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Wednesday, 29 July 2009

Breaking News: [Islamic Scholars In Nigeria Condemn Radicals Attacks In North](#)



RATING: ★★★★★ (832/219=3.79)

Low High Rate



Military Battles Sect Members, Death Toll Rises

By Sukuji Bakoji (Kaduna), Paul Arhewe, Aramide Oikelome (Lagos), Chesa Chesa, Sule Lazarus, Otei Oham (Abuja), Augustine Madu-West (Kano) and Abdulkareem Haruna (Maiduguri)

Federal lawmakers on Tuesday demanded a probe of the religious mayhem in the North, on the day the police banned open air preaching to curb the spread, as the military descended on Islamic extremists, and the death toll rose in Maiduguri and Kano.

About 600 people had died by Monday.

Assistant Inspector General of Police (AIG) Zone 12, Moses Anaegbode, enthused in Bauchi that the ban would help uphold law and order and complement the dusk to dawn curfew imposed.

Maiduguri remains under siege, and tension, as the joint military/police team on Tuesday took the battle to the camps of equally armed sect members, led by Muhammed Yusuf, who had attacked security formations and government structures on Monday.

The security personnel attacked the hide-out with superior ammunition, including armoured tanks, which have produced a large number of deaths.

Sources said Yusuf's second in command, Mallam Shikau, was captured alive. Shikau wields tremendous influence among the highly dogmatic members.

The attack on the enclave, authorised by Aso Rock, was led by Major General Sale Maina, the General Officer Commanding (GOC) 3rd Armoured Brigade, who arrived Maiduguri in the afternoon to take charge of the operation.

Shaken by the military offensive, which left hundreds of them dead, the jihadists retreated to their fortress, popularly called Markas, where Yusuf holds court amid tight security by heavily armed surrogates.

The streets in Maiduguri are deserted, with people discussing in front of their homes in groups, watching and waiting in anxiety for what comes next.

Their biggest concern is that Yusuf could evade arrest again.

Communication in the metropolis is very difficult as most mobile telephone networks are grounded, allegedly by the sect members.

Governor Ali Modu Sheriff and his Deputy, Adamu Dibal, now move in and out of the Government House in bullet-proof vehicles with heavily armed security escorts.

National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) Assistant Co-ordinator (North East), Apolos Jediel, said about 4,000 persons have been displaced from their homes and camped in military barracks.

President Umaru Yar'Adua declared before reporters in Abuja that his administration would not tolerate religious fundamentalism which has led to deaths and attacks on security installations.

He said at the Nnamdi Azikiwe Airport before his departure to Brazil for a four-day visit that the situation has been brought under control but that the security agencies would continue surveillance all over the North to avert a recurrence.

His words: "The government has moved to nip in the bud the action of a potentially dangerous people. These people have been organising, penetrating our society procuring arms, learning how to make explosives and bombs to disturb, confuse and force their belief on the rest of Nigerians.

"Definitely, our security agencies have been tracking them for years, and I believe that the operation we have launched now will contain them once and for all.

"Once the operation in Maiduguri is completed, we will continue with the security surveillance all over the Northern states to fish out any remnants of these elements and deal with them squarely and promptly.

"I want to assure the nation that this administration will not tolerate any armed insurrection anywhere in the country.

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Editorial/ Letters

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Illegal Oil Bunkering As Economic Sabotage

The seemingly intractable Niger Delta debacle, featuring continued militancy and youth restiveness, has over the years drawn the attention and concern of the international community. This is more so because of its ripple effects not only on global oil production but also regional peace.

Op-Ed/ Comments

"Anywhere any group of people begins to launch armed insurrection and destruction against their fellow Nigerians, they will be dealt with squarely and promptly.

Yar'Adua explained that the attacks are not inter-religious in nature, "And it is not the Taliban group that attacked the security agents first. It was as a result of security information gathered on their movement and intention to get all their people to move so that they can launch a major attack."

United Nations Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, in New York expressed shock at "yet another round of sectarian violence in parts of Northern Nigeria, (and condemned) the unnecessary loss of human life and the destruction of property."

Last November, sectarian attacks in Jos claimed nearly 1,000 lives.

On Tuesday, the death toll rose to four in Kano, where the police also arrested additional 20 sect members in a pit toilet in Wudil, bringing the total number of those arrested to 56.

Eleven of them are in critical condition at the Murtala Muhammed Specialist Hospital in Kano, following bullet wounds received in their clash with the police.

Police Public Relations Officer, Baba Mohammed, said nooks and crannies are still being combed for others, and that security has more than doubled in and around Kano, with anti-riot police deployed in strategic locations.

