



SAR Consultancy



Security Information Bulletin: Nigeria

IN THIS ISSUE

Summary of Security Situation

By our Senior Analyst

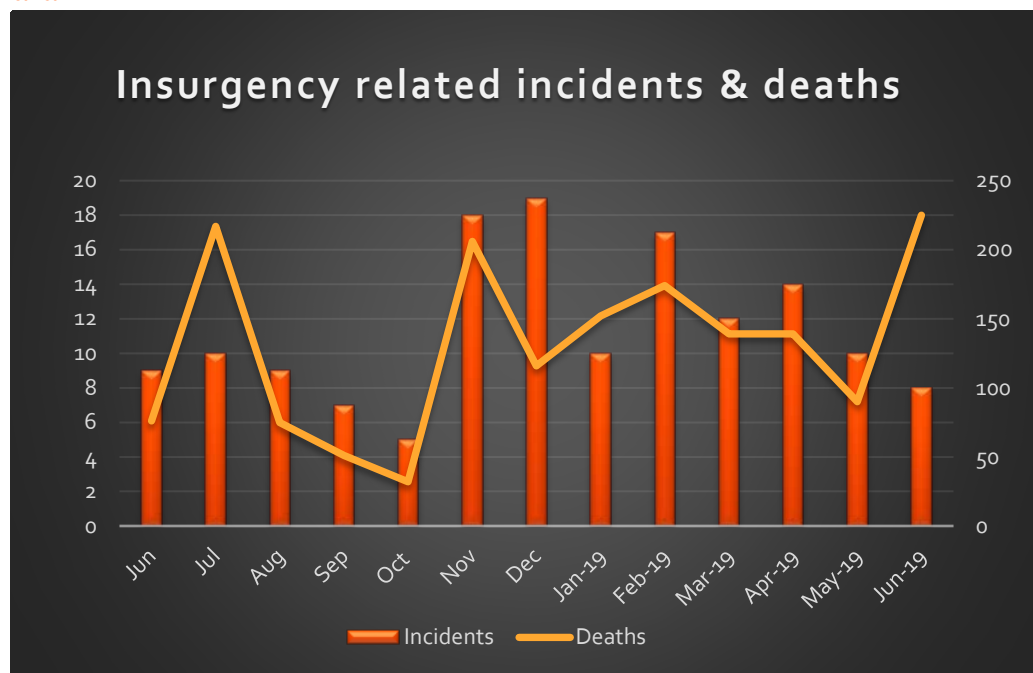
The Security Situation in Nigeria is multi-dimensional and complex. It is influenced, for the most part, by perceived political, economic and social injustice, which results in a high level of violence throughout the country. This violence is exhibited in differing dimensions and to differing degrees 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.

June 2019 – June clearly demonstrated the security challenges facing the nation, such as terrorism, violent crime, kidnapping, armed robbery and village attacks. No part of the country is immune. Boko Haram continue to pose an enduring threat to the nation in the North East, with both the military and civilians primary targets. Despite military operations reporting a number of successful operations, little seems to influence a reduction in activities by the group. The same pattern appears in the middle belt, despite military intervention, with continued reports emerging of armed gunmen attacks villages, shooting and killing indiscriminately. Reports of kidnappings also dominate media reports this month, largely driven by ransom. No one appears to be off limits, with reports of rich and poor abducted. As a result, anyone travelling to or through Nigeria should adequately prepare in advance by conducting a thorough security review and prepare a detailed security plan.

North East Nigeria & Boko Haram

If one looks at the activities of the Nigerian defence forces this month, one could be inclined to think they are on top of the security situation in the North East of Nigeria. The military reported successful operations in Nganzai, Kukawa, Gwoza, Dikwa, Bakassi, and Lake Chad region. Nearly 150 suspected militants were reportedly killed in these operations. It is difficult if not impossible to get figures about the number of military casualties encountered, if any, during these activities. The military also reported operations in Gujba, Yobe, and a former stronghold of the group. They reportedly killed ten suspected members of Boko Haram in the town.



