

Seven suspected bunkerers killed in Rivers' explosion

By George Onah

PORT HARCOURT—NO fewer than seven suspected bunkerers were roasted and several others injured when a petrol tanker exploded in Soku and Billie axis of Rivers State, following intensified search by naval patrol teams checking the activities of bunkers.

The accident became public knowledge when relations of the dead and wounded thronged the Braithwaite Memorial Hospital, Port Harcourt, wailing uncontrollably, even as morgue workers carried out documentation of the dead before being dumped in there.

Although police sources said the incident had "not been indented in the office," a naval source said the fire was a consequence of "our intensified operation to stem bunkering which has become endemic in that area."

Vanguard gathered that while some of the wounded have been admitted in the hospital, relations of some of the dead and wounded have secretly buried their dead, while the wounded are being taken to private clinics and herbal homes for treatment.

The decision, it was learnt, may not be unconnected with the belief that the (wounded) could be picked up by security agents "who would want to know the reason for their burns and place of the accident".