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MONTHLY SITUATION REPORT

HIGHLIGHTS

32

Boko Haram Activity

○ **Highlight of week 1 & 2**

- The number of incidents recorded during the first two weeks was 264 and the most recorded incidents were armed attacks by various armed groups, armed clashes, and killings.

24

Banditry Activity

- A new self-appointed negotiator for armed groups became the highlight the Northwest region.
- New COVID-19 cases in the first two weeks were at 13,273 and deaths were at 135.
- Peaceful demonstrations were common in the the first two weeks with 26 incidents recorded.

38

Civil Unrest

- Kidnappings were recorded in all the six-geopolitical zones in the weeks with most incidents recorded in the North Central region.
- Ethnic tensions as Yorubas started the eviction of Fulani herdsmen from the South West region.
- Military operations recorded in the North East and North West regions.

34

Kidnapping Activity

○ **Highlight of the week 3 & 4**

- The number of incidents in the last weeks of the month reduced to 114 despite an intensity in armed attacks, killings, and kidnappings.

73

Killings

- COVID-19 numbers in the last two weeks surged to 23,801 new cases.
- Tension amplified leading to inter-ethnic clashes between Hausas and Yorubas. Also, a blockade of food trucks from the North to the South.
- Boko Haram insurgents orchestrated attacks attempting to infiltrate the capital of its stronghold in North East region.

04

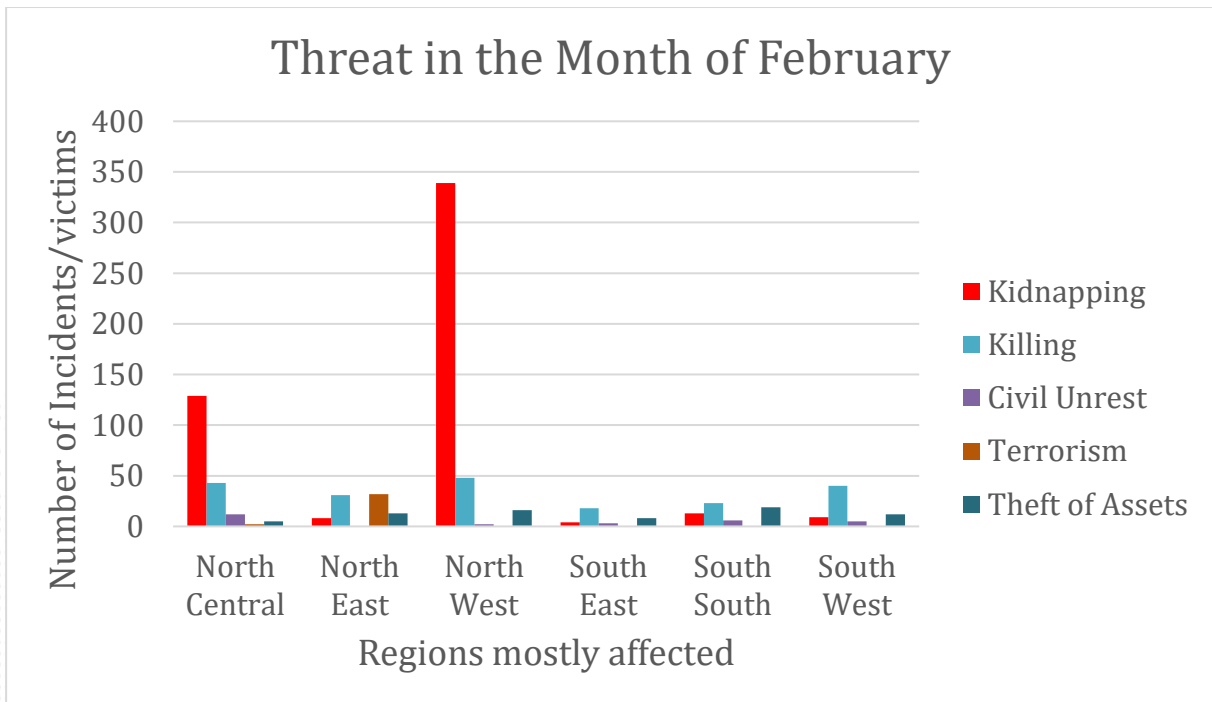
Military Operation

- Two IED incidents was recorded in the North West and North East regions.
- A massive kidnapping incident targeting school girls in the North West region.
- Police stations and police officers targeted in the South East and South South region.

