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Chevron: MEND lied —Investigation

[National News](#) Jun 12, 2009

By Emma Amaize

WARRI — CONTRARY to the claims by the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) that it was responsible for the bombing of Chevron flow station at Utunana, on Tuesday night, Vanguard's investigations yesterday revealed that the militant group lied, as residents of the area disclosed that the fire was caused by a mechanical fault in one of the systems, a position also earlier held by the Joint Task Force (JTF).

Meanwhile, seven persons, including four children, an elderly man, woman and driver from Kurutie and Kunukunma communities, who were escaping to Warri for safety from their hideout in the creeks, met their tragic end, Tuesday, near Kangbene community, when their speedboat ran into the troops of the Joint Task Force (JTF) on the Niger-Delta.

7 killed in fresh attack

A relation of the deceased persons who spoke to Vanguard gave the names of the boat driver as Aaron Ebimor and the man as Pa Idumubinaie Okoro. The woman was identified as Mrs. Beauty Amaokosu.

Also, twenty-eight days after the war in the creeks began, the whereabouts of the traditional ruler of Gbaramatu Kingdom, Godwin K. Bebenimibo and his wife is still unknown. His palace at Oporoza in Warri South West Local Government Area of Delta State was bombed by the Joint Task Force (JTF) on the Niger-Delta, which accused him of fraternising with wanted militant leader, Government Ekpemupolo, alias Tompolo.

Coordinator of the Joint Media Campaign Centre (JMCC) of the task force, Colonel Rabe Abubakar, told Vanguard when contacted, yesterday, that he was not aware of the death of the seven people.

Our source, nevertheless maintained, "Two days ago (Tuesday), a speed boat was carrying four little children with one elderly man and a woman, coming to Warri through a hidden creek from the Chanomi Creek, but, the JTF ambushed them and opened fire on them, killing the driver, the four little children, the elderly man and the woman."

He lamented that the driver who was merely helping the people that were trapped in the bush to relocate to safety was also shot dead by the task force.

MEND lied

An independent inquiry by Vanguard has revealed that the fire on Chevron's flow station at Utunana was caused by a mechanical fault in one of the systems.

A community leader from Omadino community in Delta State and member of the Delta Waterways Security Committee (DWSC), Mr. Austine Oniyesan, who spoke to Vanguard, yesterday, said, "when the incident occurred, it was a fire outbreak, Chevron called us (community leaders) to inform us and said the matter was being handled, it is not militants that struck there, we should say the truth at all times".

Mr. Oniyesan said it was wrong for MEND or any other militant group to be attributing an incident it knows nothing about to its fighters to the discomfiture of the people of the area, who would be the first victim of possible backlash from soldiers as a result of false claims.

According to him, the people of Gbaramatu kingdom have suffered enough for the unsubstantiated claims of MEND and should not be made to suffer more.

Coordinator of the Joint Media Campaign Centre (JMCC) of the JTF, Colonel Rabe Abubakar had while reacting to the MEND claim on Wednesday said the fire incident was caused by "system failure of a

platform in the flow station.

“If any militant group and their collaborators want a show of force, we are ready, if they want to test their strength; they are welcome as we do not engage in media war and cheap popularity. Therefore, this claim and all other claims by any militant group should be disregarded in its entirety”, he said.

Chevron, speaking through its General Manager, Government and Public Affairs, Femi Odumabo also said there was a fire incident at the Utunana production facility in Delta state, which had been shut down before the Tuesday incident.

In a related development, management of the company has clarified that contrary to an earlier report published on Sunday, June 7 purporting that the company declared a force majeure last month following attack on a pipeline facility, only a shut-in of 100,000 barrels per day was declared.

Gbaramatu monarch still missing


The traditional ruler of Gbaramatu kingdom, Godwin Bebenimibo, a retired Superintendent of Police and his wife are still missing, 28 days, after his palace at Oporoza in Warri South West Local Government Area of Delta State was bombed by the Joint Task Force (JTF) on the Niger-Delta.

His son, Prince Meshack Bebenimibo who confirmed the development to Vanguard, yesterday, said, “I want the Federal Government and the JTF to produce my father and mother who are missing since the day when the bombardment of the palace took place.


“I don’t know if they were kidnapped by the JTF or still in a faraway bush, I have not seen them nor heard from them since the bombardment”, he said.




16 Responses for “Chevron: MEND lied —Investigation”

1.  *Onuoha Udensi E.* says:
[June 12, 2009 at 1:17 am](#)


I said it!!!! Innocent people are killed by unprofessional and immaturated Hausa army of Nigeria!!!!How on earth can you kill innocent and lovely kids?!!!!Oh,y God!!! The president,vice president and all members of National Assembly must resign and face war crimes in Hague!The wicked shall never go unpunished.Yar’adua will never have peace in his life and his family will never see peace for killing those children and elderly people in Niger Delta!!!!!! I have said in my comments in Nigeria newspapers that the Nigeria army needs urgent transformation,reformation,total change to meet with the army of the 21st century.May the souls of those kids and elderly ones and the driver of the boat rest in peace.My heart bleeds with sorrow!!!Oh my God...

