

Two Captains, One Soldier in Heroic Deaths as Guards Brigade on Routine Patrol is Ambushed in Bwari

● Terrorists kill three, abduct school principal, six others in Katsina ● Law school moves call to bar to Jabi ● Anonymous fresh terror alert in FCT, Lagos, four other states ● Wase: DSS issued 44 security reports before Kuje's attack ● Senate passes bill for commission against arms proliferation ● Ex-MNJTF commander urges FG to name terrorism sponsors ● Kogi denies explosion in govt house

Kingsley Nwezeh, Emmanuel Addeh, Alex Enumah, Sunday Aborisade, Udora Orizu in Abuja and Francis Sardauna in Katsina

Two army captains and one soldier, Sunday night, died as heroes battling insurgents around the Kubwa-Bwari Road, near Abuja, while on routine patrol.

Although a statement on Monday by the Presidential Guards of Brigade, had claimed three soldiers were injured during a clash with terrorists that Sunday night, THISDAY can, however, confirm that two officers and a soldier, paid the supreme price during active service to fatherland.

Unfortunately, the menace constituted by these anti-social elements, have continued to scale up with the killing, also yesterday, of three persons and kidnapping of seven others in fresh onslaught in Yar Tarki and Unguwar Isiyyaka

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WE ARE WITH YOU...

L-R: Former All Progressives Congress (APC) National Welfare Officer, Alhaji Ibrahim Masari; Vice Presidential candidate, Senator Kashim Shettima; Plateau State Governor, Simon Lalong; former Edo State Governor, Adams Oshiomhole; presidential candidate, Bola Tinubu; National Secretary, Senator Iyiola Omisore; Kaduna State Governor, Nasir el-Rufai, and Zamfara State Governor Bello Matawalle, during the appointment of chairman and Director General of the party's presidential campaign in Abuja... yesterday

LEAD CONTINUATION

TWO CAPTAINS, ONE SOLDIER IN HEROIC DEATHS AS GUARDS BRIGADE ON ROUTINE PATROL IS AMBUSHED IN BWARI

villages in Funtua Local Government Area of Katsina State.

Also disturbing was that the first batch of the 2022 Call to Bar ceremony of graduates of the Nigeria Law School, could not hold again at the premises of headquarters of the institution in Bwari, Abuja, as scheduled, following threats of attacks by terrorists.

Worse still, an anonymous alarm, patterned after standard security alerts from some of the nation's agencies, has warned that terrorists were planning to attack the ICT, Katsina, Zamfara, Kaduna, Kogi, and Lagos States.

In similar breath, the Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives, Hon Idris Wase, yesterday, disclosed that the Department of State Services (DSS), issued not less than 44 security reports ahead of the recent attack on the Kuje Correctional Centre, Abuja, yet, no action was taken by the authorities.

Nonetheless, the Senate has passed a bill to establish a national commission for coordination and control against the proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

This is as a former Commander of the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF), Brig. Gen. Jon Temlong (rtd), has called on the Nigerian authorities to make public, the list of sponsors of terrorism in the country.

Meanwhile, the Kogi State government, has denied reports that there was a bomb explosion in the Government House, saying the claims of a bomb explosion was a mere hoax.

Spokesman of the Guards Brigade, Captain Godfrey Abaka, had said in his Monday statement that, some soldiers were ambushed along the Kubwa-Bwari Road while responding to a distress call, and that three of them were wounded and hospitalised, while the attack was repelled by his men.

Troops on routine patrol along Kubwa-Bwari were ambushed by suspected terrorists. Three soldiers were injured during the attack. The soldiers have been evacuated for medical attention," the statement stated.

THISDAY, however, gathered that two army captains and one soldier were killed during the attack.

A competent source said the remains of the soldiers had been taken to the Brigade of Guards medical facility.

Two captains and a soldier were killed in that unfortunate encounter. They paid the supreme price. I was with one of them last week. I am in mourning presently," a military source said.

Terrorists Kill Three, Abduct School Principal, Six Others in Katsina

Gunmen suspected to be terrorists have killed three persons and kidnapped seven others in fresh onslaught in Yar Jalki and Unguwar Isiyaka villages in Funtua Local Government Area of Katsina State.

A security source in Funtua, who confirmed the separate attacks to THISDAY, said, the hoodlums armed with sophisticated weapons invaded the neighbouring villages in the wee hours of Tuesday.

He explained that the principal of Government Secondary School, Makera, a 35-year-old nursing mother and her 17-month-old baby were those abducted in Yar Jalki village.

