

Analysis of Boko Haram Insurgency in the North East Nigeria

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Abstract: This Paper examines an over decade ongoing battle with insurgent groups that threatens the stability and political integrity of Nigeria an Africa's most populous state. These articles employed the use of secondary sources of generating data by reviewing related literature in the fight against Boko Haram insurgency in North-East Nigeria. It has been revealed that poor leadership, weak institutions of governance and low democratic values and dividends are among the causes of insurgency in the region. The paper also recommends that the Nigeria government should intensify the battle against Boko Haram in the following ways: It should involve, as a matter of fact, coordination at all agency levels diplomatic military, intelligence, Para military services, the constituent units of the countries especially border authorities, civil society groups, and the traditional authorities and network of-Early Warning Systems at the levels of the African Union, ECOWAS, among other measures.

Keywords: Boko Haram, Analysis, Insurgency, North East Nigeria

I. INTRODUCTION

Since the creation of human societies, threats and counter threats have been in existence. However, the phenomenon of terror and its activities has reached unprecedented level in the North East Nigeria. For over a decade's there has been an ongoing battle with insurgent groups which threatens the stability and political integrity of Africa's most populous state. Since 2011, Boko Haram one of the largest Islamist militant groups in Africa has carried out terrorist attacks on religious and political groups, local police, and the military, as well as indiscriminately attacking civilians in busy markets and villages. Among the widely known incidents is the kidnapping of over two hundred girls from their school in April 2014. The government's inability to contain it created a severe national security challenge. However, following negotiations between Boko Haram and the Nigerian government, brokered peace by the International Committee for the Red Cross yielded about the released of, 103 girls out of 200 girls abducted. It has been alleged that the group has been said to pledge allegiance to the Islamic State in March 2015. This scenario made the problem to become a global concern thereby making even the United States to boost Nigeria support by offering military assistance in deploying three hundred troops in the fight against Boko Haram. The terror attacks have been presumed to also threatened U.S. economic interests Inspire many efforts and strategies put in place both at the national and international levels; it has

become so tasking for the Nigerian government to address issues and affairs of Boko Haram attacks.

Against this backdrop this review attempts to highlight on historical and political incidents, Dimensions, effects of Boko Haram situation in Nigeria at present.

II. TRENDS OF BOKO HARAM IN NIGERIA

The Concept of Boko Haram is a combination of Hausa native word meaning Western Prototype Education while Haram is an Arabic word meaning forbidden or prohibited. The Arabic translation of the group is known as *Jama'atu Ahlis-Lidath'awati Wal Jihad* (Community dedicated to the Implementation to the Prophet's deeds. The group for about a decade or so has constituted a stumbling block to peace among Communities in Nigeria. The seed of Boko Haram have been sown by two Nigerians, namely, Mohammed All from Borno State and Abu Umar from Kano who were indoctrinated to reject Western Education and other symbols of modern governance by a Syrian preacher called *Al-Basir Al-Dardusi* in Yemen. Subsequently, Mohammed Yusuf who was killed by the Police in Maiduguri in 2009 (Fafowora, 2013 and Uchendu, 2012). The Boko Haram sect started with sporadic attacks on security formations. With time, they graduated to offensives on Christian churches, Mosques, schools and other public places. The use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and suicide bombing has since added to the ever-degenerating complexion of insurgency. In addition, Boko Haram Terrorism has been posing a great threat, not just to life, property, human rights, dignity and democratic values, including fabric and existence of Nigeria (Umar, 2016).

However, the modus operandi is very amorphous and the tactical focus evidently unpredictable. Conversely, if the strategic objective of the government is to politically negotiate cessation of violence and resolution to the crisis, then a different military concept of operations and rules of engagement would be required both in the short and long term (Achodo, 2019). According to the Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Foundation, the group has carried out 1 639 violent attacks with 14 436 fatalities, 6 051 injured victims, and 2063 hostages across the Northeast region of Nigeria (Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Foundation 2018).

III. EFFECTS OF BOKO HARAM IN NIGERIA

The activities of Boko Haram have been primarily contained in the Muslim north, particularly in Borno state, but has displaced millions of people in the region. In June 2018, the Nigerian Army announced that two thousand internally displaced people were to return home. Security forces combatting the militants have also been accused of severe human rights abuses. Painful as the losses of lives of innocent citizens of the country may be apart from those killed by the Boko Haram insurgents. The attacks have left many people. Deaths and hardships such as long treks, exhaustion, still birth, hunger and thirst, attacks of wild animals and snakes and many other forms of trauma. The deaths have of course left behind psycho-social trauma of exponential proportions form loss of bread winners and/or loved family relations and friends.

However, there has been series of controversies about the number of people that have lost their lives as a result of the Boko Haram insurgency. Figures ranging from 14,000 to 15,000 civilians are often officially given but locals would always point at a much higher figure. A senior official of Yobe State Government for instance, has confirmed to this writer that in his Local Government Area alone not less than 10,000 civilians have been killed. As media reports and information from locals confirm, the deaths are increasing by the day as the attacks on remote villages close to the dens of the insurgents and suicide bombings have continued, albeit sporadically. Recently reports have continued to come of Boko Haram attacks leading to the deaths of people in Borno and Yobe States More painful is the fact that through these deaths the nation has lost its able-bodied citizens including professionals and artisans.

