



# SAR Consultancy



## Security Information Bulletin: Nigeria

IN THIS ISSUE

## Summary of Security Situation

by our Senior Analyst

The Security Situation in Nigeria is multi-dimensional and complex. It is influenced, for the most part, by perceived political, economic and social injustice, which results in a high level of violence throughout the country. This violence is exhibited in differing dimensions and to differing degrees from state to state and region to region. This level of unrest and complexity provides the environment for more opportunistic types of criminal and militant activities to take place. Deconstructing the relationships between all these factors and influencers is very difficult and contributes to the complexity that surrounds the security situation in Nigeria. Another dimension which adds to this complexity is the diversity with regard to the actors at play throughout the country. Violence is perpetrated by a wide range of groups, such as insurgents, militants, nomadic herdsmen, cultists, and ordinary criminals, notwithstanding the allegations of security force involvement and alleged political

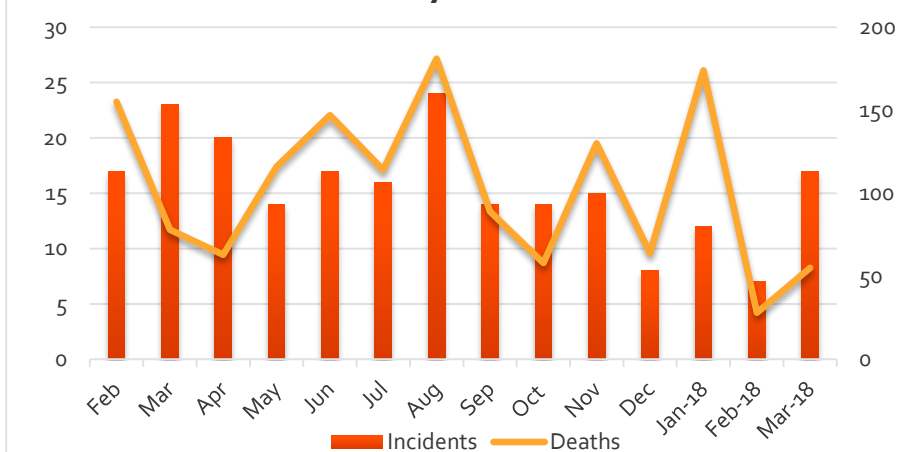
interference. This interplay of actors makes it difficult to determine the perpetrator and the victim in many cases. Nigeria is a country with specific needs, both development and increasingly, humanitarian, therefore access for international and domestic NGOs and developmental organisations is a must. It is a country with a potential for great growth in a wide number of commercial areas; as a result it is an attractive country to commercial organisations. These access requirements, coupled with the security environment, results in a need for up to date and thorough analysis of the security situation across the country on a regular basis. Forecasting the likely evolution of the security situation for the short and medium term can be difficult, due in part to the influence of underlying elements of a political, economic and social nature, which impact differently throughout the country. Nonetheless, the presence of existing trends and patterns can assist greatly in strengthening the credibility of forecasts.

**March 2018** – March's incidents throughout March illustrate that Boko Haram still remain a considerable threat to the NE Nigeria. While it is still likely that military responses are forcing the group to adapt their activities, they still seem to be able to circumvent security responses in many areas. As said last month, this is very worrying because the government have reportedly invested considerable money, resources and personnel into tackling Boko Haram, and despite some gains in 2015/2016, the group appear to have regained considerable strength. Unfortunately now significant security resources are also required within the middle belt and in other regions, resulting in high demand on resources. This is unlikely to change in the short to medium term which is likely to result in a further deterioration in the security situation in Nigeria, as opportunists look to areas where security resources are low. This may result in a rise in security related incidents and crime in areas previously thought to be safe.