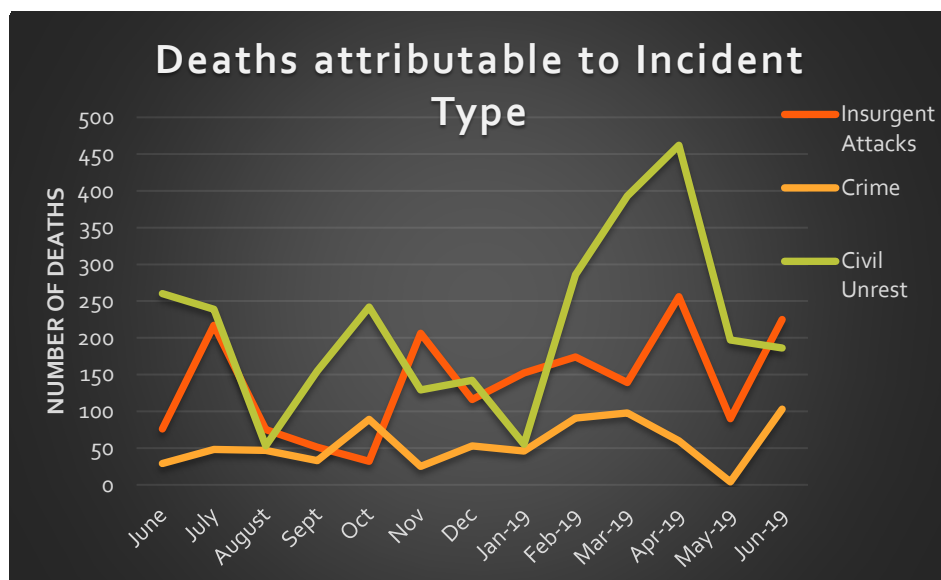
Despite these operations, and reported successes, the group did not appear to be perturbed. Furthermore, their activities in June illustrated that the group still continue to prioritise their activities in the direction of the military. For example, the month started with reports that the group attacked and killed five soldiers in Damboa. The group were also blamed for attacks on military personnel in Mobbar, Nganzai and Monguno. It was reported that over fifty soldiers were killed in these attacks. However, this has not been confirmed. Across the border, similar activities were reported in Cameroon. In a clash between suspected militants and the military. It was reported that over sixty suspected militants were killed, alongside twenty soldiers and approximately fifteen civilians. Media reports suggest that more than 300 heavily armed militants attacked military installations in Darak.

This month, albeit they were limited in comparison with other months, the group also targeted civilian populations. Three suicide bombers reportedly killed themselves and thirty others, in Konduga State, while over forty people were reportedly injured in the attack. Media reports claim that two girls and one boy, all children, were used as suicide bombers for this attack. The incident occurred outside a hall in Konduga, a town known as a hotspot for Boko Haram of late. Twenty farmers were reportedly killed in Mobbar. It is suspected that Boko Haram were responsible. They were also blamed for the deaths of fourteen in Guzamala and Mafa, Borno.

Assessment & Forecast: Similar to last month, the activities of Boko Haram appeared to be heavily targeted at the military. They do not seem deterred from attacking military installations, despite reports of successful operations on behalf of the military. The incident in Cameroon referred to above, provides some insights in why the group do not seem to be afraid by such operations. It is clear from this incident that the group still maintain the ability to gather in large groups, with over 300 operatives reported. Furthermore, these large groups still seem to be able to move large distances without detection.. This in itself is interesting, given the reports from the military that the group no longer dominate territory in the region. Such incidents continue to serve as a stark reminder that the group are in no way defeated, and that their activities are likely to continue in the short and long term. On a different note, the suicide bomb in Konduga also demonstrated some interesting factors. For one, the age of the bombers. It is reported that the three were children. This is an interesting dimension, given that it is reported that 48 children were used in such attacks in 2018, 38 of whom were suspected of being female. The use of children appears to be chosen strategy by the group, especially where attacks were targeted at civilians. This appears to be at odds with rhetoric from group members, who often pledge that they will not target civilians. No one is immune from their attack. In this backdrop and given continued incidents, vigilance is recommended. Those travelling to or through the areas should try to tap into timely, reliable and robust information from the field. Furthermore, SAR recommends that anyone considering to travel to or through the North East conduct a detailed risk assessment, informed by shared knowledge, that considers the dynamic conditions of the region at present, including a contingency plan for evacuation and/or extraction with limited or any military assistance.

Loss of Life*

The patterns and trends that emerged this month are not surprising given that May witnessed a reduction in deaths across all incidents types. These patterns illustrated a slight increase in deaths associated with crime and insurgent incidents. This increase saw figures return to the higher levels of deaths, rather than the average, which is worrying. The deaths associated with civil unrest continued to see a very slight reduction. However, death rates are still extremely high in this area, so any reduction is welcomed. It will be interesting to see how patterns continue for the next two or three months, given that last year's patterns show a significant reduction, will this same pattern emerge.*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.



