

Troops lay siege to Rivers community over killing of soldiers

• Monarch's aide, youths arrested

TROOPS of the Nigeria Army have stormed Bille, Degema Local Government Area of Rivers State following the killing of soldiers by pirates

It was gathered that the pirates, who terrorise the community, also seized the soldiers' weapons on Sunday.

Three troops, according to sources, broke into houses in Bille, and arrested, the traditional ruler, LN.C Herbert, his personal aide, Damiete Alabo, and some youths.

Spokesman of the 6th Division of the Nigeria Army, Port Harcourt, Major Iweha Ikedichi, said the troops on "cordon and search operation" in the area would not be withdrawn until the perpetrators are arrested and the

From Mike Odiegwu and Rosemary Nwisi, Port Harcourt

seized arms recovered. Iweha, who did not give the number of the soldiers killed, however, said the monarch was later released.

The Chairman of the Bille Council of Chiefs, Bennett Okpoki, who lamented the development yesterday, called for urgent Federal Government intervention.

Okpoki said Bille had been at the mercy of pirates, adding that on Friday a Port Harcourt-bound boat was attacked and one Impaisinba Igani, killed.

He said that the matter was reported to the 29th Battalion Tactical Headquarters of the Nigeria Army in the area.