

sister, Mrs. z Dupe Adeleke; and Governor of Osun State, Rauf Aregbesola, at the eight-day Fidu of the late senator in Ede... on Monday. Photo: Osun State Government House

Three soldiers, 15 militants killed in Ondo creeks gunfight

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and Peter Dada

TROOPS of the Nigerian Army under Operation Delta Safe, on Monday morning engaged in a gun battle with militants in the Ajakpa community in the creeks of Ondo State, during which the militants' ring leader, Ossy Ibori, and 14 gang members, were killed.

It was gathered that three soldiers were killed during the encounter, while three others were injured.

The gang leader, Ibori, reportedly brought the militants from the creeks in a bid to steal crude oil and other activities when they had a shootout with troops.

Our correspondent learnt that Ibori was shot dead, while some of his gang members escaped into the waters with bullet injuries.

According to a source, the clash occurred at about 1am on Monday while the soldiers were on patrol of the creeks to flush out the militants from their hideouts.

The source added, "Immediately the militants saw the soldiers from their hideout, they opened fire on them. During the gun duel, a soldier and a member of the militant group were killed, while many soldiers and the

militant were injured."

Another resident of Ajakpa, who spoke on condition of anonymity, confirmed the casualty figures.

"It was a fierce gun battle on Sunday. The militants wanted to capture the troops' location. In the end, the gang leader and 14 militants were killed, while the troops lost three soldiers," he added.

According to the joint task force in Delta safe, Ibori led criminal gangs that terrorised different parts of Lagos, Ogun and Ondo states prior to this operation.

The gangs were said to have committed many atrocities, including the killing of an army Captain and two policemen at Ikorodu.

They were alleged to have carried out several attacks on the Ese-Odo community around the Ajakpa, Safarogbo and Balowo areas.

The Joint Media Centre Coordinator, Major Abubakar Abdullahi, said the injured soldiers had been rushed to a military hospital for treatment, adding that the troops were on the trail of the fleeing gang members.

The statement added, "Troops of Operation Delta Safe, in line with its mandate to rid Niger Delta of all criminal acts of militancy and kidnappings, in a special operation, repelled an attack on troops location around the Ajakpa community in the creeks of Southern Ondo State last night.

"The attack was led by one notorious gang leader, Ossy Ibori, with a hideout at Ajakpa, Ese-Odo Local Government Area of Ondo State.

"The leader was gunned down during the gun duel

Adeleke was not poisoned, saying his death came from God.

along with some of his gang members. His body was identified by some of the locals in the area.

"While search for other criminals, who jumped into the water with gunshot wounds is ongoing, troops have recovered one AK-47 rifle and four magazines."

He confirmed the killing of a soldier in the encounter.

"Sadly, a soldier was killed while three others sustained gunshot wounds. They have since been moved to military hospital for proper medical attention," he added.

Minimum Wage: MAN, CSOs disagree as workers disrupt Abuja May Day rally

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Ekweremadu pointed out that the nation could afford N50,000 minimum wage through proper management of the economy and prudent expenditure by all levels of government.

The Deputy Senate President made the call in his goodwill message to workers on May Day, which was issued on Monday by his Special Adviser on Media, Mr. Uche Anichukwu.

Ekweremadu added, "I

felicitate with our workers who toil day and night to move the nation forward. But we must collectively show the workers that we care beyond lip service.

"Importantly, it is high time we raised the minimum wage from N18,000 to N50,000. It does not make sense to preach anti-corruption alone without giving people the opportunity to earn honest and meaningful living.

"The truth is that the

take-home pay can no longer take the workers home. Where it does, it cannot keep their homes happy because they can hardly afford a bag of rice, let alone pay school fees, and foot other basic bills."

Also, President of the Senate, Bukola Saraki, advised the Federal Government to constitute a panel consisting of stakeholders to work on the demands by Nigerian workers for increased wages and arrears of

pension, promotion and allowances.

Saraki was quoted as saying this while addressing journalists at the Eagle Square, Abuja, venue of the 2017 May Day celebration, in a statement by his Special Adviser on Media and Publicity, Mr. Yusuph Olaniyonu.

He said if the workers had allowed Ngige, to address them, he would have announced some plans that the government had for the workers.