

ACROSS THE

Navy kills suspected pirate, arrests another in Rivers

By George Onah

PORT HARCOURT—A suspected pirate was gunned down and another arrested, yesterday, by naval men of the NNS Pathfinder, along the Bonny Waterway, while escorting a vessel loaded with petrol.

Vanguard gathered that the sea robbers, who have become a menace to travellers on the sea route attempted to hijack the vessel as it sailed along the channel even as it was being escorted by naval soldiers.

A security source said the vessel, which was conveying no fewer than 400,000 litres of petrol was “initially accosted by the pirates who ordered the vessel to divert its route.

“A tugboat and a barge were sailing towards Saipem along the Bonny Channel when four suspected pirates hijacked and attempted to

take them to an unknown destination.

Fortunately, a member of the crew in the boat was able to make a call to the company that owned the boat. The company in turn sent a distress call to the NNS Pathfinder.

The NNS Pathfinder sent a gunboat in search of the pirates and later found them along Bakana creek. One of the suspects was arrested with a rifle and brought back to base while the others escaped.

The suspect has since been handed over to the appropriate law enforcement agency for thorough interrogation”, but naval authorities could not be reached on the matter.

Confirming the incident, Commissioner of Police, Mr. Felix Ogbaudu, said he was aware that “naval men on patrol killed a suspected pirate and arrested another suspect along Bonny Channel”.

Food poisoning: 4 die, 200 hospitalised in C-River

BEKWARRA—FOUR persons have died of food poisoning in Bekwarra council area of Cross River State.

Two hundred others were hospitalised in the area because of the food poisoning.

All the victims consumed some local beans known as “banbara”. A three-year-old child was among the dead.

The casualties came from Nyanya and Beten villages in Bekwarra, close to Ogoja.

The Chairman of Bekwarra local government council, Ochislego Idagbo, said in a telephone interview that all the casualties ate “poisoned banbara beans”.

Idagbo said the beans, which is a staple meal in Bekwarra diet, was brought from

a neighbouring state.

The chairman said the hospital authorities in the council had reported that some of the victims were still in critical state.

Idagbo alleged that the beans must have been treated with a poisonous preservative, which affected those who ate it. The chairman said a team of medical personnel had been deployed from Calabar to assist in the treatment of the victims.

Idagbo said most of the victims had been admitted at the General Hospital and a mission-owned maternity hospital in Ogoja.

The paramount ruler of Bekwarra, His Royal Highness, Chief Stephen Omang, also confirmed the incident.