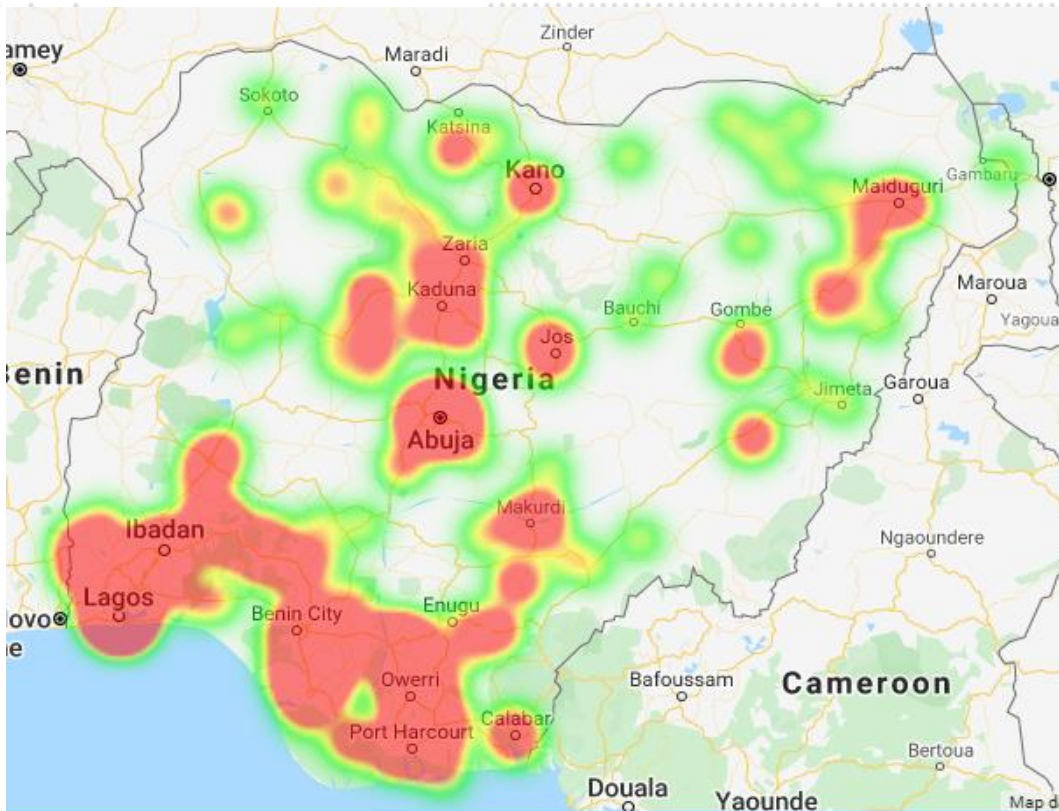
46

Theft of Asset

MAPS AND CHARTS



Heat Map for Nigeria - February 2021



Analysis



The month in review is assessed as high due to ethnic tensions, killings, attacks on police stations, and kidnappings spread across the six geopolitical zones.

The highlight of the month was the kidnapping of students in the North Central and North West regions of the country. The first of such incidents attributed to armed groups now known as bandits was recorded in December 2020 at Government Science School in Kaduna State. This time around, two incidents of the same nature were recorded in the month with over 300 students being kept hostage possibly in a forest in the northern part of the country.

