

Army accuses ESN of killing two soldiers in Enugu

GUNMEN have killed two soldiers in the Adani community in the

Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area of Enugu State.

The hoodlums attacked an Army checkpoint at Igga/Asaba along Nsukka-Adani-Anambra road at about 4:30 am on Tuesday.

It was gathered that youths have started fleeing the community.

The Army said the troops were deployed to check the activities of criminals.

Director Army Public Relations, Brigadier General Onyema Nwachukwu, said in a statement: "Nigerian Army troops deployed to check the activities of gunmen at Adani community of Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area of Enugu State, on 13 July 2021, repelled Eastern Security Network (ESN) gun attack on troops' location at Igga/Asaba checkpoint.

"Sadly, during the fire fight that ensued, two soldiers paid the supreme price. Troops are currently on the trail of the criminals.

"We assure the general public of our commitment to providing adequate security in the general area in collaboration with other security agencies.

"We also urge members of the public to complement the effort of the security agencies by remaining law-abiding and provide useful information on the fleeing gunmen."

Sources said that gun battle left no fewer than six hoodlums dead.

"I can tell you that security forces neutralised about six

From Damian Duruiheoma, Enugu; Chris Njoku, Owerri and Okodili Ndidi, Abuja

hoodlums. That's why they can categorically tell you that the attackers were ESN members," a source said.

Imo monarch defends ESN

Also yesterday, Chairman of Imo State Traditional Institution, Eze Emmanuel Okeke, said not all ESN members were kidnappers and armed robbers.

He spoke while briefing reporters on a new security initiative of the state.

Okeke, who also chairs the Imo State Community Policing, said: "Those called ESN are not the people causing problems in the state.

"ESN are not armed robbers. ESN are not kidnappers. ESN are not robbers robbing banks and point of sale (POS).

"The issue is that the country has no grassroots security network to monitor the activities of criminal elements who live among the people.

"That is why we are calling for a state police or grassroots vigilante squad who are familiar with the activities of these criminals because they are living among us."

Okeke assured that the new security outfit proposed by the state government would enhance the peace being enjoyed by Imo residents.

He believes the security outfit will also enable traditional rulers to identify criminal elements in their communities as most of the personnel will be selected from the grassroots.