

Suspected sea bandits kill three soldiers in Bayelsa

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*As Bayelsa govt, Brass LGA boss condemn killings

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YENAGOA—SUSPECTED pirates, yesterday, attacked a military checkpoint at Tombi waterside in Nembe Local Government Area of Bayelsa State, killing three soldiers.



Vanguard gathered that the pirates, who caught the soldiers unawares, struck at 10 a.m. They allegedly made away with a gunboat belonging to the military and two K2 rifles.

The incident caused panic in the coastal enclave, as the natives abandoned their homes for fear of reprisal by the military.

The bandits stormed the checkpoint in an SUV and opened fire on the soldiers, carting away their arms. While some fled with the vehicle on land route, others disappeared into the creeks with the gunboat.

Chief of Army Staff, Lt-Gen. Tukur
Buratai

A villager, who spoke to Vanguard on phone, said that shortly after the attack, he saw a military fighter jet hovering over the area.

Sources hinted that the military reinforced security and took over the waterways to Nembe to apprehend the criminals.

Soldiers also cordoned off the uncompleted Ogbia-Nembe Road project jointly sponsored by SPDC and NDDC.

Meanwhile, Joint Task Force JTF, confirmed the attack, saying that gunmen believed to be militants at 10a.m, attacked 343 Artillery Regiment, a detachment of Operation Delta Safe deployed to Nembe Jetty in Bayelsa State.

Acting Coordinator for the Joint Media Campaign, Centre, Lt Commander A Ahmed, said in a statement, that “During the incidence, three soldiers lost their lives. The Commander of Operation Delta Safe, Rear Admiral Joseph Okojie, has consequently deployed reinforcement to apprehend the perpetrators of this heinous crime.

“It should be noted that the attack by militants was as a result of the ongoing operations of the JTF aimed at flushing out all forms of criminality, especially pipeline vandalism and destruction of illegal refinery within the region.”

Also, Bayelsa State deputy governor, Rear Admiral John Jonah, (retd), who is an indigene of Nembe Kingdom, visited the scene.

The deputy governor commiserated with the families of the slain soldiers and assured the authorities of the JTF of the state government’s support towards apprehending their killers.

On the fears of the indigenes of Nembe communities over possible reprisal by soldiers, he assured them of their safety and advised that they go about their duties peacefully.

Meanwhile, Chairman, Brass Local Government Area of the state, Bello Bina, has condemned the killing of the three military personnel at Ogbolomabiri in Nembe Local Government Area of the state by the gunmen, describing same as totally unwarranted and disheartening.

In a statement in Yenagoa by his Chief Press Secretary, Saint Mienpamo, he said that such malicious act was only painting the state and indeed the region in bad light.

He said: “It is wicked for anybody to attack soldiers that are risking their lives to protect us. Such attacks are only sending a wrong signal to the rest of the world because they will continue to perceive us as a violent people. Of course you and I know the implication of this.

“It is very difficult to see progress in a nation that is plagued with violence. Only peaceful nations make progress. So our youths must recognise this fact and refrain from violence,” he said.