According to the source, the suspected terrorists massacred three people and kidnapped four other residents of Unguwar Isiyaka village, including the ward head, to adjoining forests in the area.

He said: "Early this (Tuesday) morning, some armed terrorist in large numbers carrying sophisticated weapons attacked Yar Jalki village and started shooting sporadically and in the process they kidnapped one Yahaya Magaji, the Principal of Government Secondary School, Makera.

They also kidnapped Marakusa Yakubu, aged 35, and

her 17-month-old baby. Bilikisu Yakubu. At Unguwar Isiyaka village, three men were killed by the terrorists and four others have been kidnapped including the Mai Unguwa (ward head).

He added that those who sustained injuries during the attacks were receiving treatment at near-by hospital.

When contacted, spokesman of the State Police Command, SP Gambo Isah, said he had no clue about the incidents. "I am not aware of any attack in Funtua but I will find out," he said.

In a related development, the Coalition of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Katsina State, has expressed concerns over the increasing spate of terrorists' attacks on communities across the state, saying nobody was safe again in the state.

The coalition, in a statement by its Chairman, Abdullrahman Abdullahi titled: "Worsening Security Situation in Katsina State: A Call for Prayers and Sober Reflection", accused the state government of failing to secure the lives and property of the citizens.

"Most disheartening is the government's inability to take decisive actions and bring these incessant senseless killings of innocent and law abiding citizens to an end. Banditry activities are in the rise everyday and the bandits are becoming bolder and more dangerous with every attack they carry out.

"This is because they are becoming more equipped with deadly weaponry with the ransoms paid to them, making them stronger and more daring to advance their attacks to areas, thither to, inaccessible to them. Today, nowhere is secured and nobody is safe in Katsina State. The state headquarters, the seat of power, is not a safe haven either," the statement read.

Law School Moves Call to Bar to Jabi

The first batch of the 2022 Call to Bar ceremony of graduates of the Nigeria Law School, might no longer hold as scheduled within the premises of the headquarters of the institution in Bwari, Abuja, following threats by terrorists.

Instead, the swearing-in of the new lawyers, would now take place at the headquarters of the Body of Benchers (BoB) in Jabai, along the airport road.

A Senior Advocate of Nigeria, who gave the hint, however, pleaded anonymity, citing the worrisome insecurity in the country.

He was responding to questions from journalists on issues discussed at the July meeting of the body, which held at the headquarters of the BoB, in Abuja.

Asked what was discussed during the meeting and whether the request of the NBA for the Chairman of the BoB, Chief Wole Olanipekun, SAN to step down as chairman was also discussed, he said, "No nothing like that was discussed.

"This meeting was fixed three months ago and what was discussed was solely the Call to Bar ceremony, which will be holding here, because of the security situation in the country. Our next meeting will be in September and nothing regarding the NBA was even mentioned for that meeting."

Reports of planned attack on public institutions by terrorists had been in the media for some time now forcing the Ministry of Education to order the immediate closure of some secondary schools in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

Another report also has it that while a convoy of Brigade of Guard were attacked by terrorists along Bwari-Kubwa highway, the terrorists have besieged the Nigerian Law School in Bwari, possibly planning an attack.

The terrorists had reportedly threatened to kidnap President Muhammadu Buhari; Governor Nasir El-Rufai of Kaduna State;

some members of the National Assembly to register their displeasure with the current administration.

Kidnapping for ransom has become a booming business for terrorists and kidnappers as they appear to operate unimpeded and unchallenged by security operatives.

Security Issues Fresh Terror Alert in FCT, Lagos, Four Other States

An anonymous alarm patterned after standard security alerts from security agencies, has warned that terrorists were planning to attack the FCT, Katsina, Zamfara, Kaduna, Kogi and Lagos States.

The alert said the Islamic State for West African Province (ISWAP) had mobilised fighters and high calibre weapons, particularly, Rocket propelled Grenade (RPG) launchers, Anti-Aircraft (AA) guns and General Purpose Machine Guns (GPMG), which they intended to deploy for the offensive in Katsina State.

"We have received credible intelligence that Boko Haram and the ISWAP Terrorist groups have mobilised fighters and high calibre weapons particularly Rocket propelled Grenade (RPG) launchers, Anti-Aircraft (AA) guns and General Purpose Machine Guns (GPMG), which they intend to deploy for the offensive in Katsina State.

"In another development, two separate bandits groups are plotting coordinated attacks on North-west, North-central and South-west (Katsina, Zamfara, Kaduna, Kogi, FCT and Lagos respectively).

"Consequently the Commandant-General, has directed you to scale up deployment in all strategic places, including schools, worship centres and critical national assets in your respective states to checkmate any possible threats by these criminal elements," it said.