2.  *dave* says:
[June 12, 2009 at 3:43 am](#)

trying to create tension among people! MEND think of something better! YOU HAVE BEEN OVERPOWERD. Accept ur defeat, period!!


3.  *dave* says:
[June 12, 2009 at 3:52 am](#)

‘hurricane piper alpha’ started by lies, who knows the Omega of it. GOD is our altimate fighter nd not these selfish mend.

4.  *ken A* says:
[June 12, 2009 at 5:31 am](#)


kudos to you vanguard. Now you’re doing proper investigative journalism as is done in CNN. but please put measures in place to ensure that your sources are reliable and valid oo. It wont be nice if later we find out that your correspondent sent to investigate the incidence actually went to some other /safe’ community to drink palmwine in a hut and listen to local rumour by mishevious sources making the rounds without neccasarily authenticating the information. Afterall we are all nigerians and understand how prone the military, militants, journalists (like you accuse pointblancnews), and graduates are to falsify informaation to bend towards their sense of what should be real.

Kudos once more

5.  *OROBOKIRI* says:
[June 12, 2009 at 6:29 am](#)

IS MEND THE ONLY GROUP OF PEOPLE LIVING ON THE NIGER DELTA. ‘I BEG GO SIT DOWN FOR DIRTY!!...’ WHY NOT COME OUT FROM HIDING AND FACE THE MILITARY. YOU ARE THE CAUSE OF ALL THESE RUBISH IN OUR LAND. INSTEAD OF LOOKING FOR BETTER AND MOREHONOURABLE THINGS TO DO, YOU DECIDED TO TAKE UP ARMS.SINCE YOU STARTED THESE NONSENSE THE ONLY THING WE HEAR IS ‘WE CLAIM RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS AND FOR THAT’ IE DESTRUCTION; NOT CONSTRUCTION. ALL THE MONEYS YOU COLLECT FROM HOSTAGE TAKING WHY NOT USE THEM TO DEVELOP YOUR AREA SO WE WOULD KNOW YOU MEAN BUSINESS OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMICAL JUSTICE AND EQUALITY. THAT IS WHY OBAMA REFUSED BLUNTLY TO COME TO NIGERIA BECAUSE YOU COULD TAKE HIM HOSTAGE IN RETURN FOR BILLION DOLLAR RANSOM (YOUR BOOTY) AND THAT HE WOULD NOT WANT YOU TO WASTE HIS TIME BECAUSE YOU DON’T VALUE YOURS. .

AMNESTY IS UP FOR GRABS OH, IT IS BETTER YOU SCRAMBLE FOR IT OR IT WILL BE TOO LATE. COME OUT OF YOUR HIDING, APOLOGISE TO NIGERIANS AND THE WORLD AND BEG THE GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA THAT YOU WILL NOT DO THAT AGAIN IN YOUR LIFE AND AGAIN THAT YOU ARE READY TO COOPERATE. SUBMIT YOUR ARMS AND FORM AN OPEN GROUP THAT WILL WORK WITH THE GOVERNMENT. AFTER ALL AT THE END EVERY WAR THERE IS ALWAYS PEACE. WE LIVING IN FEAR IN THE NIGER DELTA REGION ARE TIRED OF YOU AND GOD SHALL EXPOSE YOU IN DUE CAUSE.

6.  *Dennis Don* says:
[June 12, 2009 at 7:51 am](#)

Unoha Udensi E,comment is not worthy of publication,it is too biased and myopic, lets be

objective a little,there are better ways to make your grievance known,certainly not by what MEND is doing.

Right now we have so much suffering and pain,people are losing their lives,jobs and family members because of the selfish activities of MEND, kidnapping insecurity,threats,theft and all other vices are the fallout off their activities,they are cronies of the political class,they are not and will never fight for anybody.

Life is too precious and beautiful to be wasted for whatever guise.

7.  *chris* says:

[June 12, 2009 at 8:00 am](#)

@Dave, do you know what guerrilla warfare means? You dont even know the technicalies involved in the unconventional war. The soldiers are fighting and killing women and children. How many freedom fighters have they killed since their 28day stupid invasion in the creek, anwer this question. I guess you are decendant of Hausa - Fulani- Yoruba oligarcy who is sustaining and fueling this problem in eastern part of the country. The time you know what MEND is up to, it is very late for your halfbaked unprofessional Northen- Western nigerian army forces, just watch and see.


8.  *ALEXANDER MOSES (UK)* says:

[June 12, 2009 at 8:29 am](#)

Even when the 18 soldiers including their superior officers were killed, the Hausa JTF initially said MEND lied but today, we are hearing of uncovered graveyard full of blood stained khaki. That is not even the issue.....Whether there is a said here or there is immaterial at this time as every hands must be on deck to finally lay to rest the spirit of TRUE FEDERALISM which will forever haunt the our body polity till there is that “political will” to relegate born to rule faith and appreciate the much needed change in the positive direction.

