

She said: "I met him eight years ago while I was working as a real es-

Turner

doc

Military raids militants' shrine, discovers human skulls

The Joint Military Task Force (JTF) in the Niger Delta, Operation Delta SAFE, has arrested two militant leaders and discovered three human skulls in the ongoing military operations.

The spokesman for the task force, Lt.-Cdr. Thomas Otuji, in a statement yesterday in Yenagoa, said troops raided five shrines at Debe and Ikot Ofing in Akpabuyo Local Government Area of Cross River on Thursday.

He said troops on covert operation in Esighi waterside of Cross River apprehended a suspected militants' leader found with charms, while another suspected leader was picked up at a hideout in Ikpa Road, Uyo.

Otuji also said the air component of the Operation Delta SAFE during a reconnaissance patrol at Onne in Rivers, sighted barges of 15,000 litres of petrol concealed with green grass.

The troops also arrested three oil thieves operating illegal refineries at Bennet Island, Asugbo, in Warri South Local Government Area of Delta State.

He said that the oil thieves had connected a hose linking the site to a wellhead from where crude was siphoned.

Otuji said that a locally made gun, five live cartridges, a crude laden wooden boat storage tank, seven speed boats with outboard engines were seized at the site.

He said a kidnap victim, Mrs. Roseline Duku, who was abducted by gunmen at Afiesere

junction in Ugheli North Local Government Area was rescued by troops in response to a distress call.

Otuji said the victim's Rav4 car with registration number FST 927 was, however, abandoned by her abductors along Ejode Road in Ughelli while being pursued by troops.

He said: "Troops in conjunction with the police and local vigilante group rescued the victim at Ekapkamre, Ugheli North Local government Area, Delta State.

"Furthermore, troops deployed at Koluama in Bayelsa trailed and arrested a notorious

pirate known as Labiesta, who attacked innocent citizens at Ogubene creeks."

Otuji said the militant had been on the wanted list of security agencies.

He said the successes recorded by the troops in the ongoing operation were traceable to the timely information provided by members of the public and resilience of the troops.

He restated the commitment of the troops to degrade the capacity of criminals in the Niger Delta region and pledged to provide a safe environment for legitimate business to thrive in the region.

Customs seize N1.3bn smugg

A total of N1.3 billion worth of smuggled items have been seized by a special team set up by Hamid Ali, Comptroller General (CGC), Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), two months ago, an official said yesterday.

Musa Jalo, an Assistant Comptroller of Customs who heads the CGC's Compliance Team, said in Kaduna that 23 suspects were arrested in various operations it carried out across the country.

He said that the seized items included rice, vegetable oil, spaghetti, poultry products, used tyres, vehicles, second hand clothes and mosquito coil.

"Two months down the line, our aggressive patrols of creeks, highways and suspected routes used by criminals and smugglers, and strong deployment of intelligence have continued to justify the creation of the team.

"Within the period un- been able to make a total of across the country, with D 300, 000.00.

"It is important to point would have been lost had created by the CGC because of the leaks on areas of leakages.

He noted that rice was item across the country, and that the service would correct them on the effect of smuggling on the economy.

According to him, some rested a week ago in Lagos some smuggled rice.

"This shows that smuggling profits, they do not care for their lives after consuming