Kano, the commercial nerve centre of the North, on Monday joined Borno, Bauchi, and Yobe States under the siege of Muslim fundamentalists whose activities have sent panic everywhere in the upper part of the Niger River. Residents of Kano were gripped by the confrontation between the police and the jihadists, which led to the death of three people and injuries to several others.

The leader of the sect Abdulmimuni Ibrahim Mohammed, who was paraded at the Bompai police headquarters along with 30 other suspects, said their mission is to press home their demand for the abolition of Western education in the country, because it has no place in "Islam and so represents evil."

Monday's attack on the Wudil police station was a replay of a 2007 incident by a group that calls itself "Taliban" which attacked security formations, killed personnel and stole assorted arms and ammunition before soldiers dislodged them from Kano.

Items for manufacturing explosives were also recovered from them.

Jamaatu Nasril Islam (JNI) also condemned the violence in a statement issued in Kaduna by its acting Secretary General, Abdulkarim Mu'azu Palladan.

He said the JNI will soon convene a meeting of the Central Fatwa Committee to deliberate on the teachings of the jihadists, "So that Muslims and non-Muslims alike will be assured of the fact that this 'Anti-Boko' group is criminal and un-Islamic."

Palladan urged all Muslims to condemn the criminal activities of the sect as well as support the security agencies in preventing new attacks.

He stressed that "as the umbrella Islamic organisation in the country, (the JNI) cannot and will not fold its arms and watch the carnage and madness going on in the country (particularly in the North East) in the name of Islam.

"We therefore wish to categorically disassociate Islam from the activities of the 'Anti-Boko' misguided group, and denounce the wanton murders and destruction of properties perpetrated by this group."

In Lagos, Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN) President, Ayo Oritsejafor, blamed the 17 Southern Governors for the killing of Christians in the latest uprising in parts of the North.

He blamed Southern Governors for their inability to defend Christians living in the North, pointing out that some of the victims may have contributed to their election into office.

Oritsejafor said he has written a letter to all Southern Governors on the need for them to engage the 19 Northern Governors to ward off sectarian crises in the North.

Back in Abuja, members of the House of Representatives in plenary condemned the violence and urged the Federal Government to order an investigation.

The resolution arose from a motion tabled by Rabe Nasir (PDP, Katsina),

Ekiti North Senatorial Re-run: Ayo Arise vs Olu Adetumbi (1)

I have written two articles on the Ekiti North senatorial election conducted on April 21, 2007, which has since been nullified by the Court of Appeal in Ilorin with a rerun election ordered.

Debilitating Debts

The recent move by the House of Representatives to stop the Executive from accessing a foreign loan to the tune of one million dollars, ostensibly to fight the scourge of malaria, is both salutary and patriotic.

A Nation's Identity Crisis: Blame The Rat Race (2)

No company would like to spend money to advertise its products if not threatened; going by the rule, 'reduction of cost to maximise profit.' For example, how many oil companies (Shell, Chevron etc.) put money in the entertainment industry or do advert?

Columnist

Conversation of an Angry man

June 12: Mustapha Sings A Heroic Tune

The June 12 presidential election threw up its own share of heroes and villains. And there was a fine line of distinction between the two groups.

Candour's Niche

Digital Revolution And Africa,s Media (2)

Aware of the challenges posed by the new era, magazines and newspapers are changing the ways they had hitherto approached journalism. Not only have they gone online, establishing their own websites, many in a bid to cultivate new audiences have resorted to blogging some beats or sections that ordinarily would have run in print.

Scruples

...Still On Anambra

A couple of weeks ago, I did a piece here on the nature of politics and governance in Anambra State and how these combine to determine the popularity rating of the State Governor

The Roundtable

South Africa 2009: Lessons For Nigeria?

The FIFA Confederations Cup (FCC) is a global football tournament that showcases the champion national teams of the six federations that make up FIFA (Africa, Asia, CONCACAF,

Speaking Out

The Other Pains Of Strike (1)

It was a Friday and we were in the sixth month of our strike. Our salaries had been stopped and letters purportedly dismissing us from our jobs had been handed to all striking university lecturers.

Independent Opinion Poll	
Do you support Federal government amnesty to militants in Niger Delta?	
<input type="radio"/>	Yes
<input type="radio"/>	No
<input type="radio"/>	Uncertain
<input type="button" value="Submit Vote"/>	
Current Results	

who noted that Nigeria has contended with so many religious disturbances and the problem has refused to abate, and could instead assume a more damaging dimension.

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