Beat: Local

Pirates kidnap 7 Russian, Estonian sailors off Nigeria coast

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USPA News - Nigerian pirates earlier this week attacked a Luxembourg-flagged cargo ship off the coast of Nigeria, kidnapping six Russian crew members and one Estonian crew member during the assault, a French company which provides maritime services confirmed on Wednesday. The attack happened on Monday when gunmen attacked and boarded the Bourbon Liberty 249 cargo ship off the coast of Nigeria`s oil-rich Niger Delta region.

The 60 meters (197 feet)-long vessel, which was heading to the Port of Onne in Nigeria`s Rivers state, was carrying a total of sixteen crew members. Paris-based Bourbon SA, which provides marine services to offshore oil and gas companies, confirmed the incident in a brief statement on Wednesday. "Bourbon confirms that 7 crew members, 6 Russians and 1 Estonian, were kidnapped during the boarding of the Bourbon Liberty 249, which occurred on October 15, 2012 in Nigeria," the statement said. The nine other crew members remained on board the vessel on Wednesday and have continued their journey to Onne. "They are safe and sound, and in good health," the statement continued, adding that the company has set up an emergency unit to rescue its employees as soon as possible. "Bourbon is in contact with the crewmembers` families, supporting them, and keeping them regularly informed," the statement added. "Bourbon will continue to disclose any new information when available and verified and will not make any comment, which could adversely affect the liberation of the hostages."

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