

Police deploy horses, motorcycles for intelligence gathering in FCT

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Horses, motorcycles and other detection tools would be deployed for intelligence gathering in the Federal Capital Authority (FCT), police authorities said on Sunday.

The FCT Joint Security Team also described as "fake news", a viral publication on social media alleging that the territory was under heavy attack by the Boko Haram terrorists.

The joint security team was constituted for effective security coordination in Abuja and its environs in the wake of the worsening security situation in the country.

The Saturday's purported terrorists attack on the FCT was highlighted on social media a few days after a security advisory issued by the Central Bank of Nigeria to its staff across the country.

The memo, addressed to all staff of the bank, among other things, warned them against irrelevant travels, keeping late nights and flamboyant lifestyles that would attract criminals infiltrating Abuja.

'Siege report mischievous'

In a statement on Sunday, the spokesperson for the FCT Command of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), ASP Mariam Yusuf, said the alleged invasion of Abuja by terrorists was mischievous.

"The joint security team of the FCT wishes to refute the mischievous publication targeted at creating palpable tension amongst the well-spirited residents of the FCT."

"Contrary to the speculation, the Heads of Security Agencies (HOSA) in the Federal Capital Territory in bid to address security concerns within the FCT held a strategic meeting on Thursday, April 29, 2021, where the team resolved to deploy alternative proactive crime-fighting measures within the FCT particularly in areas with challenging terrain including aggressive motorized/foot patrols.

"However, the patrols will be conducted in line with the peculiarities of every terrain within the territory. In other words, the team has adopted the use of motorcycles, horses and other technical means of gathering intelligence to checkmate criminality within the FCT."

"In view of the above, the joint security team chaired by the Commissioner of Police, CP Bala Ciroma enjoins residents to remain calm, law-abiding and verify the information before circulating such information to avoid creating panic amongst members of the public," the statement said.

Daily Trust reports that before the recent developments in the FCT, Governor Abubakar Sani Bello of Niger State had on

Monday last week raised the alarm over the safety of Abuja.

Bello made the appalling revelation in Minna when he visited 5,000 internally displaced persons from Shiroro and Munya Local Government Areas at the IBB Primary School near the palace of the emir of Minna.

"I am confirming that there are Boko Haram elements here in Niger State, here in Kaure, I am confirming that they have hoisted their flags here."

"This is what I have been engaging the federal government on, unfortunately, it has now got to this level. If care is not taken, even Abuja is not safe."

Bello claimed that the Boko Haram elements were trying to use some locations in Niger as their home just as they did in Sambisa.

According to him, "Sambisa is several kilometres from Abuja but Kaure is just two hours' drive from Abuja. So nobody is safe anymore, not even those in Abuja."

LG chair still missing as gunmen kill Kogi commissioner

24 hours after the whereabouts of the Chairman of Yagba West Local Government Area of Kogi State, Pius Kolawole, is still unknown after gunmen attacked him alongside the Commissioner for Pensions in the state, Solomon Adebayo.

Mr Adebayo died at the spot of the incident around Erukutu, a border town between Kwara and Kogi States on Saturday evening.

The police spokesman in Kogi, ASP Williams Aya, who confirmed the incident on Sunday said the deceased pension commissioner was hit by the assailant's bullet.

He, however, could not confirm whether the assailants were armed robbers, kidnappers or bandits but assured that the command would get to the root of the matter.

Aya said that the body of the deceased had been deposited in a morgue, adding that the whereabouts of the LG chairman remained unknown.

"The Commissioner of Police in the state, Mr Ede Ayuba, has deployed personnel to the area to search for and rescue the chairman from his abductors. The command is not resting on its oars to secure his release," he said.

Police intercept 753 ammunition in Ebonyi

One officer on duty was killed and another injured when some gunmen attacked the Abaomege Police Station in Onicha Local Government Area of Ebonyi State at night Saturday.

No group had claimed responsibility for the attack but it has the hallmark of Eastern Security Network (ESN), the militia arm of the proscribed



■ IG of Police Usman Alkali

Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB).

A reliable police source who did not want his name in print confirmed the attack saying some people armed with sophisticated weapons attacked the station.

Another source said the assailants wanted to enter the police station but could not, saying the mission was aborted due to the presence of some officers who were keeping vigil metres away from the station.

When contacted via phone, the Ebonyi State Commissioner of Police, Aliyu Garba, did not confirm the attack but told our correspondent that he was in a meeting with Governor David Umahi.