The North Central was riddled by kidnappings the whole month. An estimated 157 individuals were kidnapped from various incidents from 2nd February to date in Niger, Taraba and Abuja FCT with Niger recording the most incidents. Abuja FCT recorded an upsurge in kidnappings as the Bwari council chairman's father and in Kubwa where a journalist and two sons of his neighbour were kidnapped on 3 February at 2300 hours. Noteworthy, Bwari is a community close to the notorious Kaduna-Abuja Highway which is a known hideout for bandits. Fortunately, the journalist and his neighbour's sons were released after the wife reported they paid NGN 10m (USD 25,300). Most of the incidents in the capital has been random and it is unclear why ordinary citizens are being targeted. Although ransom remains the goal, the act of kidnapping these individuals from their homes raises further concern. In Taraba, most of the kidnappings recorded in the month were high profile individuals and it was further reported that residents of the southern part of the state had been acquiring arms to protect their communities from attacks. It is unknown if the strategy has yielded the desired results considering that the number of kidnappings in the state is not as high as other parts of the region.

During the month, kidnapping attacks changed as armed men attacked a secondary school after invading surrounding areas and highways kidnapping 27 students of Government College, Kagara LGA on 17 February. The Governor, Sani Bello immediately ordered the closure of boarding schools in four LGAs. The attacks in the area intensified for days afterwards as unknown number of residents drowned trying to escape the onslaught by the assailants. Further reports claim that at least nine LGAs have been besieged by armed groups. The Senator representing Niger East constituency, Sani Musa, expanded on the security situation by stating that the most affected of the LGAs in the state is Rafi while incidents occurring in Munya are underreported. Other areas that were affected include, from Alawa to Erena in Shiroro LGA, Lambata in Guarara LGA, between Minna and Suleja, Tarfa LGA. By map, it will be noticed that the aforementioned areas share border lines with Kaduna State which is rife with armed groups activities. The current perhaps self-appointed negotiator, Sheik Abubakar Gumi however announced that the students might be released on 21 February if the bandits' demands are met. The students were not released on that date rather, 21 of the victims who were kidnapped along a Zungeru road in the state were released on 22nd



February. Unfortunately, the abductors of the students have threatened that if the government does not make payments for the release of the students, their starved remains will be retrieved. Also, part of the negotiations for the release of the students is the withdrawal of vigilantes from some local governments in the state which has already commenced. The boys were later released six days later. Due to the recent kidnapping at a school in Niger State, the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) announced that it will be deploying officers to designated schools across the country.

Benue and Plateau states continue to record herdsmen attacks. Although incidents in the area are underreported, they are not gaining as much importance as the issue of violent herdsmen specifically of Fulani descent is now widespread. In Kogi State, a school was incinerated by the herdsmen in Kogi State and the assailants were reportedly later arrested by the police. Thus far on the matter, the response from the government via the Special Adviser to President Buhari on Media and Publicity, Femi Adesina was that any individual bearing arms unlawfully must be arrested and prosecuted.

All through the reporting month, 32 terrorist activities were recorded in Borno and Yobe states including the attempted invasion of Maiduguri, Borno State by Boko Haram terrorists on 23 February. All through the month, many insurgents were sighted moving around in gun mounted trucks in Dapchi and Babbangida towns in Busari LGA in Yobe and others along Dikwa-Marte road, Borno State where they were reportedly preventing people from moving from Marte to Dikwa and along Gajiram-Monguno road. The terrorists have resorted to robberies along highways and these incidents are recurrent with no security forces in sight. It was however reported that soldiers were prompt in dispersing the assailants immediately they were reported during the first reporting week. Security forces also restricted vehicular movement along the Monguno-Gajiram road, due to the presence of terrorists along the routes. This is most likely the cause of the mass movement of over a thousand internally displaced persons from four LGAs (Gubio, Magumeri, Kaga and Konduga) in Borno into Geidam, Tarmuwa, Gujba and five villages on the outskirts of Damaturu, Yobe State. The movement was confirmed by the Police on 4 February. On 2 February, the staff on an international NGO were attacked by during a cash distribution programme in Garin Gada community in Yobe State. The staff were trapped, and two women were kidnapped but were later released. one of their vehicles escaped while the others were trapped in the town. Staff of International NGOs seem to be the new target as they are the most sought after for ransom and for propaganda. The military reportedly recorded a successful operation between 3 and 25 February with an estimated 60 terrorists killed including their commanders.

