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Militants bomb Shell facilities again

[Headlines](#) Jun 29, 2009

* MEND claims 23 soldiers killed

*No soldier was killed – JTF

By Emma Amaize

WARRI - MILITANTS in the early hours of today bombed an off-shore platform of the Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) located at Forcados in Delta State and purportedly sunk a military gun boat carrying between 20-23 soldiers, a claim that the Joint Task Force (JTF) on the Niger-Delta promptly denied.

Spokesman of the Movement for Emancipation of the Niger-Delta (MEND), Jomo Gbomo who confirmed the bombing of Clusters 11 and 30 of the platform and clash between militants and soldiers in an online statement, yesterday, also said its commanders were being enticed with up to N1 billion each to lay down their arms.



His words, “Even though our commanders are constantly being bombarded with enticing monetary offers as much as 1billion Naira per camp, only those who are willing to sell their birthright for a bowl of porridge will accept while the rest of us will continue the struggle until justice is achieved”.

Coordinator of the Joint Media Campaign Centre (JMCC) of the JTF, Colonel Rabe Abubakar , however, said MEND was fabricating a story concerning a clash between soldiers and militants in the state, as nothing of such happened.

He said the militant group was striking at isolated pipelines that were not in use and which soldiers were not guarding, all to create the impression that they were still potent, whereas, it was clear that the security outfit was dislodging the militants from their

various camps..

Colonel Abubakar said that no military gunboat was sunk, not to talk of 20 -23 soldiers losing their lives as claimed by the MEND.

The JTF spokesman wondered why the boys carrying out the attacks should not take the opportunity opened by the Federal Government by the proclamation of amnesty to drop their arms and live a good life, saying, he was surprised that they were still going ahead with the destruction of the nation's economy and pollution of the environment of their people despite the government's gesture.

MEND in a drawn out statement said Shell Forcados off-shore platform attack at about 3.30 am was a continuation of its Hurricane Piper Alpha, pointing out, "Cluster 11 and 30 are currently on fire after a massive explosion".

Gbomo said after bombing the two clusters, "A military gunboat patrol on noticing the fire stumbled upon heavily armed fighters and the confrontation resulted in the sinking of the gunboat with all the occupants numbering between 20-23 soldiers".

According to him, "We have made it clear that patrols must not open fire at us as our target is the oil infrastructure. This unheeded warning resulted in the death of these soldiers"

MEND disowns representatives

In a related development, he said, "MEND wishes to state that Mr Innocent Iboroma and Mr Cletus Arerebo are not representatives of Farah Dagogo and Boyloaf at high level talks. Therefore, the said meeting held in Port Harcourt between them and the Minister of Internal Affairs is a fraud".

"MEND", he maintained, "will negotiate as a group when the right time comes. The impression the government is trying to give that commanders are negotiating independently is another propaganda aimed at causing confusion".

Arerebo, Boyloaf fault Jomo Gbomo

Vanguard contacted Mr. Arerebo and he explained he had the mandate of Boyloaf to attend the meeting. His words, "It is Boyloaf that called me to represent him at the meeting, I did not know about the meeting before, he was the one that called me and I know that many people called him to find out whether he sent me to the meeting and he told them he was the one, so I don't know what Jomo Gbomo is driving at. I even spoke to Boyloaf this morning .

Also speaking to Vanguard, Boyloaf said, "Cletus Arerebo has been representing at several meetings, I sent him to represent me in this one in question".

MEND raises fresh query on Okah

The militant group also picked holes in government's sincerity on the release of its detained leader, Henry Okah. According to Gbomo, "The sincerity of the government of Nigeria came into question again on Friday, June 26, 2009 after the Interior Minister, General Godwin Abbe (rtd) informed the nation that the release of a sick Henry Okah would now depend on consultations with the dictators and despots ruling Angola and

Equatorial Guinea”.

“The minister also lied when he said Okah travelled to Equatorial Guinea. The fact is that Mr Henry Okah has never set foot in that country; not even as an airport transit passenger.

“In the case of Angola, the authorities in that country had severally wanted to release Okah and Atatah because they had no case to answer, but were prevented by the Nigerian ambassador in Angola from doing so”, he noted.

“It is important to remember that Edward Atatah, arrested with Henry in Angola has long been set free because nothing incriminating came out of that business trip. If it were true that Okah went to purchase weapons as claimed, then Edward would not have been set free because both men traveled together to inspect the fishing trawler in Luanda, Angola which Henry wanted to purchase.

Demands compensation for Green and Pepple families

“Many Nigerians are unhappy that the Yar'Adua government has brushed aside the call for inquiry into the extra-judicial murder on 08/08/08 of Messrs Boma Green and Stanley Pepple by the JTF in Bonny, Rivers state”, he added.

He continued: “The fact they have not seen reason to investigate the killings that was caught on tape means that the perpetrators have been given a license to kill innocent civilians. The region is not safe in the hands of such licensed armed killers called the JTF who we understand is now threatening the families to shut up or risk being killed”.

“The government should use part of the 50 billion Naira amnesty fund as compensation to the families of these men since they left behind children that must be educated and wives that must survive with a trade.

“A fraction of what was wasted for travels, hotels, allowances and entertainment by the Niger Delta Technical Committee whose report has joined the long list of shelved reports since 1960 could have gone a long way in helping the two families.

“Justice for the two men will become an integral part of any future negotiations we will have with the government until the perpetrators of that evil act are brought to book”, he said.

Amnesty'll separate criminals from freedom fighters

On the amnesty for militants, he reiterated that it was directed at criminals and not freedom fighters, saying, “If successful, the on-going amnesty exercise directed at repentant criminals in the Niger Delta region will no doubt create an enabling environment for dealing with the Niger Delta question which freedom fighting groups such as MEND is waging”.

“It will separate the wheat from the chaff and allow the government to focus on the root issues instead of tying militancy with criminality as an excuse for not addressing the grievances of the Niger Delta people.

“Because criminals in other parts of Nigeria may hijack the struggle again after the region is rid of them, we call on political thugs, armed robbers, kidnappers, pirates etc

from other states in Nigeria to take advantage of the governments offer by travelling to one of the centers in the Niger Delta and trade their weapons for amnesty.

“Come with the whole gang and get rehabilitated with gains of free education, money to start legitimate businesses etc. This is a unique opportunity in a country where so many graduates cannot find jobs and girls no longer marry for love. Remember to use a name that strikes terror, like Osama bin Laden, 9/11, Taliban, Mujaheddin etc.

“The certificate the Inspector General of Police (IGP) will personally hand over will be your life saver. One last thing, take a picture shaking hands with the IGP as proof, frame the picture and leave it on your car dash board to avoid future harassment by the police at illegal road blocks.

“We hope that after this exercise is over the government will begin a genuine bilateral peace process with the involvement of the international community and every stakeholder to address the agitation of the region such as fiscal federalism amongst others”, the militant group asserted.


...Rehabilitation for criminals in public office

“We also hope that rehabilitation of criminals from past public office holders to the present ones, including the armed forces and police will be put in place so as to bring sanity back to the decayed system.

“Past heads of state and governors from the military era should also participate in the program too. The Jerry Rawlings type of rehab against



1 Response for “Militants bomb Shell facilities again”

1.  *James Osato* says:
[June 29, 2009 at 2:14 pm](#)

Incredible MEND!

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