

METRO PLUS

## Military arrests militant for killing five operatives

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Troops of the Joint Military Task Force, *Operation Delta Safe*, have arrested Oyaweikumor Peregbabofa, the leader of a militant group accused of beheading an operative of the Department of State Services in Bayelsa State.

The 28-year-old militant, known in the creeks as *General Karaowei*, also reportedly led militant gangs that allegedly killed four soldiers during a clash with military operatives at Toru-Ndoro community of the Ekeremor Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.

The military authorities had reportedly deployed their men last Saturday in Toru-Ndoro in search of the suspected militant who allegedly decapitated a soldier and made a ceremony out of the act by displaying the head around the community.

*Karaowei*, who allegedly led a gang of militants involved in abduction, sea robbery and other criminal activities in the area, was reportedly arrested on Wednesday at his maternal home at Edegbene, Burutu LGA, Delta State, by the JTF operatives.

Some of his clansmen claimed that the suspect had contacted the Chairman of the Ekeremor LGA, Mr. Tolu Amatu, on Tuesday, declaring his readiness to surrender himself and avoid the ongoing carnage allegedly carried out by the military, who were searching for him and members of his gang.

Security personnel, however, claimed that the wanted militant leader was arrested with severe bullet wounds alongside four members of his gang.

Confirming the development, spokesman for the Bayelsa State Police Command, Mr. Asinim Butswat, said though the suspect had been arrested, the command had yet to get full details of the arrest.

But a senior police source confirmed that the suspect sustained gunshot injuries and was in the custody of security operatives.

“The details will be made available to the public at the appropriate time,” he added.

Meanwhile, a civil advocacy group, the Patriotic Citizens of Nigeria, has condemned the military invasion of Toro-Ndoro community, alleging wanton destruction of property and killing of law-abiding residents in Ekeremor.

The group claimed that nine persons had been killed since the invasion of Toro-Ndoro in search of the militant, whose camp was allegedly located at Toru-Ndoro part of Delta State.

The group, in a statement on Thursday by its Convener, Aluzu Augustine, and co-convener, Debekeme Powedei, alleged that many houses in Toro-Ndoro had been razed and property worth millions of naira destroyed.