The Federal Capital Territory Command of the National Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) had, penultimate week, issued a similar alert.

When contacted, Spokesman of the NSCDC Headquarters in Abuja, Mr. Shola Odeumoso, denied that the alert emanated from the agency.

Wase: DSS Issued 44 Security Reports Before Kuje's Attack

Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives, Hon Idris Wase, has disclosed that the Department of State Services (DSS), actually issued about 44 security reports ahead of the attack on the Kuje Correctional Centre, Abuja, without any commensurate action from the authorities.

Hundreds of inmates, including members of the Boko Haram, were freed by some insurgents, who invaded Kuje Maximum Prison on July 5, 2022.

Wase, however, made this known while reacting to a motion sponsored by Hon. Abubakar Yalleman (APC-Jigawa) on the 'need to halt the proposed nationwide ban on commercial motorcycles'.

He urged the motion sponsor to step it down, as the parliament was obligated to support the federal government in their efforts to curb the worsening insecurity in the country.

"We should cooperate with the government, though we appreciate what our brother has brought and we appeal to the government that as they implement this policy, they should look at those areas that are not vulnerable and do not have the potency of having any such insurgency in their community."

"In line with our principle to help to curb the incessant insecurity in our country, we have to cooperate with government. You can't imagine what's going on today in Abuja. I went through DSS report, 44 reports were given before the attack of kuje prison. And it all has to do with this. There's no community where attack will happen that you don't have an intel. So, we have to cooperate with government."

Yalleman, had while moving his motion, urged the federal government to halt the proposed nationwide ban on commercial motorcycles and ensure that adequate palliative measures were put in place before such decisions were implemented.

He also prayed the government to restrict the proposed ban to the local government areas, where the mining activities or banditry/terrorist activities take place.

He also said the House was aware that the proposed ban of motorcycles was aimed at curtailing the supply of logistics to the terrorists in the country.

But the lawmaker expressed concerns that the activities of bandits and kidnappers across the country had subjected members of victims' families to serious psychological trauma even as they were forced to part with their hard-earned money.

He opined that while banning commercial motorcycle operations across the country as a means of curtailing security challenges, the welfare and wellbeing of the citizenry should be considered foremost, as the government has not offered palliative measures to cushion the expected effects of the ban.

While worrying that the proposed ban could render millions of Nigerians jobless, Yalleman said putting a sizeable number of the population out of work would only aggravate the security challenges in the country.

Senate Passes Bill for Commission Against Arms Proliferation

The Senate, yesterday, passed a bill to establish the National Commission for the Coordination and Control of the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons, 2022.

The passage of the bill, however, followed the consideration of a report by the committee on National Security and Intelligence.

The bill is a consolidation of three bills – two private-member bills and one from the executive arm of government against the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the country.

They are "The Nigerian National Commission against the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (Establishment) Bill, 2020 (SB. 283); The Nigerian National Commission against the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (Establishment) Bill, 2020 (SB. 513); and The National Centre for the Coordination and Control of the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (Establishment) Bill, 2021 (SB. 794)."

The three bills, after scaling second reading, respectively, in the Senate, were all referred to the Committee on National Security and Intelligence for further legislative work.

Chairman of the Committee, Senator Ibrahim Gobir (APC, Sokoto East), in a presentation on the floor, said the three bills sought to provide for the establishment of a government body that would be saddled with combating the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Nigeria.

According to him, the functions of the body shall be in line with Article 24 of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Convention on the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons which came into force in 2009.

The lawmaker added that the Committee on National Security and Intelligence, resolved to consolidate the three bills into one, adding that doing so would adequately cater to the establishment of a Commission to implement measures aimed at eradicating illicit arms.

Gobir explained that establishing a Commission against proliferation of weapons stemmed from the need to immediately address the nation's present state of insecurity.

The National Commission Against the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (Establishment) Bill, 2022, was passed by the Senate, after a clause-by-clause consideration of the Committee's report by the

Committee of the Whole.

Ex-MNJT Commander Urges FG to Name Terrorism Sponsors

A former Commander of the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF), Brig. Gen. Jon Temlong (rtd), yesterday, called on the Nigerian authorities to make the list of terrorism sponsors in the country public.

Speaking on Arise News Television, Temlong, stressed that terrorism had become a multi-billion naira industry, and that the elite could not be extricated from the insecurity in the country.

The former military top shot urged the country to take a holistic view of the growing insecurity in the country, noting that a situation of increasing unemployment, out-of-school children as well as the almajiri system, would only continue to breed hardened criminals.

