

# Stray bullet killing: Hunters' bullets found in villages –Army

## SUNDAY ABORISADE

**T**HE Army insisted on Friday that it was not the bullets fired by its personnel during shooting trainings that allegedly hit and killed 17 people in Oyo State.

## tasks media on Lagos population

roads?"

He added that every part of Lagos was being turned into markets, with more people coming into Lagos, but with no plan to go back again.

Fashola assured the people, that if the state could successfully achieve 9.1metres full width alignment on the Wilmer road under construction without touching any building, then no building would be demolished.

He said, "From Ajegunle, to Orile or Apapa and Ikoyi, we use quality, we would not settle for anything less".

Fashola said that it was very clear from the various project sites starting from the Bridge at Wilmer Crescent, the roads in Ajegunle, Apapa and the Magistrate courts at Mbah Street and Aerodrome Road, that top quality work was done.

Meanwhile, Fashola has urged the Federal Government to make special provision for Lagos State in the annual federal budget for the maintenance of infrastructure.

The victims were residents of the various villages around its barracks in the Odogbo area of Ibadan.

Residents of Idi-Omo, Ajobo, Alasa, Aba-Ode, and Elepe villages alleged recently that the stray bullets from the soldiers had killed

17 of them and injured many others.

But the Assitant Director in charge of the Public Relations, 2 Division, Nigerian Army at the Adekunle Fajuyi Cantonment, Colonel Dapo Otiki, maintained at a news

normal commercial life of the city.

"As you rightly identified, about 600 to 1000 people come into this state everyday never to go back", the governor said, citing as an example his visit to one of the suburbs of the state where according to him "you need to see the thousands of people there."

Earlier, the Minister said his visit was to show appreciation to Fashola for making his work as Foreign Minister of Nigeria easier as a result of the governor's commitment to good governance.

"As I travel around the world, the success story of Lagos State Government under the dynamic leadership of Governor Fashola has made my work easier," Maduekwe said.

He said that as a Senior Government Official, he was also in Lagos to show appreciation to Fashola for doing well, being accessible, insisting on the rule of law and cutting waste among other achievements.

conference that it was hunters' bullets that were picked from the villages.

Otiki explained that the villagers were illegally living in the affected settlements because they encroached on the land allocated to the army by the Federal Government many years ago.

He wondered why the state government, through its agencies in charge of town planning, had not taken measures to dislodge the villagers or prevent them from encroaching in the first place.

Otiki said the incident which was said to have happened in 2007 was generating controversies because development had brought the civilians closer to the military barracks.

He said, "Currently, if you look at the demography of the entire area, the army barracks is virtually subsummed by civilian structures. These structures are as close as 5000m (5km) to the shooting range.

"This mark of gesture was demonstrated by the former General Officer Commanding who is now the Chief of Army Staff to show how the military values the safety of lives and property of the civil populace

"By this arrangement, there is no way a bullet from a small arm like the rifle fired from 100 to 300m would travel as far as 5,000m and cause havoc to life and property," he said.

Otiki said the soldiers

conducted an investigation in the villages where 17 people allegedly hit by stray bullets died but discovered that the villagers could not produce a corpse of any of the victims.

He also said the bullets found there were too tiny like those being used by hunters whereas police use 5.9mm and the army, 7.2mm bullets.

He said the army would construct a fence round the whole barracks adding that if the army used the natural fence (planting of trees) to demarcate its land, the villagers would still encroach.

"After fencing the barracks, any person whose house is found within the barracks would be made to pay a fine," he said.

He, however, promised that the army would intensify efforts at engaging in constructive dialogue towards exploiting other means of improving the physical structure of the range to further guarantee safety at all times.

He said the action taken by the army to check the alleged killing had succeeded because, "Since the exercise began this year, no report of any casualties had been reported."

He argued that the bullets that were allegedly picked from the neighbouring villages were smaller than the ones that the army use and that they were old bullets.