Apart from the deaths arising from the Boko Haram insurgency, another manifestation of the North East crises is the issue of the abductions perpetrated by the insurgent where thousands of men, women and youths have been abducted and subjected to all manner of atrocities ranging from indoctrination into the Boko Haram beliefs, forced marriages and/or outright sexual abuse, forced labour and child soldering among others (Abah, 2017). Apart from kidnapping, there have also cases of abduction of members of the society for the purpose of extracting the payment of ransom.

As Boko Haram also captured a settlement or a territory, the lucky people who manage to escape the onslaught or are close to the scenes of the attacks, naturally find their way to safer grounds and later to IDP camps either within the towns and villages in the affected state or away to a safe distance, often in neighbouring countries. It is reported that in July, 2014, when the International Organization for Migrants (IOM) set up a Displacement Tracing Matrix (PTM) as at April 2015 that there are about 1,491,706 IDPs spread in Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, and Yobe State (PTM Report II). When this figure is combined with the figures of the IOP in far off places like Abuja, Nasarawa, Kebbi, Kano, Kaduna etc,

a figure of about 1,600,000 can be obtained about 2013 the refugee figure may have run as far as 3.3million according to some reports. In 2014, this occurred from at least three axes: Mubi/Maiha/Madagali in Adamawa State; Gwoza/Bama/Gamboru/Marte axes in Borno State and Malam Eaton axis also in Borno State (Daily Trust, Saturday June 20th 2015).

It is estimated that there are not less than 200,000 Nigerian refugees in Cameroon, Chad and Niger. On at least three separate occasions, also in 2014, Nigerian military had been forced by the circumstances to cross the border into Cameroon and at least on one occasion they crossed the border into Nigerian territory (Durotoye, 2000). Even though the Nigerian Military has explained the cross-over to foreign territories as "tactical maneuvers" many pundits view the development as adding another dimension to the North-East crises, this time around of confidence.

Another manifestation of the Boko Haram induced North-East crises is the prospect of famine. This is especially in the areas that suffered attacks or occupied by BH fighters and areas of current military operations. The 2014 farming season was destabilized as people were either unable to till their farms and where they did, the escalation of the insurgency in Southern Borno and Northern Adamawa especially most of the farmers could not harvest their farm (Umar, 2016). More worrying presently is the poor prospects of farming in the 2015 farming season: Already there are reports that the refugees that returned home were unable to stay because of the destruction of their homes and many fears going back to their farms due to fear of mines. There is also the fact that the able-bodied men made up of youths and the middle-aged who provide the bulk of the work force on the farms have been seriously decimated through deaths and flight away from the area as they were the high targets of the BH insurgents. This scenario would have the prospects of further worsening a bad situation.

The relevant question to ask is: is the fight against Boko Haram a Nigerian issue? Of course, in the beginning, the countries of the Chad Basin, especially Cameroon, must have thought that the fight against Boko Haram was a Nigeria issue. Perhaps Nigeria on its part might have felt it could deal with the menace on its own. While the Nigerian citizenry may have been divided on this matter, but it can be said that majority must have felt that the Nigerian security establishment that has dealt with the Biafran rebellion (1967-1970) and that is acknowledged to have performed wonderfully elsewhere in peace keeping operations would clean-up the mess. There was a creation or arrangement of a Joint Task Force (JTF). Meanwhile Boko Haram capacity to inflict damages on military and civilian targets increased in ferocity and territorial aggrandizement with the resultant hardships to the people and corrosion of the confidence of the affected people in their government when elements of the Nigerian Military operation close to the border with Cameroon began to cross into Cameroon territory, it became obvious that Boko

Haram can only be fought with the assistance of and close coordination of the neighboring countries.

Besides its refusal to join the Multi National Task Force for the security of the Lake Chad area, at one time it even proposed walling a sector of the boundary to ward off Boko Haram incursions and refused the Nigerian Military the rights of hot pursue of the' B oko Haram fighters into its territory. Chad n the other hand was ambivalent. Conspiracy theorists see the hands of Chad in Boko Haram and are quick to point out the correlation between France, Chad, hydrocarbon interests in the Chad Basin with the alarming successes of Boko Haram. Niger may have woken up late; first in response to the influx of Nigerian refugees into Niger and secondly, to Boko Haram's attacks particularly in the Diffa region and- the Nigerien Islands in the Lake Chad area.

