

Gunmen hit another police formation in Imo

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Gunmen on Thursday launched multiple attacks in four of the six geopolitical zones, including a highway between Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) and Kogi State.

They launched the attack in Owerri, Imo State in the South East; burnt houses in a community in Ondo State in the South West, cult groups fought in Rivers State in the South South; rival communities clashed in Kwara State in the North Central and some bandits laid siege on a highway leading to Abuja.

Daily Trust reports that the first security breach was an attack by unknown gunmen who vandalised police station in Imo and caused tension in another in Abia.

A separate group of assailants abducted a monarch in Ondo and sacked a community in Ogun.

The security breaches were perpetrated hours before a security summit in Kaduna where the federal government said Nigeria's corporate existence was under threat.

Some governors have also voiced their fears over the threats to Nigeria's sovereignty as different criminal groups including separatists, terrorists, bandits and kidnappers continued to wreak havoc.

While Governor Seyi Makinde of Oyo State who was in Bauchi said leaders must douse ethnic tension, Zamfara State Governor Bello Matawalle said northern governors must speak out.

Again, police station under siege

A police officer was abducted in an attack on Mbieri Divisional Police Headquarters in Mbaitoli Local Government Area of Imo state on Thursday morning.

No fewer than six police stations have been attacked in the state since February, as residents live in fear and uncertainty.

The siege on Mbieri took place three days after the Imo State Police Command Headquarters and Owerri Correctional Centre were attacked.

At least 1,884 inmates were released by the attackers who reportedly drove overnight from Onitsha in Anambra State. Nearly 100 of the inmates that fled the correctional facility have returned, but residents said the assailants that attacked the police station in Mbieri on Thursday had released some suspects.

Sources said the policemen on duty had engaged the attackers in a gun duel but they were reportedly overpowered.

A community leader, Nokey Ebikam, told newsmen that the police divisional headquarters was not burnt but confirmed the release of the suspects in detention after vandalising the facility.

Police Public Relations Officer in the state, Orlando Ikekwu,

confirmed the attack on the police station but did not go into details.

Daily Trust gathered that aside from the officer who was abducted, two others sustained injuries in the incident which is the second major attack on a police station since an armed gang invaded the state police headquarters on Monday.

Police authorities have blamed the recent attacks in Imo on the outlawed Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), but the group has distanced itself from the attacks.

Governor Hope Uzodinma had also fingered IPOB on Tuesday but later recanted and accused some "opposition elements" whom he said were all out to destabilise his state.

Still in Imo, the traditional ruler of Umueze community in Nguru in Aboh Mbaise Local Government Area, Eze Charles Iroegbu, has been kidnapped.

Iroegbu, who is a transport magnet was said to have been abducted along with members of his council while returning from a traditional wedding ceremony in Mbano.

A source in Nguru said that the entire community has been thrown into confusion following the abduction of their traditional ruler.

Gunshots rock police area command in Aba

A police area command in Aba, the commercial town in Abia State was rattled following sporadic sounds of gunshots on Thursday. Residents were going about their normal activities when the gunshots blazed across the town with people fleeing to safer locations.

All roads around the police command were barricaded and residents ordered back to their houses.

A top police source in Aba told Daily Trust that security operatives got intelligence that the gunmen that unleashed terror on security formations in Imo State were on their way to Aba area command.

The incident had also sent jitters in many parts of Aba, with residents calling on law enforcement agencies to allay their fears by confronting the assailants frontally.

Daily Trust reports that soon after Vice-President Yemi Osinbajo decorated him at the Presidential Villa in Abuja on Wednesday, Usman Alkali Baba, the acting Inspector-General of Police, said the force will change its strategies in order to meet up with the security challenges.

Security operatives have been under attack across the country but the development has taken a worse turn in the South-East.

In what appeared as his first major directive, the acting IGP yesterday, ordered the deployment of one unit of fully armed anti-riot policemen to Imo State to quell the rising burning of federal establishments in the state, especially police stations.

Our correspondents gathered that the IGP has directed the Assistant Inspector-General of Police in charge of Mobile Police

unit to raise a squad from Mobile police units 8 Jos; 12, Minna, 13, Makurdi; 15, Ilorin, 21 FCT, Abuja; and 37 Lokoja.

The unit was also to be raised from MOPOL 38, Akwanga, 50 Kubwa, 58, Lafia, 61, Kontagora and 69 Toto. MOPOL 70, Kabbia, and 77 Okene are also to contribute to the unit.

The policemen were ordered to proceed to Owerri on special duty.

Mayhem in Ondo as 15 houses razed

The mayhem in Ondo State was attributed to some assailants terrorising waterways in Ese-Odo Local Government Area of Ondo State.

They reportedly razed 15 houses in a midnight attack on Asere riverine community.

Daily Trust was told that the gunmen attacked the people of the community for allegedly tipping off security agencies about their activities and movement.

While women in the community staged a protest, the paramount ruler of Agadagba Kingdom, Oba Zachueus Doubra, said he received a report that one of his subjects, who he described as a "recalcitrant boy" invaded Asere to burn down the community.

According to him, "I sent my chiefs and some police officers to the community and I was informed that 14 houses were burnt down and nine other houses vandalised. Many people were rendered homeless and had to run into the bush.

"I want to appeal to all the three tiers of government and all relevant agencies to come to the aid of the victims by way of relief materials."

