

Why we killed four IPoB members —Army

- *IPOB dismisses Army's claim of arresting a top commander of ESN*
- *Says person arrested is only an IPoB member*

**By Chimaobi
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THE ARMY said its troops had neutralised four armed members of the proscribed Indigenous People of Biafra, IPOB, who attacked security operatives in Anambra State on Friday.

It also accused the outlawed group of carrying out its recent attacks to create panic ahead of the November 6 governorship election in the state.

The Director of Army Public Relations, Brigadier General Onyema Nwachukwu, who stated this yesterday, said the armed IPOB members attacked security operatives attached to Ekwulobia Roundabout in Aguata Local Government Area of Anambra State and fled.

According to him, the troops went after the fleeing gunmen and engaged them in a gun duel but regretted losing a security agent.

The statement, titled "Troops neutralise IPOB/ESN gunmen", read: "Troops of 82 Division of the Nigerian Army conducting Exercise Golden Dawn have neutralised four gunmen of the proscribed Indigenous People of Biafra/Eastern Security Network in a fierce encounter at Nnobi Junction, Idemili South Local Government Area on Friday.

"This followed the assailants' armed attack on personnel of

security agencies deployed at Ekwulobia Roundabout in Aguata Local Government Area of Anambra State, during which troops swiftly mobilised to the scene and subsequently embarked on a pursuit of the criminals along Nnewi – Nnobi Road.

"Troops made contact with the fleeing gunmen and engaged them in a fierce fight, neutralising four of the criminals."

He said the troops also recovered two AK-47 rifles, one GALIL Ace 5.56 x 45 Iwi Gun, one Avofeng Handheld radio, and one Black Highlander sport utility vehicle.

In another operation, Onyema said troops foiled an attack by IPOB/ESN gunmen at Umuoze Checkpoint, in Orumba South Local Government Area.

According to him, the troops overwhelmed the attackers in the shootout that ensued, forcing them to take to their heels, abandoning one Pump Action gun with nine cartridges, one dark blue Ford, and four motorcycles, which the troops had recovered.

He however said the attacks were meant to sabotage Anambra governorship election.

Meanwhile, the Indigenous People of Biafra, IPOB, yesterday dismissed the alleged arrest of a top commander of Eastern Security Network, ESN, by the Army, in Ekwulobia Aguata Local Government Area, Anambra

State, saying it was a suspected IPoB member that was arrested.

I PoB in a statement by its Media and Publicity Secretary, Emma Powerful, entitled "Army shot and arrested IPoB member in Ekwulobia, not top ESN Commander", said the person arrested, Mazi Udubua Chubueze, was only a member of IPOB, and not one of the ESN operatives, let alone a top commander.

The statement read: "The attention of a great family of the Indigenous People of Biafra, IPOB, under the command of our leader, Mazi Nnamdi Kanu, has been drawn to the fallacious statement from the Army and Police that they arrested a top commander of ESN in Ekwulobia Aguata Local Government Area of Anambra State.

"We declare without equivocations that there is no iota of truth in the said fallacious statement. Rather, Mazi Udubuan Chubueze is only a member of IPoB. He is not one of the ESN operatives, let alone being a top commander of ESN.

"What transpired was that he came to his home in Ekwulobia, Aguata L.G.A, to bury his dead mother and soldiers acting on a tip-off from a traitor, stormed his house, shot him and got him arrested.

"Yes, he is an IPoB member but not ESN commander. But those who sabotaged him shall reap the reward of treachery. We know them."