



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

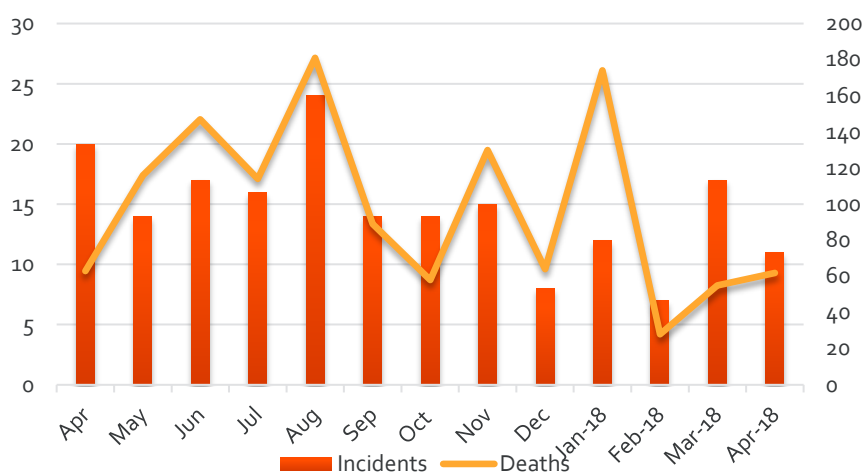
interference. This interplay of actors makes it difficult to determine the perpetrator and the victim in many cases. Nigeria is a country with specific needs, both development and increasingly, humanitarian, therefore access for international and domestic NGOs and developmental organisations is a must. 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.

May 2018 – May continued in a similar vein to April. While reports of operational successes by the military throughout the North East continued, so too did reports of insurgent attacks. However, similar to last month, it is not the North East that is of significant interest, it is the middle belt. There, incidents continued to be reported claiming a significant loss of life. Furthermore, there appeared to be an increase in 'kidnaps' this month, especially in Kaduna State. This will be interesting to monitor in the months ahead. Similarly, the Niger Delta region could be in for an increase in incidents, even if only to posture and garner a position of power for possible negotiations in the run up to the elections. Holding such a position in advance of the elections, may help influence support and further political commitment to the region. In fact, as we build up to the Presidential elections, things are likely to shift. For anyone with interests in Nigeria, SAR recommends close monitoring of the situation, as it is likely to be dynamic.

North East Nigeria & Boko Haram

The use of suicide bombers continued through the month. For example, two people reportedly detonated devices around a mosque in Mubi town in Adamawa. Over 25 people were reportedly killed in the incident. Four bombers reportedly detonated devices in Maiduguri, but no other casualties were reported. Police in Maiduguri also reported a failed attack near the Jidari Polo area, in which two female bombers were killed. Similar reports came from Bama, where the military successfully neutralised a suspected bomber before they could detonate their device. However, in Konduga LGA, four suicide bombers reportedly killed themselves and three others in one incident, and in a separate incident but also in Konduga, a suicide bomber reportedly killed five members of the CJTF. A number of similar incidents were reported throughout the state, but the majority did not report additional loss of life other than the suicide bombers.

Insurgency related incidents & deaths Apr 2017 - Apr 2018



Despite claims that Boko Haram have been defeated, they still do not seem to shy away from direct contact with the military. This was evident in a clash in Kaga LGA, early in the month, when the group tried to attack the troop's position resulting in direct clashes. Furthermore, they are continued to be blamed for attacks on villages. For example, they were said to have taken the lives of approximately ten people, in Konduga during the month. Across the border in Chad, they were also blamed for the deaths of two customs officials, two forestry agents, one soldier, and one civilian across the border in Gabalami.

However, more positively, the military continue to report their successful operations. They claimed to have killed over ten suspected insurgents in Marte and four in Bama and Dikwa LGAs. The Air Force reported bombed suspected Boko Haram hide outs in Bama LGA. They also reported that they rescued nine hostages from suspected Boko Haram insurgents near the end of the month. However, names of abductees are rarely provided publically so it is difficult to substantiate such claims. On a less positive note, it was reported at the end of the month that five soldiers lost their lives in an altercation with suspected insurgents in the Gwoza area of Borno State.