## North East Nigeria & Boko Haram

March continued with reports of suspected Boko Haram activity throughout Borno, but interestingly, their suspected activity was also reported in Yobe and Adamawa State. While this is not unheard of, in fact the groups, at times, have shown the extent of their reach in both states, of late a lot of incidents had been focused in Borno State. For example, a suicide bomber reportedly killed herself before killing anyone in Gubya LGA and in Adamawa State, three people were reportedly killed, alongside one suspected militant in an incident in Madagali. But as in previous months, the majority of their activities have been targeted in Borno State. For example, the month started with reports that Boko Haram had attacked Rann, Kala Balge LGA. Six soldiers and four police officers were said to have been killed. A further three aid workers were reportedly killed and two others abducted as the incident happened close to an IDP camp. Unfortunately near the end of the month, a fire broke out in the camp, claiming the lives of between six and ten displaced persons. The group were also blamed for an attack on Mashumari village, barely 24 hours after the Maiduguri-Bama Highway had been reopened. This stretch of road had been closed by the Nigerian military four years after it was taken by Boko Haram insurgents.

### Insurgency related incidents & deaths Feb 2017 - Mar 2018



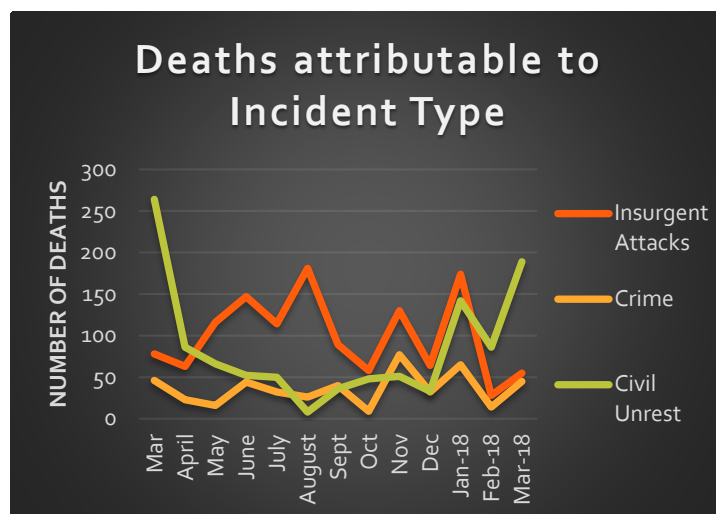
March continued with reports of suspected Boko Haram activity throughout Borno, but interestingly, their suspected activity was also reported in Yobe and Adamawa State. While this is not unheard of, in fact the groups, at times, have shown the extent of their reach in both states, of late a lot of incidents had been focused in Borno State. For example, a suicide bomber reportedly killed herself before killing anyone in Gubya LGA and in Adamawa State, three people were reportedly killed, alongside one suspected militant in an incident in Madagali. But as in previous months, the majority of their activities have been targeted in Borno State. For example, the month started with reports that Boko Haram had attacked Rann, Kala Balge LGA. Six soldiers and four police officers were said to have been killed. A further three aid workers were reportedly killed and two others abducted as the incident happened close to an IDP camp. Unfortunately near the end of the month, a fire broke out in the camp, claiming the lives of between six and ten displaced persons. The group were also blamed for an attack on Mashumari village, barely 24 hours after the Maiduguri-Bama Highway had been reopened. This stretch of road had been closed by the Nigerian military four years after it was taken by Boko Haram insurgents.

Suicide bombs continued throughout the month. A suicide bomber killed himself and three CJTF members in Maiduguri, when he reportedly detonated explosives as he rode his bicycle through the area. Approximately twenty were said to have been injured in the incident. While two female suicide bombers reportedly attacked a security position near Giwa barracks, reportedly armed by CJTF, in Jere LGA, killed over six people. The day after a male reportedly attempted a similar attack also in Jere LGA, but he was shot by security forces before he could detonate his device. Two suicide bombers also reportedly killed themselves but no others in Maiduguri, Borno near the end of the month. Two female suicide bombers reportedly tried to approach a school on the outskirts of Konduga, but were shot and killed before they could detonate. A week later, two other females reportedly detonated their devices near a housing Estate, also located on the outskirts of Konduga, killing three people. A number of deaths in Borno State this month, were also blamed on the group, despite there being very little information available as to the nature of the incidents. For example, seven loggers were said to have been killed by the group in Dikwa, four of which were said to have been killed by a landmine planted by the group. The group were also blamed for an attack on a village in Ngala, in which two people were killed and others injured.