Ondo police spokesman, ASP Tee-Leo Ikoro, said: "We want to assure the people of the area that police operatives are on top of the situation. The people should go back to their normal businesses."

Gunmen abduct doctor, nurse in Ogun

Gunmen have abducted a medical doctor and a nurse along Abeokuta - Imeko road in Ogun State. The doctor, Oladunni Odetola, who is the head of General Hospital, Imeko, Imeko-Afon Local Government Area, alongside the nurse, identified as Mrs Bamgbose, were kidnapped on Wednesday night.

The latest kidnapping came barely 24 hours after the two Chinese nationals were freed by some kidnappers.

The medical personnel were reportedly abducted by gunmen while driving in a Toyota Camry (Muscle) marked KTU 584 FR, along Abeokuta-Imeko road.

Our correspondent gathered that the gunmen had emerged from the bush at Olubou village to attack their targets.

Sources told our correspondent that the victim's car was left at the middle of the road, where it was discovered by the police.

It was further gathered that the police had recovered the doctor's Nigerian Medical Association (NMA) identity card and a minute of the association's meeting in the vehicle.

The State Chairman of NMA,

Ogunlaja Oladayo confirmed the kidnap in an interview with Daily Trust.

"Yes, it is true. But we have allowed the security operatives to do their job. We don't want anything to jeopardise the process," he said.

The Spokesman for the Ogun Police Command, Abimbola Oyeyemi, also confirmed the abduction, saying "police detectives are on the trail of the kidnappers."

Three feared killed as cultists clash in Rivers

Three persons have been killed following a bloody clash by cultists at the old Port Harcourt township area of Port Harcourt City Local Government Area of Rivers State. It was gathered the violence had thrown residents of Bende, Victoria and Bagham streets into a panic.

The two cult groups in the area had reportedly engaged in a supremacy battle to gain control of the area. Public Relations Officer of the Rivers Police Command, SP Nnamdi Omoni, who confirmed the development, said the casualty figure was yet to be ascertained.

In Kwara, communities of Share and Kanje, Tsaragi district in Ifelodun and Edu Local Government Areas also on Thursday renewed age-long land dispute leaving three people dead and many others injured. It was learnt that at least 20 people sustained injuries during the early morning clash.

Many houses and vehicles were torched over disagreement on clearing of land for the coming farming season.

In Abuja, gunmen suspected to be kidnappers shot dead four persons and abducted an unspecified number of passengers at Ahoko village, along Abuja-Lokoja highway.

Daily Trust learnt that a man identified as Abdulmalik Yakubu, a native of the village, who was riding a motorcycle was also abducted, but he escaped from his abductors on the way to their den. A member of the vigilante in the area, who preferred anonymity also corroborated the story.

A resident of the community, simply identified as Ibrahim, said the incident happened at about 7 pm on Wednesday, at Ahoko Bridge, when the gunmen emerged from the bush and opened fire on three Toyota Hiace buses conveying passengers to the eastern part of the country.

He said men of the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) from Gugu unit command later arrived at the scene with an ambulance and conveyed the four corpses to the mortuary in Lokoja, Kogi State.

Insecurity threat to Nigeria's unity-Lai Mohammed

The Minister of Information and Culture, Alhaji Lai Mohammed, said on Thursday that the insecurity across the country posed a dangerous threat to Nigeria's unity and existence.

He, therefore, urged all Nigerians to rise up in one accord

and proffer solutions in order to stave off the threats to Nigeria's unity and existence as a nation.

The information minister made the appeal in his opening address at the 18th Town Hall meeting on National Security held on Thursday at the Main Lecture Theatre of the Kaduna State University (KASU).

The meeting was themed, "Setting Benchmarks for Enhanced Security and National Unity in Nigeria."

Lai Mohammed said that it was imperative for the citizens to appreciate the efforts of the federal government to address the issues of insecurity and its effect on national unity and cohesion.

He said that the general state of insecurity, as reflected in incidences of "farmers/herders clashes, Boko Haram insurgency, banditry, ethno-religious clashes and intolerance, cultism, drug addiction and kidnapping for ransom, were triggering rising calls for secession as well as politicisation of ethnic and religious differences."

The minister asked: "How did we get here and what can we do to change the narrative?"

"We believe that finding a way out of the situation in which we have found ourselves requires teamwork, reflecting all diversities and leveraging on all our collective creativity to pursue with diligence the project of rescuing Nigeria."

"Perhaps the correct starting point towards addressing these myriad of problems is the building of an elite consensus on the security, unity, indissolubility and peaceful existence of Nigeria."

Bandits don't deserve to live - El-Rufai

Governor Nasir El-Rufai has said that Nigeria is in a war with terrorists challenging the sovereignty and monopoly of the instruments of coercion of the country and its territory.

According to him, security forces must collaborate to take the war to the terrorists wherever they reside in the country.

He made the comment in his opening remarks at the ongoing Town Hall Meeting on National Security in Kaduna.

"These bandits have lost their right to life under our constitution and must be wiped out in their entirety."

"There is no other way to approach the current insurgency situation today as far as governmental action is concerned," he said. El-Rufai's Kaduna State had witnessed endless attacks of recent with attendant loss of lives and property.

"Amidst the sorrows and suffering insecurity has caused to many of our citizens, some of our compatriots will be tempted to dismiss gatherings like this as futile and impotent gestures. No one who is in a position of responsibility can deny the necessity for firm action in the form of proactive and sustained offensives against the criminals who menace us," he said.