inhabitants of Lagos.

By Eugene Agha

avail, to put out the fire when it was first noticed, as the fire continued to spread from one office to another," said a witness.

One of the staff alleged that the fire also destroyed all her certificates which she kept in a locker in her office.

As at 10am when THISDAY visited the place yesterday, the entire area where the Nigeria

Press Council once stood had been reduced to rubble with items such as refrigerator, air-conditioners, computers, books and television sets, littering the place.

One of the security men who spoke to THISDAY on condition of anonymity alleged that only one fire-fighting truck was sent to the place by the time a distress call was made to the office of the fire service.