**Assessment & Forecast:** Incidents this month continue to illustrate that Boko Haram are still capable of moving through the North East with relative ease and that despite statements to suggest the opposite, the Security forces have still not gotten the upper hand over the group and its activities. Furthermore, the range and scope of incidents illustrate their ability to conduct attacks against different targets, whether that be unarmed civilians or armed security forces. An interesting development this month emerged in the later part of the month, Nigeria's Information Minister Lai Mohammed announced that the government is currently negotiating with Boko Haram about a possible ceasefire in order to secure a permanent end to the conflict. Despite the hope that this may give many, especially those who have lived with this insurgency for years, the past cannot be forgotten, and such claims have often proved fruitless in the past. As a result, SAR notes that it would not be beyond the realms of possibility for Shekua to release a statement that such claims are in fact false. That said, it could be that such negotiations could be proceeding with a different faction of the group, but even if this is the case, it is unlikely that any ceasefire would bring about a total cessation to the violence, as no one faction is likely to be able to negotiate on behalf of all. It should also be noted that while some might see the release of the girls, and the previous release of some of the Chibok girls as another positive. This should not be overestimated. There is often an apparent difference in motivation and willingness to negotiate on issues with a financial and/or strategic benefit to a group. In fact, this abduction may just be indicative of a group that has realised that the abduction of girls can be a very lucrative industry. If this is the case, this is likely to increase the risk of future attacks. The government may be thinking along these lines, given that they announced the indefinite shutting down of all boarding schools in Borno, with exceptions in Maiduguri and Biu in what could be seen as a means of preventing copycat abductions.

## Loss of Life\*

March saw an increase in deaths associated with all three incident types, with the most significant increase evident in incident attributed to civil unrest. That said, in comparison with the death rate from March 2017, March 2018 is lower. This may be due to increased security activity in the middle belt; that said, it is at a significant level and more intervention is required, especially given the rise on last month. The death rate associated with insurgent incidents has also increased but this is still a low level in comparison with previous patterns and trends and may be the result of military activities and the prevention of many incidents. \*As with incident numbers, it is acknowledged that exact death rates in the aftermath of incidents in Nigeria are hard to assess, the graphs included provide only an indication of the trends.



## Communal Clashes

Reports of communal clashes appeared to increase on last month, with many incidents reporting a death rate over ten. A second interesting aspect is one that has been seen before and it relates to apparent hotspots or concentrations of incidents in certain locations throughout the middle belt and slightly north. Thirdly, although this is hard to prove given the lack of lack of detailed information, there appears to be an apparent retaliatory nature of some of these incidents, something that has also been seen before. For example, reports emerged on early in the month that fifteen people had been killed in Sardauna LGA, Taraba State. The details of the attack were vague, but days later a subsequent incident reportedly claimed the lives of approximately 20 people. Reports suggest that clashes broke out in Nguroje Village, also in Sardauna LGA. While it is difficult to categorically say that the two incidents are related, knowing patterns and trends in the area, it is highly likely. In another, and likely separate incident in Taraba during the month, two people reportedly lost their lives in Takum area of the state.

