

Nigeria: JTF Kills Three Militants, Captures Four in Bayelsa

THREE militants were shot dead and four others captured alive, yesterday, after a heavy exchange of gunfire between the Joint Task Force on the Niger-Delta and militants, who attempted to overrun an Agip flow station at Tebidaba, a creek community in Bayelsa State.

A member of the task force was also seriously wounded. Reports said the entire community was thrown into confusion as guns shoot boomed for several hours, forcing the villagers to run helter-skelter.

Coordinator of the Joint Media Campaign (JMC) of the JTF, Lt. Col Abubakar who confirmed the incident to Saturday Vanguard said the militants launched an unprovoked attack on the JTF men who mounted sentry at the oil facility.

His words: "The militants in their desperation at seeking relevance in the scheme of affairs in the Niger-Delta has once again launched an unprovoked attack on the men of the Joint Task Force who are guarding an Agip flow station at Tebidaba in Bayelsa State.

"The attack, which was coordinated by MEND met with stiff resistance following a serious exchange of gunfire with own troops, which compelled the militants to withdrew due to JTF superior firepower.

"In the ensuing battle, three militants were confirmed killed and four injured militants were captured and no damage was done to the oil facilities", he said.

According to him, The Commander of the JTF, Brigadier-General Nanven Rimtip has already visited the site and condemned this unwarranted attack and told his men to be "extra vigilant."

He commended them for repelling the attack and warned that the JTF would launch a manhunt for those responsible for the attack with a view to bringing them to book.

"The commander called on all well-meaning Niger-Deltans to condemn this barbaric act especially now that there is a peace process of resolving the problem in the oil-rich region," Abubakar added.

He quoted Brigadier-General Rimtip of, nevertheless, assuring the public that the JTF was on top of the situation and that there was no cause for alarm.

On his part, Lt. Col Abubakar reiterated the JTF's professional capability in suppressing this and similar unwarranted attacks, adding, "The JTF will, however, remain committed to the peace process and rule of law and its assigned rule of engagement while emphasizing minimum use of force in self defence where necessary".

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