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## My life as policeman, kidnapper and informant – Accused

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A 32-year-old former policeman, Akiri Elolalagha, has told an Ebute Magistrates Court that he resigned from the Nigeria Police Force to join oil pipeline vandals and kidnappers, who used to operate on Lagos and Ogun states coastal creeks. Elolalagha was charged before Court 5, on kidnapping, armed robbery, murder and pipeline vandalism.

He was arrested on August 15, at Egbesubiri-Arogbo area of Ondo State and was transferred to Lagos State Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS). SARS had remand application supported by affidavit that Elolalagha be remanded in prison.



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According to the police, he was one of the militants who escaped from the creeks of Lagos and Ogun states after the military aerial bombardments, which displaced them from the creeks. He was arrested at a motor park in Ondo State while seeing off a visiting relative.

Police described Elolalagha as a dismissed police constable who turned to militancy and was also involved in the killing of nine policemen attached to Anti-Pipeline vandalism in 2014.

He confessed to the crime after his arrest and was transferred from Ondo to Lagos State Police Command. Meanwhile, Elolalagha narrated how he left his duty post as a policeman to join militants in the creeks. He said: “After my education, I followed my father to the creek for timber work.

I later applied to be a policeman and was selected. I trained as an officer. I'm an Ijaw man. After my training, I was posted to Bayelsa State, Brass Division. In 2010, I left Bayelsa to Lagos and was posted to Owutu Police Station, Ikorodu in 2011. I knew about Igbolumo Creek militants. It was headed by General O/C. We had six AK-47 rifles and eight automatic pump action rifles.

I was with those in charge of Ibafo-Magboro Creek, where we were doing oil bunkering early this year. I lost my police

identity card when I went to Ibafo- Magboro Creek. I also knew those in charge of Festac-Ijegemo Creek. They were also into bank robbery. In my first operation in bunkering, I got N150, 000, in my second operation, I got N100, 000 and in my third operation I got N80, 000.”

The defendant said he knew that the Department of State Services (DSS), the Nigeria Police and National Intelligence Service were looking for the leaders of the militants, who had committed multiple murders of both children and security operatives. Elolalagha said: “I used to put on my mobile police uniform to drive some of these high ranking creek militants so that they wouldn’t be arrested.

The AK-47, five magazines and 150 rounds of ammunition found on me belong to one of the leaders called Agbala. Another leader called Kekeremi was into kidnapping. When the police were looking for him, he decided to stay at Ibafo-Magboro Creek. I’m the one that used to visit his house at Alole in Sagamu to get him some clothes and personal items.”

Elolalagha told the court that his major aim of teaming up with the militants was because of money. He said: “They used to give me N100, 000 after each kidnapping. They killed my co-policemen, kidnapped and robbed people. The main leaders relocated to Ariogbo riverine in Ondo, Delta and Bayelsa states.



I was arrested when I was seeing off a relative to the motor park in Ondo.” The Magistrate, G.O. Osuji, adopted the remand application. Elolalagha will remain in prison pending directives from Director of Public Prosecution (DPP).

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