

Explosion rocks Chevron facility in Bayelsa

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An explosion reportedly caused by gas leakage rocked a Chevron facility on the Atlantic fringe of Brass local government area of Bayelsa State leaving two persons missing.

The explosion it was learnt occurred between 4.30am and 5am Monday and was reported to be an accident.

It could not be ascertain if the missing persons identified as one Nigerian and an expatriate were actually at the facility when the incident occurred.

There are conflicting account of the incident. While some community sources claimed that the explosion was due gas leakage from drilling machine others reported that the explosion occurred from a new gas well head at Funawa 5 along the Koluama river.

Another report claimed that the explosion occurred following a fire from an oil barge under repair with some workers of Chevron working on the rig.

The fire from the barge was said to have spread to the oil rig and it exploded as the workers were facing some difficult technical challenges to contain the gas pressure

About 213 workers present at the facility during the explosion were reportedly evacuated from the scene.

According to sources from the company, the rig is named K.S Endeavour, and is operated by Chevron at its Pennington Field in Bayelsa state.

“We heard a big bang that shook our community. The next thing we saw was fire coming out of the Chevron rig. The thing happened around 4.30am. When we inquired they said they were working on a new well head. There was no sabotage. Nobody went to attack them.

“Up till now the fire is still burning. The entire rig has been burnt down. They tried to stop it but it went out of control. We know that the company is drilling a new well head that contains only gas in our area,” said a community source.

Contacted, Chevron’s General Manager, Public and Government Affairs, Femi Odumabo said though no casualty was recorded, “there was no explosion. It was fire incident in the Finuwa Field. The name of the rig is KS Endeavour. It is owned by Fode Drilling. All workers are being evacuated.