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Mr. Emeoyiri Uzorma Benjamin, 28, alias Onye Army, arrested for being a member of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), has alleged that he and other members of the organisation, launched attacks on security agents following a radio instruction from their leader, Mazi Nnamdi Kanu.

Benjamin, a commander of the Eastern Security Network (ESN), an armed wing of IPOB, was arrested by operatives of the Force Intelligence Response Team (IRT), headed by a Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Mr. Abba Kyari. Benjamin was arrested in Imo State.

During his confession, Benjamin stated that they also used 10 girls to make charms, which would ensure bullets didn't penetrate their bodies.

He also recalled that their supreme leader, Nnamdi Kanu, asked him to kill 2000 people to use in burying one of the group's dead commanders, Ikonso.

The suspect said: "Kanu ordered that he didn't want to see any police or military check points in the Southeast. The order was given through the radio and all the ESN state commanders asked their fighters

We used 10 girls to make bullet proof charms –ESN Commander

to comply. Kanu said we should kill security agents manning the checkpoints because they were killing Igbo people. I believed and obeyed the orders because I had taken an oath to obey him."

Benjamin further admitted to being part of the group that attacked and freed inmates from the Owerri Correctional Center and attacked the country home of the Imo State Governor, Hope Uzordima.

According to him, they attacked the governor's home as a reprisal for the killing of their member, Ikonso, who was one of the ESN's top commanders.

Benjamin said that his earnest heart desire was to be a soldier, but he didn't have the minimum qualification because he dropped out of secondary school. He had bought forms several times for entrance into Nigeria Army and Nigerian Navy, using his brother's certificate, but he always rejected.

He recalled that while he was in his village, one John, also from his village, approached and recruited him into IPOB. This was in 2019.

He said: "I started at-

tending IPOB meetings in Orlu every Sunday. We had meetings in a building close to the teaching hospital. I attended the meeting until November 2020, when Kanu formed the ESN. He said he didn't want any security agents in the Southeast. He said that all he wanted was just ESN operatives providing security in the Southeast."

After he joined ESN, he received training in a camp close to the Niger Bridge. He spent two weeks in that camp and met other trainees.

He narrated: "But before I went to the camp, I was at Okporo area of Orlu. While in the camp, we were given military training and our phones seized. We didn't talk to Kanu directly, but we received his instructions from the leaders of our camp. After our training, we were given boots and uniforms; he then asked us all to go back to our state commanders. My state commander was late Ikonso, commanding Imo State. We were not given any money and we returned to our commanders with just our uniforms and the boots.

Benjamin said on their first attack on security

agents, Ikonso brought two AK47 rifles, while two other members came with two locally made guns.

He stated: "We attacked a police check point in Orlu and killed a police officer. Two of our members were also killed and the police officers ran away, leaving their vehicle. We burnt their vehicle and took their rifles. We relocated to a farm, belonging to one of our members in Eele area of Awidemili, Anambra State. From there we also attacked several other police stations and checkpoints. Ikonso, Engineer Mike and Temple organised the attack at the Owerri Prison and Imo State Police Command, where several inmates were freed and more than 50 police rifles carted away."

Benjamin alleged that the attack on the prison was also on the instruction of Nnamdi, who charged that nobody deserved to be in the prison.

He recalled that they attacked the prison with 100 fighters, but some of them were killed at Ukorji area of Imo State by some soldiers. The group further carried out a few attacks on security formations in Imo and Anambra states and then Ikonso was killed.

He recounted: "I was in Ikonso's residence on the night he was attacked by security agents. I was armed with my AK47 rifle and I fought valiantly, but I retreated and fled after expending my bullets. I escaped through the back gate. After the death of Ikonso, we went and burnt the governor's house and killed a security man in retaliation. It was Engineer Mike that led us. I was part of those that shot at the gate. We also burnt a house in Amowmama, belonging to someone, whom it was alleged gave security agents information on Ikonso. We killed a dog and burnt a Sienna bus and then engineer Mike took us to his village in Awedemili, where we attacked a house belonging to someone he said was against our struggle. We killed two people there."

Benjamin continued: "Kanu asked that we should bury Ikonso, with 2000 human heads. We had only killed 30 so far before I relocated to Temple's camp. Kanu ordered us to attack Orlu Police Division and to free our fighters who were arrested and detained there. We were over 50 fighters and we went with over 50 ve-

hicles. We were armed with 30 rifles. I was in a white Sienna, while late Drangon was in a red coloured car. Before we got to the police station, we shot sporadically, which was circulated on the social media. The white and red clothes we tied on our bodies in the video were charms called 'local bullet proof.' We prepared the bullet proof charms with 10 heads of young girls. It was Mike that brought the idea of getting the girls and using them for the charms. We got all the girls in Imo State. But before we got to the Orlu Police Station, a police armored vehicle attacked and killed 12 of our fighters. They also injured four of our members."

Benjamin stated that after escaping that attack, they went to their camp at Idiato Camp, waiting for further directives. He said that in spite of the killings and mayhem, they were not paid and their leaders called them freedom fighters.

He said: "Most of the police officers I killed were also Igbo people. I'm happy that Nnamdi has been arrested. Let us all face the music. But I'm begging for amnesty from the Federal Government of Nigeria."