

# SENATE WANTS MORE TROOPS DEPLOYED IN ZAMFARA, OTHERS

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**Senate** on Thursday called on President Goodluck Jonathan to deploy more soldiers to Zamfara and other states with similar security problem following renewed wave of insecurity.

The Senate equally rejected a proposal requesting the President to prevail on Governor Abdulaziz Yari to rescind his decision to arm vigilante groups in the state with rifles.

Reports had it that the Zamfara State Governor has already procured riffles for the vigilante groups to tackle the insecurity problem in the state.

But in a motion sponsored by Senator Basheer Mohammed, he expressed dissatisfaction with method adopted by Yari to address the insecurity challenges in the state, adding that the measure is capable of jeopardising the fragile security in the state.

Basheer lamented that the easy access to arms by groups that are neither trained nor authorised to bear arms is partly responsible for the security challenges experienced in many part of the country including Zamfara State.

In his own contribution to the motion, Senator Magnus Abe said it will be incorrect if the upper chamber condemned the Governor based on newspaper report.

Deputy Senate President, Ike Ekweremadu, said what is currently happening in Zamfara State was worrisome where armed bandits are taking innocent citizens to ransom, urging the security agencies to do something to address the spate of insecurity in the state.

In a related development, three suspected armed Boko Haram members who allegedly disguised as women and attempted to attack a police station in Maiduguri, Borno State capital, have been gunned down by operatives of the military Joint Task Force (JTF), security sources disclosed on Thursday.

The gunmen were attempting to attack the popular Ibrahim Taiwo Extension Police Station.

But a tip-off from residents gave the security operatives opportunity to lay ambush on the attackers.

They then opened fire as the suspects advanced in a "suspicious manner," a source said.

The Boko Haram have lately changed their tactics by using women or putting on female clothes with arms hidden under their gowns order to beat security checks.

Women are subjected to less screening by security operatives to respect Islamic and Hausa culture.

And in Ibadan, the Oyo State House of Assembly yesterday urged the state government to formally protest the killing of 10 Yoruba traders by suspected Boko Haram insurgents in Mugunu, Borno State, last week to the Federal Government.

The corpses of the 10 traders killed by the hoodlums were received at the Egbeda Tollgate end of the Ibadan-Ife Road on Tuesday by leaders of the Bodija Market Traders Union together with relatives of the deceased.

The Oyo Assembly at plenary also demanded for adequate compensation for the families of the slain traders from the Federal Government.

The plenary was presided over by the Speaker, Monsurat Sunmonu.

The motion to this effect was moved by Ibrahim Bolomope (Egbeda) and was unanimously passed by the Assembly

He moved the motion while contributing to issue of urgent public importance introduced by another lawmaker, Olusegun Olaleye (Ibadan North).

In moving the motion, Bolomope had drawn the attention of his colleagues to the incident and general insecurity in the country, noting that, "It is no longer safe for one to travel to other parts of the country because of general insecurity."

To prevent traders from the southern part of the country from embarking on business trips, the end of which nobody could predict, he suggested that the Federal Government grains reserves at Kolapo Ishola area in Ibadan should be made functional.

He maintained that traders dealing in grains could go there and buy the product instead of subjecting themselves to grave dangers.

Speaking in the same vein, other lawmakers, including Yisau Azeez(Oorelope), Adesina Adeyemo (Ibarapa) and Waliu Adekunle (Atiba), expressed fears over general insecurity in the country, arguing that "Nigeria belongs to all of us, our people cannot just be killed like chicken for engaging in lawful business."

"We are not from America, we are not from Britain, we are Nigerians, we should be free to go to any part of the country to transact legitimate business," Adeyemo said.

The Speaker, Sumonu, later called for voice vote on the motion which all the lawmakers in attendance supported.

The state government was consequently called upon to write a protest letter to the Federal Government on the incident and demand adequate compensation for families of the victims.

Meanwhile, as commercial activities pick up in the Kano metropolis after several months of lull, the state police command has started dismantling checkpoints and security barricades mounted in parts of the state capital.

This is part of measures to beef up security against the activities of the Boko Haram insurgents.

The development followed the vastly improved security situation in the North's centre of commerce where Boko Haram held sway since January 20, 2012 when they rocked the city with explosives, killing hundreds of residents, including security personnel.

For two consecutive months now, Kano's relative peace has been sustained, leading to improved commercial activities, which were hitherto threatened by the murderous activities of the Boko Haram sect.

As at Thursday, most of the blocked roads in the city, especially those leading to security formations – the police particularly – which had been vulnerable to Boko Haram attacks, have all been reopened for vehicular movement.

The usual huge presence of police and military personnel in parts of the city has also recorded drastic deduction, according to our investigation.

Some measure of surveillance patrol by the joint task force by the military led team is, however, still visible, particularly in suspected hideouts and identified flash points where isolated attacks are suspected to be taking place.

Our investigation showed that the development has greatly improved the hitherto chaotic traffic situation in the state capital.

The traffic problem had been a source worry to motorists and pedestrians alike, especially those doing business around the police and military formations where commercial activities were temporarily grounded.

Some of the areas affected are the ever-busy Ahmdu Bello Way, which has a mini-military base, and Airport Road by AJIP, with another military depot, leading to Sabon Gari, a predominantly non-indigenous community.

Although the police are silent on this development, it was learnt that it was part of the measure to enhance commercial activities in Kano.

Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Majiya Magaji, said the police command was happy with the security situation in the city now, adding that the command is ready to do anything that will assist better the economy of Kano.

Nigerian Army spokesman in the town, Ikedichi Iweha, said the Army Brigade is not carried away by the relative peace, assuring that the military will continue with its routine raids.

"We will continue to do our job of ensuring that Kano is free from the grip of criminals, and that is primary," he added.

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