

## Army intensifies crackdown on ex-militants

From **Tony John**, Port Harcourt

**THE** Army has intensified its crackdown on notable former militant leaders, with an operation in Omoku, headquarters of Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area of Rivers State.

It was gathered that about 20 trucks, loaded with soldiers, were deployed by the military, which created tension in the town. A trader in Omoku, who confirmed the heavy presence of military men in the area, alleged that soldiers raided the house of a former militant leader simply identified as Donwa, adding that some persons have also been arrested.

The Assistant Director, Army Public Relations, 2 Brigade Nigerian Army, Captain Eli Lazarus, confirmed the deployment of soldiers in the area.

He said soldiers were on continuous military operations and assured residents of their safety. He urged the public to go about their normal businesses.

Similarly, as at press time, a combined team of security operatives was said to have raided homes and suspected hideouts of cultists in Abua/Odual Local Government Area, where a fierce rivalry between cult groups, have led to deaths of many people and the destruction of property. Also, three persons allegedly died following the raid on the homes of a former militant leader, and Caretaker Committee Chairman of Asari-Toru Local Government Area, Chief Soboma Jackreece (aka Egberi Papa), by a combined team of operatives from different police formations, last week.