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四角风

TUESDAY, 26 MAY 2009 00:33 BEN EGUZOZIE, TUNJI OLAWUNI & SAMUEL **FSF**

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·Senate meets service chiefs behind close door. ·JTF allays Odi people's fear. After a sustained onslaught from the Joint Military Task Force (JTF) since an offensive now in the 11th day that has driven them deeper into the creeks, Niger Delta militants yesterday hit back, slashing 100,000 barrels per day from the country's crude oil export

This came courtesy of an attack on Chevron's flow station at Abiteye in Delta State. The flow station was only taken over by the JTF mid-last week.

The destruction of major trunk lines at Alero Creek has effectively put the four flow stations that feed the Chevron tank farm in Delta State out of operation. The affected flow stations are: Chevron (at Alero Creek), Otunana, Abiteye,



shut in production as a precautionary measure while checks were made.

swamp operations in Delta State," a Chevron spokesman said.

axis

agencies.

fear has been allayed by JTF.

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Makaraba and Dibi.

Nigeria is currently pumping 1.5-1.6 million barrels per day of crude according to Rilwanu Lukman, petroleum minister.

Militants within the ranks of the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) claimed responsibility for the attack.

Confirming the heavy attack yesterday, Rabe Abubakar, coordinator of the JTF's joint media campaign centre (JMCC) condemned the attack, saying it was carried out by Kingsley Opuye, a militant leader and his gang.

And with the escalation of the military campaign which is being extended to Rivers State and other states where militants are active, there is apprehension among communities within the militants' operational

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is ongoing. No station was blown up," Femi Odumabo, general manager, government and public affairs, Chevron told BusinessDay. Concerned with the development, the Senate committee on defence yesterday held a closed door meeting with the top military brass in a bid to end the onslaught by the JTF. The committee yesterday met the service chiefs, including the chief of defence staff, Paul Dike; chief of army staff, Abduraham Dambazau; chief of naval staff, Isaac Iko Ibrahim and chief of air staff, Petirin

Residents of Odi in Kolokuma/Opokuma local government area of Bayelsa State are moving out of the town that was razed down in 1999 during a military invasion over the killing of 12 policemen by armed youths. However this

The U.S. energy firm confirmed one of its pipelines in the Abiteye area was breached on Sunday and said it had

"To protect the environment, the incident has led to the shut in of approximately 100,000 bpd production from

"The company is currently assessing the situation, while the incident has been reported to relevant government

"A pipeline in our swamp operation was breached. About 100,000 barrels of oil per day shut in while investigation

The security forces say they have destroyed at least two major militant camps in the Chanomi Creek area around Warri since launching their offensive and that they are now in control of the ground in the surrounding creeks. But industry and security sources say it is virtually impossible to fully protect hundreds of kilometres of pipeline running through remote and largely unpopulated areas, leaving infrastructure exposed to hit-and-run guerrilla raids

MEND warned such attacks would continue.

"We will continue our cat-and-mouse tactics with (the military) until oil exports cease completely," it said.

According to MEND spokesman, Jomo Gbomo, "we borrowed a leaf from the Federal Government of Nigeria, by applying the same measure of treatment the impoverished oil bearing communities suffered in the hands of government troops, by ensuring huge collateral damage."

He vowed on behalf of the militants that "this will henceforth become our standard mode of operation." Federal forces said they have rescued three Filipinos in Delta State.

JTF spokesman, Abubakar, said a cordon and search operation conducted by the troops at Oporoza community in Gbaramatu Kingdom, Warri South-West local government area of Delta State, led to the rescue of the Filipinos who are presently undergoing medical treatment at an undisclosed JTF hospital.

They are Enrico Arelano, Romeo Naclicar and Napoleon Emphasis.

Abubakar said during the raid and eventual destruction of the militant camp, different types of bunkeringsupporting equipment were discovered and destroyed along with the camp. No arrest was made as the militants had deserted the camp before the arrival of JTF team.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Odi invasion when Nigerian soldiers invaded the town following the killing of 12 policemen by unidentified gunmen. Many women and children were killed and the town razed by the soldiers.

However, special adviser to Bayelsa State Governor Timipre Sylva on security matters, Richard Kpodoh, has allayed the fears of the community, saying the military action in Delta State has not been extended to the state.

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