

Two soldiers killed, one missing in clash with ESN members in Imo

By Jimisayo Opanuga

29 December 2024 | 10:55 am



Two soldiers have been killed and one declared missing following a shootout between Nigerian troops and suspected members of the Eastern Security Network (ESN) in Osina, Ideato North Local Government Area of Imo State.

The ESN is the armed wing of the proscribed Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB).

Joseph Akubo, spokesperson for the 34th Artillery Brigade, confirmed the incident in a statement on Saturday.

Akubo said the clash occurred on Friday when troops responded to a distress call about an attack by IPOB/ESN fighters while returning from a routine patrol.

“The dissidents, caught off guard, retreated in disarray. Regrettably, two security agents were killed in action, while another remains missing. Their weapons, including an AK-47 rifle and a tear gas launcher, were seized by the terrorists.” Akubo said.

He noted that the bodies of the soldiers were recovered as troops pursued the fleeing assailants.

The suspected fighters were intercepted in the Nkwachi community, resulting in another intense gunfight, Akubo added.

According to Akubo, one ESN member was neutralised during the engagement, while others fled into a nearby forest.

“During this engagement, one of the dissidents was neutralised, while others fled into a nearby forest, unable to withstand the troops’ superior firepower. An AK-47 rifle with a fully loaded magazine was recovered during this operation,” he added.

He also disclosed that five AK-47 rifles, one fabrique nationale rifle, two magazines, and a tear gas launcher were recovered.

“We appeal to peace-loving residents of Imo State to support ongoing military operations by providing timely intelligence on the movements and hideouts of these criminals,” he added.