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Militants destroy Agip pipeline...two soldiers feared dead in Bayelsa

[National News](#) Jun 19, 2009

By Samuel Oyadongha, Yenagoa

The relative peace of Nembe creek was in the early hours of today (Friday) shattered as heavily armed militants engaged men of the Joint Task Force stationed at Obioku community in bloody shoot out forcing the natives to flee their homes.

The rampaging militants it was learnt also attacked the Omoku-Ogoda-Brass trunk line with two risers at Egeinkiri belonging to the Nigerian Agip Oil Company blown up causing massive oil spill on the river.

Two soldiers were feared dead in the Obioku attack allegedly launched by a combine team of militants from two camps on the Atlantic fringe.

Though the report from the creek that two soldiers were feared dead could not be confirmed but it was learnt that the attack was launched by a combine team of militants from two different camps said to be returning from a social gathering in one of the communities in the locality.

Saturday Vanguard learnt that the attack on the serene coastal settlement of Obioku was carried out by militants operating from one of the camps on the Atlantic fringe of Southern Ijaw and the Brass axis.

It was reliably gathered that the coastal settlement is host to the Italian oil giant, Agip oil which Saturday Vanguard learnt was planning to commence development of a new oil well in the community in another two weeks.

The development, a source from the area told Saturday Vanguard is causing tension in with the natives fleeing their homes for fear of possible reprisal attack from the Joint Task Force which has deployed more troops to strengthen its position in the troubled coastal enclave.

It was further learnt that after the Obioku attack the rampaging militias later attacked the Omoku-Ogoda-Brass trunk line with two risers at Egeinkiri belonging to the Nigerian Agip Oil Company blown up causing massive oil spill on the river.

The Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) has claimed responsibility for the attack on the Agip facility in the troubled creek but was silent on the alleged death of the soldiers.

The group in an online statement made available to Saturday Vanguard in Yenagoa signed by Jomo Gbomo said, "A major pipeline which delivers crude oil to the Brass export terminal was blown up at the Nembe creek in Bayelsa State this morning Friday, June 19, 2009 at about 0300Hrs by heavily armed fighters from the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND).

"The pipeline belongs to Agip.

"Our fighters encountered a military gunboat and all the soldiers numbering seven (7) were dispossessed of their weapons. The gunboat was also stripped of its weapons before it was disabled by explosives.

"The soldiers pleaded for their lives to be spared and we did.

"We want to use this opportunity to ask members of the public around the Bonny and Port Harcourt axis to watch the video of the extra judicial killing by the JTF of one Boma and his brother on You Tube to help trace the family and friends so as to reveal the perpetrators of the criminal act who the JTF are covering for.

"If soldiers who are supposed to protect civilians harass, rape and kill them, then they should be exposed. We know that the military still has a few good God fearing men who may recall the incident when the men were shot on a jetty where the JTF gunboats are docked. Please come forward and expose the killers amongst you."

Meanwhile, The Joint Task Force today (Friday) confirmed the attack on its location at Obioku in the Nembe Creek by militants.

Though sources from the area told Saturday Vanguard that two soldiers were feared dead during dawn raid but the security outfit dismissed the claim saying the attack was repealed and heavy casualty inflicted on the attackers who were forced to flee.

The JTF in a statement signed by its spokesman, Col Rabe Abubakar also denied the claim that an Agip delivery line was blown up by the militants.

According to him, the militants who attacked its Obioku base were in search of arms and ammunition following the blockade of the routes they have been using for illegal bunkering and supply of arms.

The statement read in part, "There was attack by yet to be identified group of militants who came in 5 speed boats at about 3am, 19 June 2009 to attack JTF location at Obioko near Nembe, Bayelsa State and this led to serious exchange of fire between the armed hooligans and troops of JTF on duty there.

"The attack was botched and heavy casualty was inflicted on the attackers who were forced to flee. There was no casualty

on our side nor any community member and the facility we are guarding (Agip Pipelines) are hundred percent safeguarded.

“The purpose of the attack was not far-fetched from the fact that they were looking for arms and ammunition because the JTF has blocked all routes that the criminals used for illegal oil bunkering activities through which they purchased arms for use against their own people and country. This information is verifiable. Any individual or group can verify this information with the JTF at the place where this attack happened.”

Col Abubakar added, “As we keep saying, the JTF is only here for the protection of lives and property, oil facilities inclusive. This is our task which will continue to manifest in our actions by crushing any criminal who insists on causing mayhem and insecurity in this our great nation. Hence, we are at all times ready to deal decisively and appropriately on any misguided elements.”


According to him, “the JTF is never an institution of brutality against innocent citizens as we do not have such records in the past and we will not have it now. People of substance should know by now that criminals are our targets and we want to reiterate that we are on top of situation in the region as far as we are concerned, because we can suppress any militant group or groups at any given time anywhere and whenever we decide.

“It is not out of place to talk of group that does not exist, however, we want to categorically state that there was an attempt to attack the facility which was foiled at Agip pipelines at Nembe early this morning, therefore, the snatching of gunboat as claimed was laughable as we don’t fight a dream war for cheap glory. Our men are not cowards; they are trained to counter any unwarranted person or persons in self defence.


We will keep liaison with peace-loving individuals and community leaders for timely information as regards the activities of the criminals for quick and speedy response.”



12 Responses for “Militants destroy Agip pipeline...two soldiers feared dead in Bayelsa”

1.  *AJAH.O. AJAH* says:
[June 21, 2009 at 9:24 am](#)

whatever a man sow...that he shall reap. so long as the people of ND will not call their MILITANT brothers to order, then, let it be known that the entire inhabitants of the creeks and the neighborhood shall all die. JTF! JTF!! JTF!!! I ASK FOR MORE FIRE TO CONSUME ALL THE MILITANTS.

2.  *Pere* says:
[June 19, 2009 at 8:23 pm](#)

ND people has been brutalized by Nigeria security forces for too long. There has been more security checkpoints in ND than anywhere in Nigeria. Our people are subjected to daily harrassment by MOPOL, JTF, Police, Customs for bribes, insults, abuse, disrespect, folkling, frog jumping, face down, squatting to the ground etc.. i challenge any media group to conduct a survey about Nigeria security forces brutality in ND and you hear more than you can record. JTf Abubakar/Frank Nweke are lairs! Afterall, Northerns control all the security apparatus from National Assembly to Executive level. MEND must keep their weapons.

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