

# One hostage taker killed, five arrested

By Emma Arubi

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**WARRI**—A SUSPECTED hostage taker was shot dead, one seriously injured and five others captured, Monday night, in the creek, between Edo and Delta states following a gun battle between the seven-man gang and the Niger-Delta Freedom Fighters (NDFF). The NDFF was the militant group that kidnapped four Americans, May 8, 2007, and kept them in captivity for 22 days before they were released.

*Vanguard* learnt that the seven-man gang was going for a kidnap operation when the NDFF leader, Egbema One, who was on patrol, accosted them and discovered their mission.

Egbema One had since the release of the four Americans pledged to cooperate with the state government in its efforts to rid the state of hostage takers, as long as the government was prepared to develop the state.

It was gathered that he tried to dissuade the criminals from going ahead with the operation but they refused and both groups engaged themselves in hot exchange of words.

The war of words resulted in a gunfight during which one of the hoodlums was shot dead. One of them was shot on the leg and it is believed that he might not be able to walk with that leg again.

The other five were captured and tied by the NDFF and later taken to the den of the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger-Delta (MEND).

A source from the NDFF, who spoke to *Vanguard*, last night, said the militant group was ready to guarantee peace in its area and called on the government to provide jobs for the youths, construct roads, build hospitals, and provide GSM services and ~~other things to give the river-~~side communities a sense of belonging.