Two weeks ago, some gunmen killed three police officers in Abakaliki, the Ebonyi State capital.

The incident happened along Nwezenyi road in Izzi Local Government Area.

The attackers, who pretended to be conducting a burial rally opened fire on the police officers who were on duty.

Before then, some gunmen using the same operational pattern opened fire on police officers at Umuogbara in Ezza North Local Government Area.

Of recent, several attacks have been launched on security operatives in Ebonyi, Anambra, Imo and Abia states, with police authorities pointing accusing fingers at IPOB.

The Nigeria Police Force Public Relations Officer, Frank Mba, in a statement made available to newsmen in Abuja, said operatives attached to the Ebonyi State Police Command, on Sunday intercepted 753 live ammunition of General-Purpose Machine Gun (GPMG).

The ammunition was concealed in a sac being transported in a commercial vehicle from Abakaliki to Umuahia in Abia State.

According to Mba, the interception and recovery of the deadly ammunition was part of efforts by the Force to identify and crackdown on criminal networks and supply chains for weapons and ammunition in and around the country.

He said that investigations aimed at bringing to book all persons linked to the crimes were ongoing.

Mba also disclosed that following investigations into the foiled bank robbery on the Onueke branch of a commercial bank in Ebonyi State which occurred last week Tuesday, Police operatives led by the commissioner had on Thursday stormed the criminal hideout of suspects indicted in the investigations located at Oriuzo village in Ezza North Local Government Area.

He explained that the suspects on sighting the police squad opened fire on them.

"The Police team engaged them gallantly and professionally. At the end, three members of the gang including two male and one female met their Waterloo following bullet injuries sustained during the exchange of gunfire. Other suspects fled in different directions."

"Two Ak47 rifles, five pump action guns, six pistols, fifty Ak47 ammunition, one hundred and twenty-six cartridges, Jack knives, cutlasses, and a 40-page notebook containing inventories of ammunition purchased by the gang were recovered."

Daily Trust reports that Governor Umahi, who is the chairman of the South East Governor's Forum, had on Wednesday, April 28, said that IPOB members were not responsible for most of the numerous attacks in parts of Ebonyi.

He added that the hoodlums hide under the umbrella of IPOB to carry out their evil attacks.

"We are aware that there are some killings over the weekend; a policeman was killed, two army men were killed and I think one civilian and their killers are pure bandits."

"They do these killings and put it in social media that they are members of IPOB or ESN. Without standing for either IPOB or ESN, but they continue to deny that they are not into violence but for me, criminality is criminality and I

have directed security agencies to crack down on all criminal activities in the state.

345 ballot boxes, others set ablaze in A/Ibom

The Resident Electoral Commissioner (REC) for Akwa Ibom State, Barrister Mike Igini, has reported that the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) office in Essien Udim Local Government Area has been set ablaze.

National Commissioner and Chairman, Information and Voter Education Committee (IVEC), Festus Okoye, said on Sunday in a statement that the incident occurred in the early hours of Sunday morning.

According to Okoye, the security guard on duty escaped unhurt but the destruction to the building and properties therein was extensive.

"Items destroyed include 345 ballot boxes, 135 voting cubicles, megaphones, water tanks and office furniture."

He recalled that on the eve of the 2019 General Election, INEC newly constructed prototype LGA office in Ibesikpo Asutan was burnt down while two more offices in Mkpat Enin and Eastern Obolo LGAs were bombed.

Beef up security in S/West, Alaafin, others plead

Prominent Yoruba indigenes have called on the federal government to beef up security in the South West.

Those who spoke are the Alaafin of Oyo, Oba Lamidi Adeyemi, the Aare Onakakanfo, Otunba Gani Adams, among others. They voiced their worry at the 51st birthday celebration of Adams in Lagos.

The Yoruba top monarch charged the federal government to be proactive in guaranteeing the safety of all residents in the South-West.

"The monopoly of violence must be concentrated in government but regrettably we are not having that now. Bandits and kidnappers now have the monopoly of violence over the government which is the reason why we are in this current situation," he said.

Oba Adeyemi also commended the Aare Onakakanfo of Yorubaland, Gani Adams for his courage, steadfastness and doggedness in the struggle for the liberation of Yoruba race.

Adams on his part said the federal government had all it took to provide security in the region. He also advocated for improved quality of education across the country through enduring programmes that can help brilliant and indigent students.

In commemoration of his 51st birthday, the Yoruba warlord gave scholarship to four indigent students from four different universities, namely, the University of Lagos, University of Ife, University of Ibadan and Lagos State University.