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Middle Belt Violence

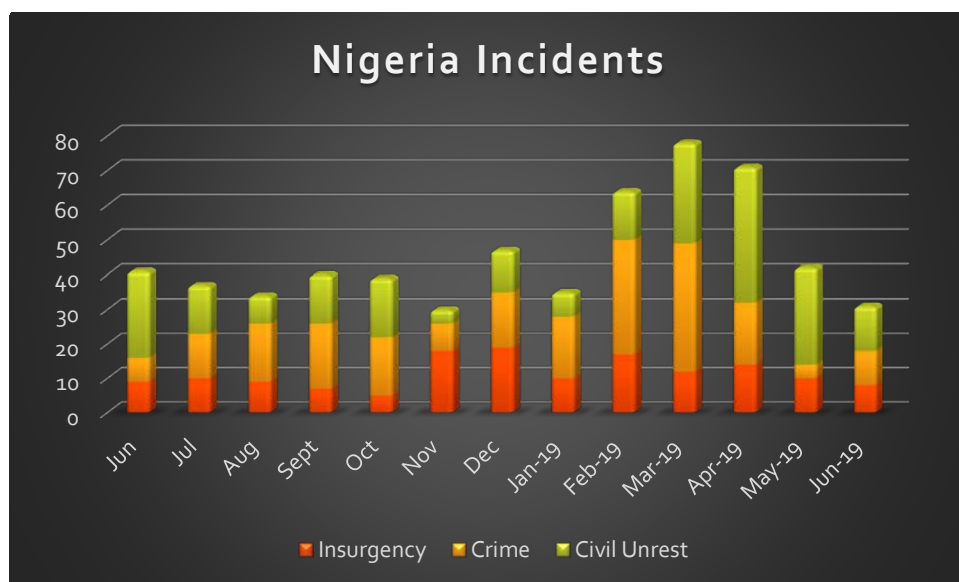
Violence in the middle belt continued throughout June. Zamfara State, for another month running, appeared to be the worst hit. For example, over thirty five people were reportedly killed in Shinkafi, Zamfara. A group of gunmen reportedly raided the village, killing as they went. They were also said to have set homes on fire. Near the end of the month, another incident occurred in the same area, two soldiers, a police officer, and nearly thirty gunmen reportedly died in a clash. A similar incident to the first incident in Shinkafi was also reported in Tsafe, in which nearly twenty were killed. Armed men reportedly came to the area on motorcycles and shot at people indiscriminately. Armed men were also blamed for the deaths of three people in Maradun, days after the military had reportedly killed over forty suspected bandits in the town. The military also reported that they killed fifteen in Maru. Taraba State also experienced a considerable number of incidents during June. Over forty five people were said to have been killed in clashes in Ardo-Kola, Donga, and Wukari. Similar to the incidents in Zamfara State, reports claim that gunmen came to the towns killing indiscriminately and burning down homes. Gunmen reportedly killed nearly twenty in Kankara, Katsina State, while further West, in Sokoto State, armed gunmen were blamed for the deaths of over fifty in Rabah and Isa LGAs. Reports from Sokoto claim that a number of villages were attacked simultaneously. Similar to other states, gunmen appeared to storm the villages shooting sporadically. A pattern also witnessed in Niger State, where gunmen reportedly attacked at least eight villages, killing nearly fifty people, and displacing others. Gunmen were also blamed for deaths in Igabi, Kaduna, Riyom, Plateau and Ukum, Benue. All of these have also experienced similar incidents over the past few months. A further seven were reportedly killed in Kontonkar, Kogi State. Reports of abduction also continued this month, eight people were reportedly kidnapped and one

Forecast: June witnessed another reduction in incidents and deaths associated with such incidents, which is warmly welcome. That said, the number of deaths is still at a worrying level. Furthermore, the nature of some of the incidents indicate that despite such reduction, some armed groups still maintain the ability and desire to attack villages, killing indiscriminately as they plunder and burn down homes as they rove. Another positive that was also identified during June was the number of deaths associated with violence in the middle belt were less than those killed in the North East. According to our records, this has not occurred since January 2019. Some may argue that the military and security response in this area is having this impact. However, it is likely to be due to a culmination of incidents. For one, the banning of mining in the state may have also had a significant impact. Another interesting factor that emerged this week, was the number of states that experienced similar levels of violence. From Sokoto to Benue State, no state appeared to be without at least one incident. It is unclear if these incidents are linked in anyway, but similar patterns are evident. One consistency across many of these incidents is the indiscriminate nature of much of the violence. This is very worrying, largely resulting in innocent civilians being the likely targets. **All in all, the middle belt continues to be a high risk area for violence.**

killed in an incident in Kaura-Namoda, Zamfara State. In the neighbouring state, Katsina, three people were reportedly abducted, while a further three were killed, in an incident in Danmusa.