Although reports of their activities in the North East seemed to be fading from limelight which was possibly because of information about their move towards the Northwest and North Central regions due to the recent activities recorded in the areas. That however changed after ten rockets were fired into Maiduguri in an attempted invasion. The assailants first fired 10



rockets which impacted Mairi, Kaleri, Constein and Gwange towns and caused chaos as video depicted residents running away from the onslaught. An estimated 16 persons were killed including nine boys playing football in Gwange while 60 others were injured. The assailants who reportedly infiltrated the area through a poorly manned entry point at Simari behind the University of Maiduguri were eventually repelled by soldiers who recorded one fatality. Noteworthy, this incident occurred as soldiers were retaking Marte LGA which was attacked and taken over by terrorists six days prior. It is most likely that it was a strategy by Boko Haram to test the porosity of Maiduguri which has been in a blackout for over a month after the sect destroyed the power grid with Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) and has continually deterred technicians from repairing the grid by attacking whenever work is ongoing as recorded on 27 February at about 1130 hours. Another IDP camp was affected by fire in the reporting week in which an estimated 620 makeshift houses were destroyed during a fire outbreak at the IDP camp at the Custom area of Maiduguri. Three persons were killed including an infant and it remains unclear how the fire spread throughout the camp without resistance.

There was tension in Gombe State as Biliri LGA sought to enthrone another traditional ruler. Violence erupted as several properties were destroyed by factions who rejected the imposition of a ruler in Tangale community. It reportedly deteriorated into religious and ethnic crisis. A curfew was ordered by the State Government to bring an end to the violence. The police were deployed to the area to restore calm.

The highlight of the month in the North West region was the meeting held by a Muslim clergy, Sheik Abubakar Gumi with bandits in their hideout in Zamfara State. The bandits who carried their AK47 rifles and dressed in military fatigue gave an insight into their description and weapon of choice. It also explained why victims are mostly confused during attacks as the sighting of military uniforms might slow down their flight mode. They reportedly said they wanted to dialogue directly with the government possibly in hopes of getting a large sum of money to let down their guns as the government is known to negotiate with armed groups and given the precedence, the bandits would prefer negotiating with the government. Despite these efforts including the renouncing of bandit activities by some armed groups, kidnappings and killings amplified in the last week of the month and one of such incidents was the kidnaping of over 300 girls by bandits from their school in Jangebe, Zamfara State. Reports indicated that women were part of the bandits and one of them spoke over the phone to inform on the ongoing operation. They were moved with vehicles but five of the girls reportedly escaped in the pandemonium.

In Kano State, the Department of State Security (DSS) on 4 February took over the mosque and residence of Kano-based controversial preacher Abduljabar Nasiru Kabara. The state government had restricted the preacher citing that his preaching was too violent and inciting. Thus, his residence and schools were surrounded by security forces till further notice. This is



in line with the DSS theory that there were individuals inciting others to cause the religious crisis in the country.

The ethnic tension between the Fulani and the Yoruba in the South West region escalated and deteriorated into violence disrupting economic activities in Oyo and Ogun states. Although, relative calm has been restored in the area, the possibility however remains that violence could erupt again if the tension is not effectively managed while number of casualties remain unconfirmed. There was a massive migration of Fulani herdsmen from Oyo, Ogun, and Ondo states into Kwara State in the first week of the reporting period causing a lot of tension. The herdsmen are known to be aggressive and unwilling to understand that livelihoods are being destroyed as they recklessly lead their cattle to feed on already cultivated land. It is however important to note that the farmer/herder clash have been ongoing for years but in recent times this has become worse as the herders have become more violent and are mostly the perpetrators of kidnappings in the SW. The Southwest governors therefore held a closed-door security meeting and unanimously agreed to adopt the National Economic Council (NEC) resolution on forest management, which will put the governors in the position to manage forest reserves in their respective states. This decision would allow the governors to be the authority on decisions having to do with nomadic herders.

