

10 soldiers die in battle as army repels Boko Haram from Ashaka town

**Over 70 terrorists killed*

**Fashola commends armed forces*

BY KINGSLEY OMONOBI & BASHIR ADEFAKA

THE Nigerian Military, yesterday, put up a brave fight against hundreds of Boko Haram terrorists who attacked the dynamite-manufacturing town of Ashaka in Gombe State.

Their plan was to overrun the town. After several hours of fighting, the Nigerian Army lost 10 soldiers while over 70 Boko Haram terrorists were killed with scores of them sustaining serious gunshot injuries - most of the terrorists fled the town. While running away from the town, the terrorists carried most of their dead members in three trucks.

Confirming the development in the Defence Headquarters twitter handle, Director of Defence Information, Major General Chris Olukolade, noted that the terrorists invaded the town in a convoy of 30 vehicles and many motorcycles.

His words: "Terrorists fleeing Ashaka on Thursday managed to retrieve three truckloads full of their dead members following the defeat and heavy casualty they suffered after a fierce battle with troops in the area.

"The terrorists, who had come in large number with heavy equipment and convoy of over 30 vehicles and a number of motor cycles, were on a mission to take control of Ashaka town, after they had operated in Bajoga and environs in Gombe State.

"Troops who got wind of their intention to overrun other towns and pursued the terrorists while some also laid ambush for them. The terrorists were forced to abandon the mission when the troops

proved unyielding. Most of the vehicles and equipment used by the terrorists for their mission were destroyed before they chose to flee the location.

"Over 10 soldiers however died in the battle while those who were wounded are being treated in military hospitals.

About a month ago, suspected Boko Haram terrorists attacked the Ashaka Cement Company where they made away with a truck load of dynamites used for manufacturing Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDS) and since then, several bomb attacks in

Kano, Maduguri, Yobe, Adamawa and Bauchi, etc have been carried out with female suicide bombers. The military succeeded in thwarting some of the suicide bombing plots.

Military's discipline reason Nigeria hasn't exploded - Fashola

Meanwhile, Lagos State Governor, Babatunde Fashola (SAN), has commended the military for its discipline and dedication to duty, which he said have kept Nigeria from imploding. Speaking at the formal decoration of two officers of the Nigerian Army Ordnance Corp, NAOC, recently promoted by the Army High Command from the rank of colonel to brigadier-general, Fashola said the resilience and continuous loy-

alty of the Army to the democratic principle were reasons the country has not exploded. Represented by Dr. Adeyemi Idowu, the governor said Nigerian Army had moved beyond what it was in the colonial era and that they were now a more formidable institution. The two Nigerian Army Ordnance Corp officers were Brigadier-General Martin Obiora Enendu, who is Director of Equipment, HQ, NAOC, and Brigadier-General Adamu Mama Dauda. Decorating the officers, Commandant, Nigerian Army Ordnance Corp, HQ, Major-General Adekunle Abdullahi Martins described them as fine officers.

2015: We'll kick PDP out of Aso Rock - Oyegun, Oni

** Oni thanks Fayose for restoring his privileges, says no strings attached*

BY GBENGA ARIYIBI

THE National Chairman of the All Progressives Congress, APC, Chief John Odigwe Oyegun and the party's Deputy National Chairman (South), Engr Segun Oni have boasted that APC will kick out the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and form the next government at the centre.

They said that the 2015 general election is the appointed time for the PDP to be defeated at the polls.

Indeed, Oni, a former governor of Ekiti State, who expressed his gratitude Governor Ayo Fayose for restoring his privileges recently, said his party will trounce PDP in spite of what he described as Fayose's rare show of brotherliness. They spoke at Ifaki Ekiti, yesterday, during Oni's 60th birthday service held at the Methodist Church, Cathedral.

Those at the event include: Governor Fayose, ex-governors Niyi Adebayo and Kayode Fayemi; immediate past Ekiti First lady, Erelu Bisi Fayemi; former Deputy Governors, Modupe Adelabu and Abiodun Aluko; former Acting Governor, Tope Ademiluyi; Speaker, Ekiti House of Assembly, Adewale Omirin; and former Chief of Staff to Oni, Mr Segun Ilori.

Oyegun, who described the PDP administration under President Goodluck Jonathan as misfit urged the electorates to vote out PDP during the 2015 general election.

According to APC boss, Nigerians are already disillusioned with the sufferings the party brought into the country, saying Nigerians should use the opportunity of the general election to effect the desired changes.

"APC is a party whose time has come. APC is a party with

welfarist and people-oriented programmes. But let me say here that youth employment will be priority on our agenda, apart from the fact that we will do everything possible to protect the lives of the Nigerian citizens. Whatever it will take us to end insurgency, we are going to do it. We are not going to steal public money the way the PDP is doing. Former Presidents Olusegun Obasanjo, Umaru Musa Yar' Adua and the present President Goodluck Jonathan expended over 68 billion dollars on power but nothing was realized in terms of power generation."

Speaking in the same manner, Oni said: "It is not an easy thing for political parties to sacrifice their privileges and come together to form APC. God Himself has ordained the APC to rule in 2015."

The former governor used the forum to appreciate the gesture displayed by Fayose for restoring his privileges and for attending the birthday service, saying it was a "brotherly gesture that has no political strings."