Kidnap and Abduction

Kidnaps continued throughout the month. The month had only started when reports emerged of the abduction of two Lebanese males from a construction site on Andoni LGA, Rivers. Cultists reportedly kidnapped seven people in Degema, Rivers. A further four were abducted from a bus, when it was hijacked along Emouhua axis of the East-West Road, in Rivers State. The bus was reportedly a commercial bus travelling from Lagos to Port Harcourt. This is not the first kidnap of this type. Attacks on buses are relatively common in Rivers State. Eight travellers were also reportedly kidnapped in Akure North, Ondo. This was followed by reports that the police arrested a male, who was thought to have been involved in the attempted abduction of an Ondo monarch. Interestingly, the attempt was said to have been made in the same location as a mother and son were reportedly taken days earlier. Media reports suggest that they have both been released. These incidents, coupled with those mentioned above in respect to the middle belt, serve to illustrate that this is a national problem, influenced largely by financial incentive, illustrated by demands for ransom in many cases. Although not in Nigeria, four Nigerian males were reportedly arrested in Ghana on suspicion of abducting two Canadians.



Some interesting aspects to keep in mind when travelling:

- (i) *Similar to previous months, a large number of abductions are targeted at commuters, be it direct attacks on buses, or on high risk routes.*
- (ii) *Where people were abducted, their escorts or drivers were largely killed. Training for drivers might help mitigate this risk.*
- (iii) *Rivers State continues to be a high risk state for abductions, but complacency elsewhere is dangerous given this month's incidents.*

Criminality, Cultist activity & Violence

Violent crime continued throughout the country this month. A gunman reportedly killed one in an attack on the highway at Irewole, Osun. While in Rivers State, four people were reportedly killed in a clash between a soldier, a cultist and two others. Further west, in Lagos, three people were reportedly killed due to an explosion of a pipeline that had reportedly been tampered by vandals. On a positive note, police in Lagos reportedly arrested three males who were suspected of being involved in a number of violent attacks and robberies in the Bariga area of the state.

Some interesting aspects to keep in mind when travelling:

- (i) *Violent Crime in common throughout the country. No state is immune.*
- (ii) *Armed clashes between gunmen and police are relatively common in certain areas, with civilians often getting caught in the cross fire.*


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Providing peace of mind in dynamic 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 independently 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?
- How confident are you that your approach would stand up to independent assessment?
- Will you wait until you are attacked to find out?

We, at SAR, can conduct this assessment for you, and can test it in a controlled manner exactly how prepared you are. SAR provides an objective independent assessment service.

Contact us to discuss your audit? Don't wait for an incident to realise things don't work as planned.

Email us at info@sarconint.com to arrange a chat.

Piracy

The Gulf Of Guinea continued to be an area of concern for those working in the field of shipping and maritime activities, given continued rates of piracy related incidents. In a recent conference in London on the topic, the activities in the Gulf of Guinea was highlighted as requiring immediate, urgent attention. It was further noted at the conference that while Nigeria was only one nation within the Gulf, a lot of activity happened in Nigerian waters. Professor Bertand Monnet reportedly stated that these activities were the result of approximately 10 groups of pirates, active in these waters. He further noted that these groups were well organised and motivated. The Director General and CEO of the Nigerian Maritime Authority and Safety Agency (NIMASA) reportedly noted that new initiatives were underway to improve the joint capacity of Nigerian law enforcement and Navy to respond to such groups. He highlighted the need to work together to find solutions appropriate for the area and the context in which these groups operate. One practical item he spoke of was that NIMASA and the Nigerian Navy will also be hosting a Global Maritime Security Conference in October to seek tailored short and long term solutions to strengthen regional and international collaborations in the Gulf of Guinea. This is positive.

Niger Delta

Relative peace was maintained in the Niger Delta Region again this month. A coalition of armed groups came together to demand action of the government that would see the government pay 13% derivation fund directly to the communities, based on allegations that alleged mismanagement of funds. It will be interesting to see if their demands are met. This could be a real tipping point for both sides, who at the moment seem to be willing to use diplomatic channels to engage with each other, which is positive.

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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.

info@sarconint.com
 Twitter @SAR_Consultancy
www.sarconint.com