After a peak in Boko-Haram related violence in 2014 and 2015, the number of casualties attributed to the group fell dramatically. The Nigerian military with assistance from Benin, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger has pushed Boko Haram out of several provinces in northeastern Nigeria, but the group retains control over some villages and pockets of territory and continues to launch deadly suicide attacks and abduct civilians, mostly women and children. In February 2018, more than one hundred students were kidnapped by a faction of Boko Haram known as Islamic State West Africa (Eze, 2014; Aduloju, Abimbola and Adenipekun, 2014), They were released a little more than a month later. This is also suggestive of poor and in appropriate response by Nigeria's proximate neighbours of Cameroon, Chad and Niger as pointed earlier. Hence, two major issues are involved: the defeat and neutralizing of BH militancy and the reorientation of the citizenry of the four Lake Chad Basin countries, especially Nigeria, to subject them such that reoccurrence of similar insurrections do not arise. For Boko aramH militarism to be defeated, and neutralized concerted African, regional and national efforts are necessary under a Comprehensive Security Coordination strategy.

IV. DISCUSSION

To situate this review within the on-going security situation in the North East Nigeria as portrayed at the background need to be highlighted. Crucial among these issues includes the escalating violence, huge loss to the lives and property, rapid slowdown in economic activities, challenging health and above all on the corporate governance. The political and administrative dimension is on corruption in government functions, campaign strategies of politicians and general perception of leadership style in Nigeria and Governors of the North East. A survey conducted on security and governance in North-East in in 2016 reveals that most of the electioneering campaigns in the North-East (Mungono, 2016) particularly was anchored on inter sect lines instead of service delivery. It was also revealed that after elections, the electorates have no access to the public officials. Little or no attention is given to the people. Hence, the people became frustrated and began to

take law into their hands. In addition, when the leader of the Boko-Haram, Mohammed Yusuf, was arrested by the Nigerian army and handed over to the Police Department, he was killed through extra judicial killing instead of administering judicial process. As such, the act also precipitated counter violence from the insurgents. People became enthusiastic about democracy and the expected dividends. This assertion coincides with Economic and Social issues played a vital role in the escalation of violence and terrorists attacks. The performance of governance has always been tied to economic and social indicators. Widespread poverty among the citizens has aggravated frustration from the people (Oruonye. 2016).

The Boko Haram group was able to provide alternative means of livelihood thereby recruiting more strong abled youths to join force. The welfare of the people especially women and children has been so devastating and deplorable. In addition, school enrolment was very low. School girls numbering up to three hundred (300) were abducted thereby making people abandoned western education as propagated by the insurgents (Fawole, 2013). A similar survey, by the Nigerian Harmonized Living Standard (2010) indicated a progressive increase in incidence of poverty among Nigerians. Poverty increased from 28 percent in 1980 to 46 percent in 1985 and 66 percent in 1992, in 2010, it was estimated that 69 percent of Nigerians were poor (National Bureau of Statistics 2010). A review of Nigeria's democracy and Governance as posited by (Oke, 2010) in (Sallah, 2016) that symptoms of poor democratic rule in the fourth republic are corruption, civil authorization, and economic failures "culminated in serious infrastructural decay to the extent that most institutions of government were not working to expectation" From the foregoing, governance in Nigeria at large and North -East in particular is characterized by poor leadership and gross insecurity (Adesoji, 2011).

In Nigeria, the rate of mortality for children under the age of 5 remains excessively high, with the probability of dying before one's fifth birthday being greater among boys than girls. Children living in rural zones are exposed to a particularly high risk of early death: due to inadequate sewage systems, lack of clean water and woefully deficient health services. Malnutrition is the principal cause of death among Nigerian children. Many of them suffer from moderate or acute dietary deficiencies, which serve to stunt their growth. Other common causes of death include neonatal maladies, malaria, diarrhea, pneumonia.

The quality of instruction leaves much to be desired, though the country has taken several important measures to remedy its educational system. There have been significant developments in school infrastructure, sanitation and administrative management, and health and hygiene have been promoted. Other actions have also been taken to improve the quality of teaching. Child abuse Corporal punishment is still an acceptable social practice and is widely utilized by both families and schools (Saalah, 2016). Those who defend

its traditional use often argue that such punishment is vital for enforcing good discipline among children. Violence is very common in Nigeria, and children are frequently the victims.

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V. CONCLUSION

So far, no lasting remedy is in sight as the faceless leadership of the sect has remained rather intransigent and malignant the current military operations offer no credible indications of purpose and objective other than to defeat the insurgency (Achodo, 2019). This poses a huge dilemma for the army, as the war is mostly internal and executed by local national actors within the region and with varied external support.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

This strategy will have to involve the African Union (AU), the two regional Economic Communities; Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and Economic Communities of West Africa (ECOWAS) and the multi and bilateral agencies of the four countries.

It will involve, as a matter of fact, coordination at all agency levels iplomatic, military, intelligence, Para military services, the constituent units of the countries especially border authorities, civil society groups and the traditional authorities. The reorientation and/or de-radicalization component must involve public information, communication agencies, of the national governments and NGOs, the intelligentsia, Ulama and clerics. The law enforcement system and the justice administrative system would need to be over-hauled to tune into the reorientation programme. The structured coordinated security policy being proposed can only operate along strong technology support i.e. a well-equipped real time Situation

Room and network of-Early Warning Systems at the levels of the African Union.

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