"I agree and I think the government, has not been able to publish these names. We have said they should make the names of these terrorists sponsors public, because there are so many of them involved.

"Yesterday, I was discussing the nexus between mining and terrorism. It is not the ordinary man there who sits down there and carries the gold for sale. Somebody said there is a gold market in Hilton and other five star hotels. Zamfara gold is being sold there and from there it goes to Dubai.

"You said people collected N800 million, where will they spend this money? In the bush? I agree that there shouldn't be a blame game. But I think we should look at these things holistically.

"It is the elites, who are aggravating and sponsoring and fuelling the insecurity, because there are merchants or crisis entrepreneurs, who are making billions out of what is happening here. There is blood money all over their hands," he stated.

Temlong argued that all the angles to the current insecurity must be reviewed to make sense out of it, adding that a situation, where some states behave like independent entities does not bode well for the country.

"If you don't give education to people, it means that you are growing the population that has no hope. And then a population that has no hope is susceptible to be used or recruited for what they (terrorists) are doing now."

"You have to start tackling the problems from down, providing education, providing the enabling environment for people to operate, because government itself cannot just provide all the jobs; it's a farce," he added.

Maintaining that the solution to the current insecurity goes beyond one individual or entity, Temlong explained that there must be synergy between the states and the federal government, saying, "Some of the states behave as if they are independent of the whole country."

He argued that at a time, bandits were allowed with guns into the government houses in Zamfara and Katsina, insisting that state governments should begin to listen to the advice given by the security agencies.

"It has to be a coordinated effort," he said, adding that insecurity is now a political issue to be used to achieve cheap political points.

He stated that Nigeria could not operate in an independent environment, because terrorism has become a global war pointing out that whatever happens in other places has a cascading effect on Nigeria since terrorism has no boundaries.

While underscoring the place of hard drugs on the prevailing national insecurity, he said the release of a video of terrorists torturing their victims recently was to create a situation to force the hands of the government to negotiate and to raise public outcry against government.

He contended that if govern-

ment started to pay ransom, insecurity in the country would never end, reason it was done through the back door in some times.

According to him, rescuing the abductees might have become very difficult due to the possibility of a lot of casualties during the operation.

"The commander-in-chief gave the instructions that they should rescue them without casualties. That is a very big problem for the military. Unfortunately, it is as if the whole of the security problems in this country have been left to the military to resolve.

"They do not have that capacity. They are not made for that. There are situations that it is the political authorities that might solve some of these problems and not just the armed forces. No, that is a misnomer," he noted.

Kogi Denies Explosion in Govt House

The Kogi State government has denied a recent report that there was a bomb explosion at the Government House, describing such claims as mere hoax.

A statement by the Chief Press Secretary to the governor, Mr Onogwu Mohammed, said the reported development was unfounded, but admitted that there was a distress call from the Ministry of Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs over an object that looked like an Improvised Explosive Device (IED).

The statement noted that a police bomb disposal unit was deployed in the area but later found out that it was a plastic bottle.

The attention of the Kogi State Government has been drawn to a false and misleading publication in the media platforms captioned: 'Explosion Rocks Kogi Government Office'.

The government is baffled and views this publication as malicious, false, misleading and a calculated attempt to cause panic and undermine the already improved security situation in the state.

May we, at this point, state the true facts surrounding the incident that actually occurred earlier this morning of 26/07/2022 around the Ministry of the Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, opposite Muhammadu Buhari Civic Centre, Lokoja.

There was a distress call to the police regarding an object that looked like an IED placed on the fence of the ministry of Local government and chieftaincy Affairs, opposite Muhammadu Buhari Square, Lokoja," the state government said.

The statement further disclosed that, The Bomb Disposal Unit of the Nigerian Police Force Command located a minute away from the scene was immediately deployed to the area.

On arrival they found out that it was a plastic bottle and a Can of insecticide wrapped together with a power source to look like an IED. It was discovered to be a hoax and the object was removed by operatives of Bomb Disposal Unit.

However, there was no explosion around any government premises in Lokoja as reported by some media platforms," the government stated, noting that, it considered the publication as not only unprofessional but also believed it was at variance with the ethics of the profession of journalism.

For the sake of emphasis, we would like to put the record straight that there was no bomb explosion whatsoever in Kogi Government House or offices in Lokoja metropolises.

"The government commends the good people of Kogi for their unalloyed support given to the security agencies in the state and enjoins them to disregard false news as it is capable of causing palpable tension as well as instilling fear in the state, while urging them to go about their normal businesses as there is no cause for alarm," it said.