

NEWS

Ngilari: War Not over Yet, Insurgents are Infiltrating IDP Camps

- Warns most rescued women are wives of terrorists, informants
- NEMA: Only six rescued women are pregnant, warns against stigmatisation

Senator Iroegbu in Abuja

The Governor of Adamawa State, Bala Ngilari, has warned that the ongoing war against Boko Haram terrorists is far from over, even as he raised the alarm that some of their members are disguised as Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and infiltrated most of the camps.

Ngilari disclosed this at the weekend in Abuja while speaking with some journalists after the formal presentation and official launch of the biography of the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), Air Chief Marshal Alex Badeh, titled: 'Destiny Calling My Name'.

He said: "In the last two to three weeks, there have been serious attacks, even on my village today (yesterday). These people struck and killed about 12 people."

"So, the war is not over yet. Towards the end, these guys will always emerge, attack and run away, but we are making progress."

The governor, however, assured the people that with the determined efforts of the federal government and the Nigerian military, the terrorists would be defeated.

Ngilari noted that the major concern was how to stop the infiltration of the terrorists into the IDPs' camps, and more importantly, how to identify and separate them from the innocent citizens of the country.

"We will reach the end of the game with them and we will conquer them eventually. That is why they are coming out now, they will hit and run but like I said, they will be wiped out gradually."

"On IDPs, my problem is how to separate the chaff from the grain. I learnt that some of the guys come in as IDPs and I am afraid some of them really are....and you know we don't want to just accuse anybody of being a member of the Boko Haram sect."

"This is because we must do a real consulting like the type we are doing right now, but there is no doubt about the fact that some of these people in the camps are really part of them," the governor said.

In a related development, a security source has informed THISDAY that most of the

rescued women and girls, after interrogation, were found to be partners, informants and wives of the Boko Haram members.

According to the source, the danger posed by these suspects informed the military and other security agencies to relocate the women to a secured location for proper rehabilitation, de-indoctrination and re-orientation.

"This is what the public doesn't know. During interrogation, it was discovered that most of these rescued women and young girls are wives of the terrorists. Some are even advanced informants and well indoctrinated."

"Even the children have very wired orientation about life and mostly tend to be aggressive. So a lot of works needs to be done and that's why they were relocated into a secured place for further work," the source said.

The Nigerian military recently confirmed the movement of 275 women and children from an IDPs camp in Yola for proper medical attention and psycho-social therapy.

The Director of Defence Information, Major General Chris Olukolade, who disclosed this to PRNigeria, said the essence of evacuation was to enable the affected persons undergo a psycho-social rehabilitation programme arranged by the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA).

He confirmed that they are presently in a safe location considered more conducive for them to undergo the next phase of the programme.

"They are expected to be better prepared to join their communities at the end of the programme," the source concluded.

The rehabilitation programme is one of the initiatives of the National Security Adviser (NSA), Sambo Dasuki, under the Soft-Approach Programme to countering terrorism.

However, as the federal government assigned therapeutic experts to treat post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in victims of terrorism, the Director General of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) Muhammad Sani-Sidi, has warned against stigmatising the girls and women rescued from

Boko Haram in the North-east saying only six of them returned with pregnancy.

The government had initiated assessment and treatment of prolonged PTSD to control the physiological symptoms, which can enable the patient to tolerate and work through the highly emotional material in psychotherapy.

Speaking at an interactive media platform hosted by PRNigeria, at the weekend, Sani-Sidi who commended the military in their combat against terrorism, said of the almost 300 rescued women and children from Sambisa forest,

majority of them were children.

"Out of the 275, 63 came unaccompanied and that is very worrisome, it is a terrible situation to have children under the age of five unaccompanied, meaning they have lost their parents and we cannot link them with their parent at the moment, six of them came with pregnancy and that is a sympathetic situation," he stated.

