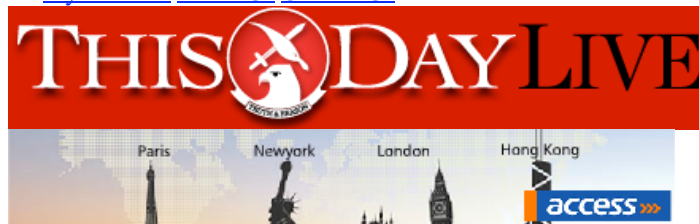


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### MEND Makes Good Threat, Kills 13 Policemen in Bayelsa

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**Henry Okah**

By Segun James

The proscribed Niger Delta militant group, Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) appeared to have made good its threat to resume hostilities last Friday as 13 policemen were shot dead at close range along the creek of Azuzuama in Southern Ijaw Local Government Area of the state.

The policemen killed were said to be on official deployment to the area to keep the peace at the burial of the mother of an ex-militant leader when they were attacked by the gunmen as they alighted from the boat which brought them.

Though the police authorities are keeping sealed lip on the issue, other security agencies contacted by THISDAY confirmed the killing even as they refused to make comments officially.

The incident it was learnt occurred at about 5pm when the policemen were heading to Azuzuama in Southern Ijaw Council Area to provide security at the burial ceremony of the late mother of ex-militant leader, Kile Selky Torughedi aka Young Shall Grow.

Although the reasons behind the dastardly act is still unknown, Young Shall Grow, it was learnt, was having problem with his boys who accused

him of abandoning them.

He was said to have relocated to Abuja after embracing the Federal Government amnesty leaving behind his former soldiers.

He was also said to have refused to be part of the move by MEND to resume militant activities in the creeks over the recent jailing of MEND leader, Henry Okah, in South Africa.

However, this could not be confirmed at press time.

The ex-militant leader was recently appointed as a Senior Special Adviser (SSA) to the Bayelsa governor on Marine Waterways Security and reportedly sought the deployment of policemen to prevent would-be trouble makers from the wake and burial activities of his mother.

Following the attack, several contingents of policemen were dispatched to the area by the State Police Command to fish out the killers, assess the situation and possibly recover the remains of the slain personnel.

The state police public relations officer, Alex Akhigbe, DSP could not be reached as he was not picking his calls but the state commissioner of police, Mr. Kins Omire, when contacted, said he was in a meeting and his line went off.

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