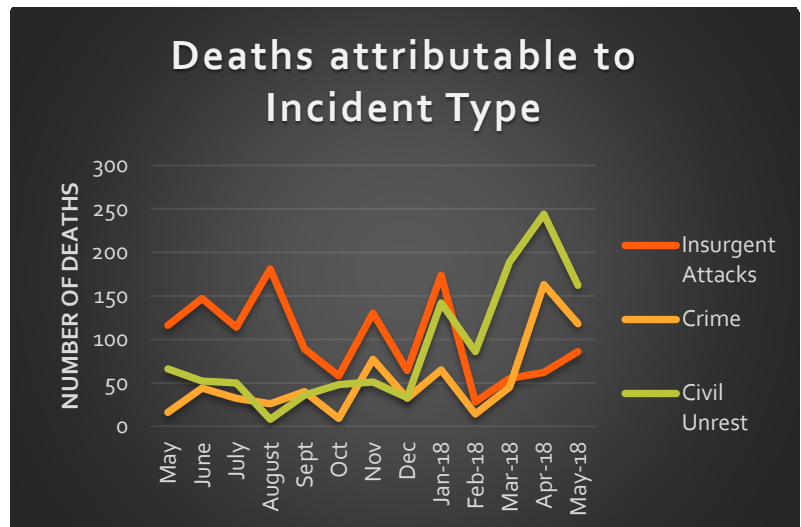
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Assessment & Forecast: This month saw a large number of suicide attacks, but as has been the case for a few months now, related casualties appear to be reducing, given the intervention by the military. This raises a number of important questions; are the military becoming better at identifying suicide bombers or, are those killed really suicide bombers, have they all been wearing explosives when recovered? If the military have learned to detect suicide bombers, the assessment criteria should be shared with security forces elsewhere so they too can learn to detect possible threats earlier. However, if those killed are not shown to be suicide bombers, then one must ask if they are in fact innocent people. Greater insight and report transparency on behalf of the security forces should be introduced to ensure they are responsible for their actions, and if a mistaken identity occurs, this should be acknowledged. Despite this reduction in deaths and in serious incidents this month, with the exception of the attack in Adamawa, this should not be understood as an indication of military success. Incidents involving Boko Haram have always tended to peak and trough throughout the year. It is unlikely that the future will be any different. As a result, SAR continues to recommend that anyone considering to travel to or through the North East conducts a detailed risk assessment that considers the dynamic conditions the region at present.

Loss of Life*

Despite a reduction in deaths associated with incidents in the middle belt, the graph illustrates the rate is still considerably higher than this time last year. Such violence really requires greater investigation and concerted effort to reduce the loss of life in this region. A similar pattern is evident in respect to deaths associated with criminality. Conversely, deaths associated with Boko Haram are creeping upwards towards last year figures.

**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.*



Middle Belt Violence

Violence in the middle belt and surrounding areas of Nigeria, continued to claim scores of lives throughout the month of May. Similar to last month, it is difficult to determine, the motive and perpetrators in many cases, and the possible links and connection between these cases.

In Zamfara this month, over ten people reportedly lost their lives as a result of clashes between suspected cattle rustlers and a local vigilante group, near Maru LGA. Days later, a further eight suspected rustlers were reportedly killed by members of the military, also in Maru LGA, during an exchange of gunfire. Exactly what motivated this event is unclear.

In Benue State, a state synonymous with alleged communal clashes, witnessed a number of incidents this month which were alleged to have been the result of clashes between herdsmen and farmers. For example, six people were reportedly killed in Guma LGA when herdsmen reportedly attacked a local village. At least four similar incidents was reported in Logo LGA, in which over fifteen people were said to have been killed. A further four people were reportedly killed in Ushongo, an incident also attributed to herdsmen. Herdsmen were also blamed for killing two and capturing one soldier in Logo State. The majority of these incidents were blamed on herdsmen, however, the military reportedly killed over thirty bandits throughout the month in Logo, Guma and Gwer West. This might suggest that attribution of these incidents to herdsmen is not so clear cut. Adamawa State experienced a similar trend. Herdsmen were blamed for two attacks in Numan LGA, in which over twenty people were reportedly killed. However, military reportedly killed ten bandits in the same area, only days after these events. Incidents in Taraba followed suit. Two incidents were attributed to herdsmen, which resulted in over fifteen deaths, but one in which security forces were involved was reported as an altercation with bandits.

Two incidents of note occurred in Nasarawa State this month, resulting in the loss of over seventy lives. No specific group were blamed for these incidents. Interesting, incidents reported in Kaduna, largely differ to incidents in the rest of the middle belt, or at least differ in respect to reporting. No incidents involving herdsmen were reported. However, at least two incidents attributed to bandits were reported in the Birnin Gwari area of Kaduna. A little under 100 victims were reportedly in these events.

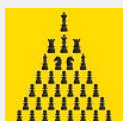
Forecast: *Incidents of this month, show an interesting dimension. It would appear, at least from reports, that when incidents occur in the middle belt they are largely attributed to Fulani herdsmen. However, when the military report clashes between themselves and others, they largely report the other party as bandits. This provides an interesting aspect that requires further examination, who is responsible for such attacks, and if not herdsmen, why are herdsmen being wrongly blamed for involvement? Is it just a lack of knowledge and awareness in reporting or does it serve a vested interest to perpetuate a narrative that demonises herdsmen? Such questions, amongst others need to be addressed given the significant loss of life in this region. It cannot be allowed to continue, irrespective of who is committing such attacks. One further interesting aspect this month within the region, discussed later in the bulletin relates to an apparent increase in abductions in Kaduna State. It would be interesting to investigate if these are directly connected in some way to other incidents in the region, or if they are just a result of people identifying and maximising vulnerabilities given stretched security resources in the region. While much of this assessment needs greater investigation and analysis, SAR recommends that risk assessments for the region are reviewed and adapted in light of an apparent new aggressor and change in targets.*