"I must put it on record that only six of them came with pregnancy and we must add however that we must be very careful not to stigmatise this innocent Nigerians who were

under captivity and came back with pregnancy so that we don't end up stigmatising the child that is yet unborn. I think we must respect their rights and be careful by the way we talk about the issue and we should respect their rights."

The NEMA boss explained that the success recorded by the military against Boko Haram has led to a drastic reduction in the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs), citing the instance of Adamawa State where "at the moment we have six camps which we call residential camps that are presently hosting about

27 thousand IDPs in Yola in particular and we have over 200 thousand living within the host communities whereas "we had about fourteen camps at the beginning of last year in Adamawa State alone."

Insisting that humanitarian work cannot be handled only by government especially where terrorism activities were the cause, Sani-Sidi disclosed that his agency had enjoyed tremendous support from the Borno, Adamawa, Yobe and Gombe State governments, where IDPs' camps are located in the North-eastern part of the country.



PAYING LAST RESPECTS

L-R: Anambra State Governor, Mr. Willie Obiano; National Chairman, All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA), Chief Victor Umeh; President-General of Ohanaeze Ndigbo, Chief Gary Enwo Igariwey; and the APGA governorship candidate in Abia State, Mr. Alex Otti, at Senator Uche Chukwumerije's funeral service in Abia State...recently

NNPC Clarifies Award of N95bn against the Corporation by French Court

● Says dispute already settled

Ejiofor Alike

The Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) has provided clarifications on the reported award of N95 billion compensation against the corporation by a French court in favour of Lutin Investment Limited in a long standing dispute.

The spokesman of NNPC, Mr. Ohi Alegbe, said in a statement yesterday that the report, which made the headlines on Saturday was fraught with material inaccuracies, which could have been avoided if the reporter had taken reasonable care to fact check with NNPC.

He noted that the matter has since been laid to rest with the execution of Settlement Agreement between NNPC and Lutin Investment with the corporation paying the said amount as full and final settlement.

The NNPC explained that the saga began in 2007, when

Lutin Investments Limited (Lutin) obtained an arbitral award against NNPC for the amounts stated in the story.

"While Lutin made several attempts to enforce the judgment within the Nigerian judicial system and by appealing to various successive government officials, including the past Attorneys-General mentioned in the story, and in various other jurisdictions, including the United States and France, NNPC resisted the enforcement of the judgment and sought to have the arbitral award set aside on grounds, inter alia, that the award was irregularly obtained," said the statement.

NNPC noted that in late 2014, following appeals by Lutin to the federal government and after taking advice of NNPC's external French counsel on the matter, NNPC offered to pay to Lutin the judgment sum it was awarded at the arbitral tribunal in 2007 if Lutin would waive all claims for interest and any

additional amounts.

"Lutin accepted this offer, the parties entered into a Settlement Agreement to that effect, NNPC subsequently paid the settlement amount and the matter was thus finally settled," the statement added.

The corporation further stated that it was an express condition of the settlement that both parties waived any benefits that might accrue to them from the judgment of the French court, which at the time was imminent and which French counsel advised would not be stopped by the settlement.

The corporation noted that subsequently, the French court rejected NNPC's challenge to the arbitral award.

NNPC also stated that contrary to the news story, the French court did not set aside the Settlement Agreement entered into between NNPC and Lutin in November 2014.

According to the corporation, the agreement was not in issue

at all in the French court.

"The only issue before the court was whether to uphold an order of 2007 made by a lower court in France recognising the arbitral award," NNPC said.

NNPC further disclosed that its position based on the facts set out above, is that Lutin cannot seek to enforce the French judgment having expressly waived its rights to any benefits that might accrue from the judgment and having accepted the payment of the amount awarded to it in the arbitration (excluding interest and costs) as full and final settlement of all controversies between the parties.

"Therefore, as far as NNPC is concerned, all issues arising from the Lutin arbitration have been finally settled and there is no judgment debt of N95 billion or any amount whatsoever due from NNPC to Lutin," the statement concluded.

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