


Vanguard



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MEND claims responsibility for killing of 15 policemen in Bayelsa creek

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Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta, MEND, yesterday, claimed responsibility for the Azuzuama attack in the creek of Southern Ijaw Local Government Area of Bayelsa State, during which it said 15 policemen were killed.

By Samuel Oyadongha

Yenagoa — Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta, MEND, yesterday, claimed responsibility for the Azuzuama attack in the creek of Southern Ijaw Local Government Area of Bayelsa State, during which it said 15 policemen were killed.

The state Commissioner of Police, Bayelsa Command, Mr. Kins Omire, on Saturday, said 12 of his men, two Inspectors, four non-commissioned officers and six constables were missing.

MEND, in a statement by its Spokesman, Gbomo Jomo, said 15 policemen were killed while it lost two of its fighters in the shootout.

MEND said the attack was due to the Nigerian security forces' dismissal of its earlier threat, Hurricane Exodus, as an empty threat.

Though the attack was launched on Friday, MEND said: "For dismissing Hurricane Exodus as an empty threat, by the Nigerian security forces, heavily armed fighters from MEND at 17:00 hrs, Saturday, April 6, intercepted and engaged government security forces in a fierce gunfight lasting over 40 minutes at Azuzama, Southern Ijaw, Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

"The clash, which happened on the river, left over 15 security forces dead as we also lost two of our fighters in the battle.

"We hope this encounter will serve as a lesson to Joint Task Force, JTF, from making careless utterances that cannot be backed

as we remain resolute in our resumption of hostilities.”

MEND advised oil companies and the public to ignore the false sense of security being peddled by JTF as well as the false comments from a “Comrade Azizi,” who claims to be the spokesman for the group.

“This person is not known to MEND, does not speak for MEND and his utterances and style do not reflect our plans and actions,” the statement said.

Meanwhile, security operatives were, yesterday, combing the creeks for the remains of the slain policemen.

The state police Commissioner, who was hopeful that the policemen were still alive, said, Saturday: “We are hoping that if any of them is alive, we will rescue him and those that are dead will be recovered, as search and rescue operations are ongoing. We have also deployed divers to the waters.”

.... As another group claims responsibility

By GABRIEL ENOGHOLASE

Yenagoa — A militia group, led by one ‘General’ Jaspa Boro (Jnr), has claimed responsibility for Friday’s attack on policemen on Bayelsa State waterways, saying it was a clear warning to their erstwhile militant leader, Mr. Kile Torughedi, known as ‘Young Shall Grow.’

The group said: “What happened, Friday, was a warning to Young Shall Grow, as we shall extend our attacks to oil installations.

“He is deducting our salaries and we have been sidelined in Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, NNPC, Bajero security jobs.

“He was given N80 million to buy cars for his commanders but he embezzled the money. We want the Federal Government, the Bayelsa State Government and other stakeholders to come to our aid.

“If they refuse, we will blow up flow stations in the region. It is an armed struggle. We have just started. Federal Government should tell him to empower his boys. We are not afraid.”

Meanwhile, Bayelsa State governor, Mr. Henry Dickson, has described the untimely death of 12 policemen serving with the state Police Command as most tragic, shocking and disheartening.

Dickson, in a condolence message to the Inspector- General of Police, in Yenagoa, noted with dismay that, the incident occurred as the affected policemen were on active duty to the nation and humanity.

He said: “The development is a constant reminder of how vulnerable we are in our collective efforts at pursuing and achieving lasting peace and unity in our state and country.”

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