Benue State, a state widely known for communal clashes and civil unrest, continued to witness a number of attacks this month. For example, five people were reportedly killed in Guma LGA, while at least twenty-four were reportedly killed in Okpokwu LGA when an unknown group reportedly attacked a village and set houses ablaze. It is reported that this incident occurred after a peaceful meeting arranged between local youths and herdsmen. Herdsmen were being blamed for this incident. Later in the month, a further four people were reportedly claimed in Guma LGA in two separate incidents. These two incidents were blamed on herdsmen. While two other incidents in Makurdi and Agatu claimed the lives of three people. These deaths were not blamed on any particular group. Herdsmen were also blamed for incidents in Plateau State. For example, five people were reportedly killed in Bassa, Plateau early in the month. This incident came days after a herder was killed in Rafin-Bauna village, Bassa LGA, which itself has occurred a number of

days after two people were reportedly killed by suspected herdsmen, also in Bassa LGA. Then in the middle of the month, a larger scale incident was reportedly in the same LGA, in which over twenty five people were reportedly killed and many others injured. Reports claim that herdsmen were responsible for the attack. Ten deaths were also reported in Bokkos, also in Plateau State and were blamed on herdsmen. Similarly, the deaths of three people in Jos South were also blamed in herdsmen.

Kogi State also reported incidents this month. In the middle of the month, thirty two people were reportedly killed in Dekina LGA and similar to incidents above, this also came with reports that houses had been set ablaze. A number of days later, a second incident also in Dekina LGA was also reported. Over ten people are said to have lost their lives in this incident. Some smaller incidents were reported in Omala LGA, also in Kogi State in which houses were also destroyed. All incidents were blamed on herdsmen. Incidents with an apparent communal dimension, were also reported a lot further south this month. For example, ten people were reportedly killed in clashes between Okwabang and Beebo communities, Boki LGA Cross River. While three people were said to have been killed and others injured in Izzi LGA, Ebonyi State. Five in Ughelli North, Delta and five in two separate incidents in Edo State, all blamed on herdsmen.

**Forecast:** Incidents this month show that despite the increased security attention being provided to the middle belt, these type of incidents are continuing to happen at alarming rates. Furthermore, the death toll this month attributed to incidents of this nature illustrates the seriousness of this issue. That said, despite an apparent automatic attribution of the responsibility to herdsmen, such assertions do not appear to evidence based, at least in the majority of incidents. As previously noted, SAR believes that such automatic attribution is very dangerous both at the local and strategic level, especially given the reprisal nature of many of these incidents, the wrong people may be targeted if such ascertains of responsibility are not correct.



## Criminality, Cultist activity & Violence

Crime of a violent nature continued during the month of March. For example, armed clashes attributed to armed groups were reported in Kaduna, Bauchi and Zamfara States. For example, the military reportedly killed four members of a suspected armed group, during routine patrols of Ningi LGA, Bauchi State. Nine others were reportedly arrested in the incident. While, twelve soldiers were said to have been killed by armed gunmen in Birnin Gwari LGA, Kaduna State. The soldiers were said to have deployed to the area to provide extra protection and security for expatriate workers on a new road linking Zamfara to Kaduna state. And in Zamfara itself, at least thirty lives were reportedly lost when gunmen attacked a village in Anka LGA. While further south a group of suspected cultists allegedly attacked a police building in Bayelsa State and set it on fire. One cultist was reportedly shot dead in the incidents. Members of a cult also reportedly threatened management of a school in Osun State.

## Niger Delta Region

The Government reported that it had employed 350 of a total of 30,000 ex-militants from the Niger Delta whom that they had sent abroad to study on government scholarships. However, reports from the Delta were not all positive this month, ten militants reportedly gave the government four weeks to reinstate Paul Boroh, (former Coordinator of the Amnesty Program). They asserted that they would start fresh attacks on oil installations and facilities in the region.

*Forecast: Such assertions by militants should not be taken as idle threats, given previous patterns of behaviour. However, given recent trends, this may best matched with an offer to return to dialogue and negotiation, especially given the recent, relative, peace in the region. This is best building for all involved.*



## SAR Consultancy

*Providing peace of mind in changing security environments*

*As 2018 begins, are you confident in your level of preparedness*

Most professional organisations working in Nigeria take security very seriously, either by providing an in-house security service or by contracting security services from a third party.

