

# Policeman dies in battle against illegal bunkerers

**WARRI**—A mobile policeman drowned in a battle against illegal oil bunkerers in the creeks in Delta State yesterday.

The efforts of the policeman whose identity could not be known immediately led to the arrest of a barge, fully loaded with a substance suspected to be crude oil by men of the Joint Military task force (JTF).

The JTF, which confirmed the death of the policeman, said that the oil thieves abandoned the

barge and fled from the scene.

Spokesman of the task force, Maj.Omale Ochagwuba, told newsmen in Warri on Sunday that another fully loaded barge and two wooden canoes were impounded while five persons were arrested for the crime.

Ochagwuba said a self-propelled barge, weighing 850 tonnes was also impounded for illegally acquiring diesel.

He explained that it was in this barge that the five persons were arrested, saying, "they had fin-

ished loading and were about to leave when the perpetrators were apprehended."

Ochagwuba said that the two wooden boats impounded were also loaded with crude oil, but that the product had been evacuated and deposited at Egbokodo-Itsekiri community jetty in Warri South Local Government Area.

He said that all the products impounded would be evacuated while the barges and boats would be destroyed and the arrested persons prosecuted.