

separable link with history, Washima who joined other prominent Nigerians to salute him said, "Nige-

mer head of state to strive to achieve greater height.

She posited, "This time round,

airing their honest opinion about IBB.

"A lot of controversy and misery

ed to put them together and publish them as a tribute to him," she surmised.

Oil Theft: Navy Kill 12, Arrest 4 In Niger Delta

BY KOLA NIYI-EKE, Asaba AND OSA

OKHOMINA, Yenagoa

Operatives of the Nigerian Navy in Warri, Delta State Saturday night killed 12 suspected oil thieves and arrested four others in a fierce gun battle at Forcados in Burutu Local Government Area of the state.

LEADERSHIP gathered that the encounter was a result of coordinated operation by the Western and Central Naval Commands, Lagos and Yenagoa respectively with the assistance of a surveillance helicopter from the Nigerian Air Force.

Security sources disclosed that the Oil thieves had hijacked a ves-

sel, MT Norte, loaded with about 17,000 metric tonnes of Premium Motor Spirit (PMS) last Thursday off Nigerian waters which triggered the Navy's emergency operation.

It was gathered that the suspects and the vessel were monitored by the Naval Officers and men from last Friday till Saturday when negotiations began between the security men and the oil thieves which led to an agreement with suspects to hands off and release the vessel.

LEADERSHIP learnt that the Naval officers played along until about 7.00 pm last Saturday when the suspects agreed to disembark from the vessel off Forcados river, about

14 nautical miles from the coast as they observed the overwhelming presence of security men around the vessel.

It was gathered that at about 8.45 pm as the suspects finally disembarked on the condition that only one Navy vessel should remain in the vicinity of the hijacked one, they made a fast move towards the coastline in an escape bid and in the process engaged the Navy personnel in a gun duel.

At the end of the gun battle, which lasted about 30 minutes, sources disclosed, 12 of the suspects including the leader identified as Ben were killed while three surrendered to the

rampaging Naval men.

The fourth suspect, it was learnt, was captured later during mop-up operation while trying to swim out of the troubled spot.

Briefing newsmen, yesterday, at the NNS Delta, Warri Base, the Flag Officer Commanding, Central Naval Command, Rear-Admiral Sidi-Ali Hassan Usman said five Naval ships, Manta and Rapid Response Boats were used during the coordinated operation with the help of the Nigerian Air Force (NAF) Maritime Patrol Aircraft (MAP) which carried out the sorties and fed the Navy with detailed location of the hijacked vessel.

Gowon Faults Prediction On Nigeria's Break Up In 2015

it will not. I believe God will not al-