However, how many of you have tested your level of preparedness and your security architecture in place.

- How confident are you that it would withstand an attack?
- How confident are your staff that they know how to respond?

We, at SAR, can conduct this assessment for you, and can test in a controlled manner exactly how prepared you are. SAR provides an objective independent assessment service. Don't wait for an incident to realise things don't work as planned.

*Contact us at SAR to discuss your 2018 audit; you have a duty of care to your employees to ensure your security infrastructure is fit for purpose.*

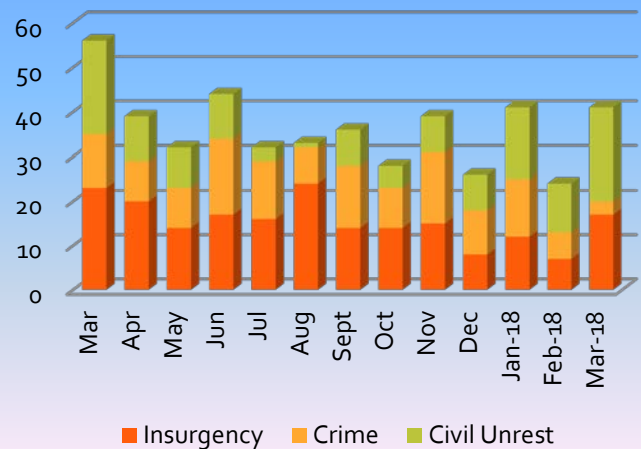
## Piracy

March saw reports that five people has been abducted from a fishing vessel in Nigerian waters. The five include; three Koreans, one Ghanian and a Greek national. It has been reported that none of the five have been recovered. Later in the month, three Indians were also reported missing off the coast of Nigeria. A ransom call was reportedly made by the pirate to one of the family of the abductees. It is unclear at the time of writing whether they have been released. The also say reports that sixteen Ukrainians, suspected of being oil thieves were being investigated by the EFCC in Nigeria. Pirates were also blamed for the deaths of three people in Ogbia, Bayelsa. Very few details about the incidents have emerged.

## Abduction & Kidnap

Kidnaps and abductions continued this month. For example, reports emerged this month that a state government official from Kano was abducted by unknown gunmen from his home in Bunkure LGA. While media reports emerged this month that suspected Boko Haram insurgents had kidnapped eight people in Oyo, Oyo State. The victims were said to have been travelling on a bus when the militants blocked the bus, before taking them from that bus to another bus that was parked by the roadside. While it is highly likely that this incident occurred, it is unclear at this point, why the incident has been attributed to Boko Haram.

## Nigeria Mar - Mar 2018 Incidents



*Last month over one hundred females were abducted from Dapchi, Borno. Boko Haram were suspected. In the later part of the month, reports emerged that the majority of the school girls were released, having been returned back to the town by suspected Boko Haram insurgents. A small number were said to have died during their abduction. The news of their release, although hugely positive, came as a surprise, and raised many questions. One of which was how and why the girls were released. That said, the Government refuted any claims that a payment was made for the safe return of the girls but others have suggested that a payment and prisoner swap is likely to have secure the release. While it is entirely possible the girls were returned without a ransom, recent patterns and trends of abductions in the past make it seem somewhat implausible.*

**SAR**  
Consultancy  
Ireland

*We would like to thank you for taking the time to read this bulletin. We hope you found it interesting & informative.*

*Please do not hesitate to contact us at [info@sarconint.com](mailto:info@sarconint.com) to discuss any part in greater detail or to discuss how we may be able to help reduce your exposure to any of the risks mentioned within.*

*Furthermore we are very happy to receive feedback on your thoughts regarding the bulletin. Hope to see you again next month.*

[info@sarconint.com](mailto:info@sarconint.com)  
Twitter @SAR\_Consultancy  
[www.sarconint.com](http://www.sarconint.com)