As a reminder, not until justice is done in one Nigeria, it will certainly be to your tents. The Niger Deltans have been paying are still paying the ultimate price and cannot now accept anything short of true federalism.

We have our 21st century freedom fighters (MEND) to thank

9.  *prince agbakramo* says:

[June 12, 2009 at 8:56 am](#)

what i dont really know,is whether niger delta is at war with the country or there is this war of propaganda tfor the military occupation of the niger delta region.the first culprit of liars is federal government,the military,the oil companies followed by the copy cats MEND. well since lies is a strategy to fuel crisis,and nothing like attack happens in chevron ,i hope the military should leave. i am a victim of military brutality,so i cant vouch for there action.I SAY NO.


10.  *Bobs* says:

[June 12, 2009 at 8:57 am](#)


The voice of Chevron in this case is that of Sarkin Bello of the Hausa JTF. Africa and the entire World already knows that Nigeria is no longer the highest oil producing nation in Africa. Chevron is still shutting in barrel upon barrels everyday due to the resultant and spiral effects of injustice

still being experienced in the Delta areas.

I think it is high time chevron is taken to a western court for redress just like the recent case of Ogoni vs. Shell in far away “foreigner-land” abi foreign-village?

11.  *Frday.* says:
[June 12, 2009 at 9:35 am](#)

MEND is a cult of Killers and Liers. The Nigerian Army is superior to them. Let MEND come out and fight instead of hidding and destroying oil pipelines. They should show their braviy.

12.  *Imma Okochua* says:
[June 12, 2009 at 9:42 am](#)

MEND makes things worse for host communities and Niger Delta as a whole when it claims destructions they did not cause. If the government is looking for an excuse to attack the region, MEND's loud-mouhted spokesman provides plenty of them while on the run from JTF. Besides, it admits it is waging a war against it's country. This scenario makes the call to release Henry Okah ridiculous.

13.  *Emmanuel Emmanuel* says:
[June 12, 2009 at 9:45 am](#)

Are there no wise men left in the Niger Delta to advise MEND that is should either fight JTF or keep shut. Their bogus claim is endangering innocent lives, incriminating them and making Henry Okah's release impossible.

14.  *Yusuf Bello* says:
[June 12, 2009 at 10:26 am](#)


Why Onuoha Udensi is not objective in your responses, why not immaturred Nigeria army but Hausa Nigeria army.Please dont tribalised the issue. Hausas are not the only one in Nigeria army. Well not all the northners in Nigeria army are Hausas.

15.  *Okpoji MKO.-Germany* says:
[June 12, 2009 at 11:13 am](#)

It is verry sad to read some of your comments,infact some of you guys are out of your mind, look criticaly at the Headline of this report- MEND Lied, this is to tell you that human rights means nothing to Nigerians,i have read through all our papers i have not seen the 7 killed by JTF as a single Healine.

For those who are happy that this kind of babarbaric,animalistic,and extra-judicial killing of the innocent children and the old, just a mater of time you or members of your family will soon be a victim of extra-judicial killing either by JTF or the Police.

MEND has become an excuse for killing the innocent, so the JTF has the rights to used the region for practicing military execise for some who have never killed or been to war, just like Sadam with his chemical experiment in Iraq, what about if the children and the old were press or humanitarian organization, the headline would have been the full cover of our newspaper as a breaking news.

16.  *Lucky O. Austin* says:
[June 12, 2009 at 11:52 am](#)

I still think that the Military should take it easy this time around, cos the killing of innocent Niger Deltans (Nigerians) is unprofessional. the president should open up on this issue by making public the fingered people behind the militants.

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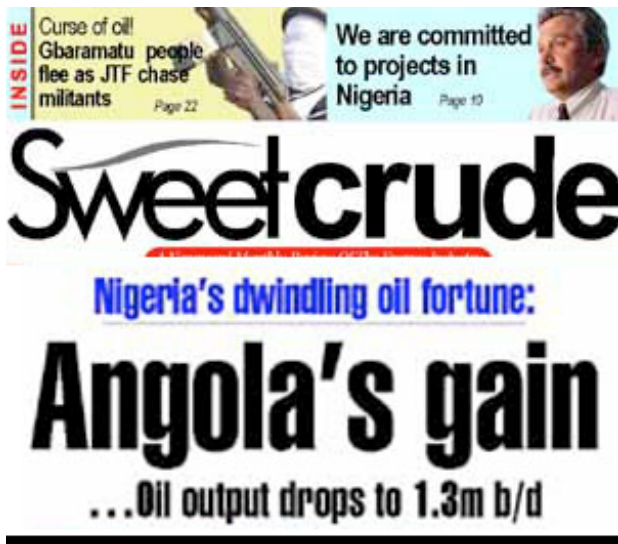


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