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Shell flow station destroyed in Nigeria: militant group



Wed Sep 17, 1:58 AM ET

LAGOS, (AFP) - The most prominent armed group in southern Nigeria said early Wednesday it has destroyed the Orubiri flow station operated by the [Shell Petroleum Development Company](#) in Rivers state.

The Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) said it carried out the attack in cooperation with another armed group, the Niger Delta Volunteer Force (NDVF).

"About 2200 (2100 GMT) on Tuesday, September 16, 2008, fighters from MEND and the NDVF in a new alliance attacked and destroyed the Orubiri flow station," MEND said in an email to the media.

There was no immediate comment from Shell, but since MEND first evoked a possible war on the oil industry on Saturday there have already been two attacks on Shell facilities and two "shooting incidents" at facilities operated by US oil giant Chevron.

This latest attack, if confirmed, will be the third on Shell in the space of 48 hours.

MEND said it killed all the soldiers on guard at the Orubiri facility and took their weapons.

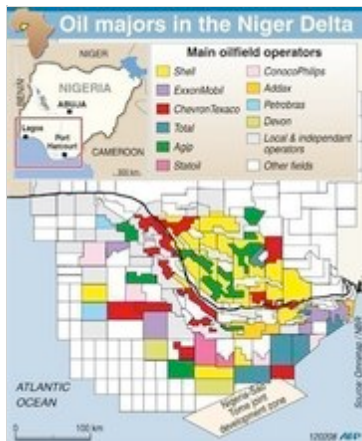
The group renewed its warning to soldiers and oil workers to abandon all installations, including deep offshore fields.

"Soldiers and oil workers are advised to abandon all oil facilities including the off shore rigs of [Bonga](#) and [Agbami](#) as we want to minimize casualties before Hurricane Barbarossa arrives," the group said.

Hurricane Barbarossa is the code name it gave to its new operation when it launched it at the weekend.

All the attacks since the weekend have been carried out in Rivers state. They have affected a Shell flow station at Alakiri and a Shell pipeline at Bakana Front in Degema Local Government Area and Chevron facilities at Robertkiri and Idama.

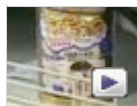
"After Rivers, the hurricane will be heading to the neighboring states in the Niger Delta," MEND said.



AFP/Graphic Photo: A map of the Niger Delta showing oil fields and main operators. A Nigerian militant...

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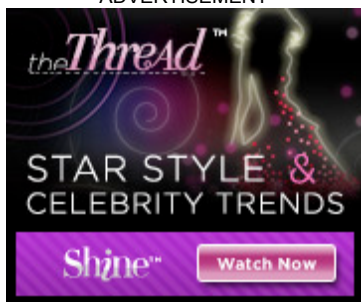
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"The people of Rivers state should hold the governor Mr [Rotimi Amaechi](#) accountable for allowing the state to be the first to be visited. He should resign and a state of emergency (be) declared in Rivers state," the group continued.

Since MEND emerged in early 2006 it has cut Nigeria's oil output by at least one quarter.

In another development on Tuesday night two South African hostages seized last week by pirates along with 25 other people aboard a vessel in southern Nigeria were freed, the military said.

Army spokesman Lieutenant-Colonel Sagir Musa told AFP the pair was released "without payment of ransom".

MEND had earlier Tuesday promised to release the South Africans, whom it said it rescued from pirates on Friday.

MEND said the two were among 27 rescued hostages, which also included 22 Nigerians, 2 Britons and a fifth foreigner thought to be Ukrainian.

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