

Fish trawler owners decry killing of members

THE Executive Secretary of the Nigerian Trawler Owners Association, Dr. Micheal C. Bissong, has raised an SOS and decried that Sea Pirates attacked 16 fishing trawlers belonging to four different fishing companies off Calabar/Bonny River and adjacent Oceanic Waters within one day.

The vessels were attacked all through the night of 29th October to the early hours of 30th October. The pirates were armed to the teeth with sophisticated automatic weapons including explosives.

The Executive Secretary further

lamented that the pirates carted away high value seafood products and electronic equipments and devices on board the vessels.

They even took away personal effects belonging to crew members after grilling, killing and terrorizing the crew resulting in two deaths and leaving about 40 crew members, including both Nigerians and foreign nationals, maimed and seriously injured. To prevent the trawlers from communicating, they even destroyed the remaining electronics on board, including several gadgets. Two weeks ago,

various dailies reported several attacks on fishing trawlers by pirates resulting in the death of two crew members. At that time, a similar number of fishing trawlers had been attacked over a period of 2 weeks. This time, however, all the attacks took place within a span of 24 hours. Further, the dimension and modus operandi of the pirates was very tactical and more daring. Instead of directly boarding the trawlers from their speedboats, the pirates, this time, took over one of the first fishing trawlers they boarded and used it as a decoy to board other unsuspecting trawlers.