As pertaining to civil unrest, the ghost of the EndSars protests haunted the Southwest in the reporting month after a decision to reopen the Lekki-Admiralty Toll which was the epicentre of the unrest in October 2020. In Lagos State, there was a call for a protest by Yele Sowore, the convener of the “RevolutionNow” at Toll on 13 February. A counter protest was also called for the same day while the government threatened that no protest must hold. In retrospect, the events of 20 October in which at least 78 persons were killed after soldiers fired live ammunition at protesters demanding an end to police brutality led to a riot in which several places were destroyed including the toll gate. The police were deployed to the area since 8 February to prevent any gathering. On 13 February, several protesters were physically assaulted by the police and arrested. Social media was filled with reports of the happenings and criticism. Calm has been restored but the contest against the reopening of the Toll is expected to resume in the next reporting month depending on government’s response,

The South East region recorded an upsurge in robberies and attacks on police officers and police stations in Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, and Imo states. At least 10 police officers have been killed in different attacks while three major stations were incinerated between 4 and 25 February. Although most of the incidents have been blamed on Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), there is no evidence to corroborate these speculations. However, the attacks on police stations intensified after the Nigerian Air Force conducted airstrikes on 18 February in Orlu, Imo State. It was reported that the targets were the Eastern Security Network (ESN) vigilantes in the area allegedly at the behest of the Governor, Hope Uzodinma. The week before this



incident, the military clashed with the group over an undisclosed dispute and it seems there was more to the incident than presented in the media. The airstrike was however criticised by social media commentators who disagreed with the military's operation considering that other parts of the country remain rife with insecurities that requires soldiers' immediate attention.

Robberies, herdsmen attacks, killings and kidnappings were recorded in the South South region during the month. Bayelsa, Edo, Delta and Rivers all recorded incidents relating to cult activities. Also, in Delta State, the aide to the governor on youth development, Okiemute Sowho was killed by armed men on the evening of 20 February along Crudax road, Sapele. It was speculated as an assassination as he was shot and close range and nothing was stolen from him. The Southern region remains volatile for criminal activities due to the proliferation of guns. In Cross Rivers State, four police officers were killed, and their weapons stolen by armed men at a checkpoint in Calabar. Police officers stormed the area the next day disrupting commercial activities.

Road traffic accidents declined in the month as 60 individuals were killed in 18 incidents which mostly recorded in the southern region. The South South and the South East regions recorded the most incidents during the month.

Civil unrest increased in the month as 38 incidents were recorded across the country. Apart from Abuja FCT which is where most protests are organised, the South South and South West regions also recorded an upsurge in protests as communities demanded an eviction of Fulani herdsmen and social justice, respectively.

Eighteen fire incidents were recorded during the reporting month spread across all the regions and interesting there was an upsurge in fire incidents in the North West region which affected shops and residential buildings.

In other news, President Muhammadu Buhari extended the tenure of the Inspector General of Police Mohammed Adamu, for three more months despite it being his retirement while he also presented the names of the just resigned service chiefs as ambassadors. The decisions were criticised by the people especially on social media. Interestingly in 2020, the President signed the Police Reform Bill which was clear on the tenure of the IG of police. Also, a directive from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) on bank transactions allowing the trading of crypto currency was restricted till further notice. This policy was also majorly criticised on social media.

Threat Chart for February

- ◆ **Low (1)** - Incident did not occur in the reporting period. Nevertheless, will to conduct attacks and opportunity to target project assets and/or personnel remains a threat.
- ◆ **Medium (2)** – Incident occurred but minimal. Nevertheless, will to conduct attacks and opportunity to target project assets and/or personnel remains a threat.
- ◆ **High (3)** – Incident occurred at increased proportion and active with demonstrated will to conduct attacks that would target project assets and/or personnel.

Threats for the Month					
Region	Kidnapping	Terrorism	Theft of Assets	Civil Unrest	Killing
North Central	High	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
North East	Medium	High	High	Low	Medium
North West	High	Medium	High	Low	High
South East	Medium	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium
South West	Medium	Low	High	Medium	Medium
South South	Medium	Low	High	Medium	High



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