Criminality, Cultist activity & Violence

Violence down south, also continued. For example, over ten people were reportedly killed in Odukpani, Cross River during a reported clash between parties. The motive is still unclear. Cultist activities reportedly claimed the lives of around ten in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. Two armed reportedly killed two policemen in Rivers State, the reason behind the deaths is unclear. The police response to criminality in the south also resulted in a number of deaths. Five people were reportedly killed by police in Lagos and a further five in Bayelsa. The five in Bayelsa, were said to have been killed at a protest at the University in Southern Ijaw. In a separate incident customs officers reportedly killed four suspected smugglers in Ogun State this month,

Niger Delta Region

While no major incidents were reported in the region this month, one incident raised concerns amongst many that the region may be heating up. The Nigerian Airforce reported that gunmen killed an airman when they attacked a helipad in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. Furthermore, groups within the region continue to threaten that they will resume hostilities in the region, so such incidents may become more common in the short term, as groups try to demonstrate their commitment to their cause and to garner negotiating power in advance of the Presidential elections. On a different note, the Air Force announced that they would soon deploy drones to the region to assist in security oil installations on the creeks and hard to reach areas of the Niger Delta region.



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Providing peace of mind in changing security environments

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 next audit; you have a duty of care to your employees to ensure your security infrastructure is fit for purpose.

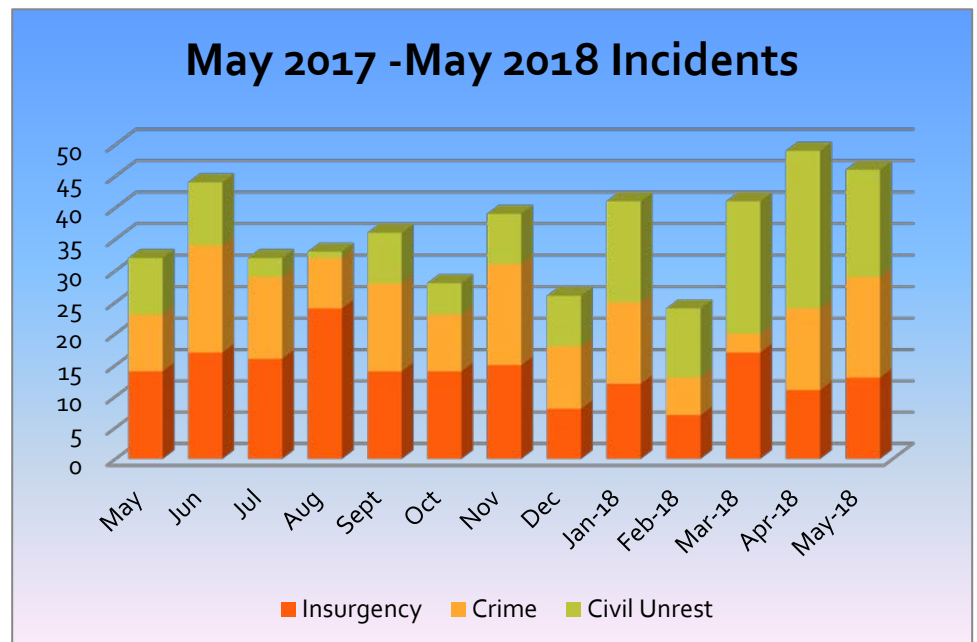
Piracy

A number of incidents were reported in Nigerian waters this month. Seven suspected pirates reportedly boarded a boat, near Lagos Port. However, a crew member reportedly escaped and raised the alarm. The robbers escaped. On a positive note, this month saw the reported release of six Ukrainian sailors who had been previously abducted. They had been held captive for nearly a month. Abductions in the region are not rare, and statistics released this month suggest that authorities arrived to prevent a theft or kidnapping in only one case out of 97. Despite recent efforts, more needs to be done in this area.

Abduction & Kidnap

Kidnappings throughout Nigeria are not a rarity, but they are often underreported which can result in it being difficult to determine exactly where the risk is and whom is at risk. Stories relating to the abduction of internationals usually get more airtime, while reports of nationals abducted often do not even report it to the police. However, this month seemed to break that trend with a large number of incidents reported, many of which seem to be connected, or at least present in a way that would suggest it might be worthwhile to further investigate such assertions. For example, in Birnin Gwari, Kaduna State over 150 people were reportedly abducted in a number of incidents by bandits. Such reports raise a number of interesting questions, the first being, are the reports actually true? Secondly, who and why are people being taken in such numbers? Where are they being taken to? What is being doing with them? And finally, how are the abductors able to taken people in such numbers? These questions need to be answered in order to better respond to such incidents.

Elsewhere, kidnapers reportedly abducted the family of a Zamfara based Commissioner, including six children. While, a Syrian national was reportedly abducted in Bodinga, Sokoto. Three policemen were said to have been killed during the incident. Such incidents are not rare, and while it is likely that this was the work of criminals. It is likely to bring to mind, the abduction of a British and Italian engineer in 2011 by ANSARU in Kebbi State, who were later brought to Sokoto. ANSARU have not been heard of for a number of years, but the similarities between these two incidents needs to be noted, if nothing else.



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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 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.

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