

NIGERIA ANNUAL HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT 2022



**Nigeria
Annual Human Rights
Report 2022**

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1.0

INTRODUCTION

Periodic reports are in a sense comparable to the compass in helping to locate where progress has been made or not in a journey towards meeting a given set of objectives. That is one way to view the Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre's (PLAC's) Annual Report on Human Rights in Nigeria, which helps track the country's progress, or lack of, towards meeting the human rights provisions of the Constitution as well as those required by the country's international commitments.

In the Nigerian Constitution of 1999 (which has had four alterations so far), the citizen's human rights are articulated in Chapter Four and characterised as "Fundamental Rights." These include the right to life, the right to the dignity of the human person, the right to personal liberty and the right to fair hearing. The provisions also guarantee the right to family life, freedom of thought, conscience and religion as well as freedom of expression and of the press. They also give the right to peaceful assembly and association, freedom of movement, freedom from discrimination and the right to acquire private property while prohibiting compulsory acquisition of a person's property.

These constitutional provisions to protect human rights were also crafted to reflect Nigeria's accession to international treaties that protect individual rights. These include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations Conventions on the rights of women and children. These laws and treaties, which Nigeria voluntarily elected to be governed by, will form the basis of the assessment of the extent of the country's compliance with its human rights obligations.

In February 2022, PLAC initiated a project supported by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) to strengthen remedial actions against human rights violations in Nigeria. The project aims to encourage the Committees on Human Rights in the Senate and House of Representatives to use their oversight powers to provide remedy to victims of human rights abuse. The approach is to find the lapses and identify the legal measures needed to address them and alert those responsible for making laws to act on them. This report is a reflection of the information collected in the course of implementing the programme.

To further establish the context of this report, it is worth remarking that 2022 marked President Muhammadu Buhari's seventh year in power as an elected leader. It is also the third year of his second four-year term. In other words, it is a year in which the political transition process started as potential successors emerged to seek office in elections due early in 2023.

The political transition process also comes at a time of great economic difficulty that has seen plunging government revenues, increased borrowing and a foreign-exchange crisis that has only served to energise a growing inflationary spiral. This in turn has had a deleterious impact in the form of social tensions, rising insecurity and crime and a spreading conflict over grazing land between herders and farmers that have also followed the country's ethnic and religious fault lines.

Broadly speaking, the above is the background against which many human rights-related events occurred in 2022. This report will discuss the key incidents of rights violations against the expectations of the law.

For organisational ease, this report uses a thematic approach to review issues related to human rights violations in Nigeria during the outgoing year. The first set are those that directly impact on personal freedoms, such as the right to life, respect for the dignity of the human person, guarantee of personal liberty and the right to a private and family life.

The next set considers matters related to the administration of the justice system and the application of the principle of fair hearing. This will also involve examining the conduct of the security agencies and all those involved with managing the criminal justice system. After this, there is a look at how issues of freedom of expression and belief fared during the period under consideration. These cover issues such as freedom of the press, freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

Consideration is also given to aspects of the rights that relate to the mobile and social nature of the human person. These are the provisions that guarantee freedom of movement and association, as well as the right to peaceful assembly. Attached to this also is a review of the administration of the right to own property and the right to freedom from discrimination.

A concluding section highlights the key points identified in the review and offers suggestions on measures needed to keep Nigeria on track to ensure that the human rights provisions of the Nigerian Constitution and treaties signed by the government are fully implemented for the benefit of lawful citizens and residents.



2.0 THREATS TO PERSONAL FREEDOM

The year 2022 is one in which rights related to personal freedom were severely undermined due to worsening social tensions, insecurity and a number of insurgencies going on concurrently. Here, we are talking of such provisions as the right to life, respect for the dignity of the human person, guarantee of personal liberty and the right to a private and family life.

It is envisaged by the law that every person will have a right to life that can only be abridged in the execution of the sentence of a court for a criminal offence for which the person was properly convicted. It is a stand challenged by opponents of the death penalty. It is equally not a violation if someone dies from “reasonable” force permitted by law to protect another person from unlawful violence, in defence of property, to arrest or prevent the escape of a detainee and for the purpose of quelling a riot or insurrection.

The Constitution does not expect Nigerians to be subjected to any form of degrading treatment. Specifically, the law prohibits slavery, servitude and any form of forced labour. The only exceptions are when the

labour is required in compliance with a court ruling or when done as part of national service in the armed forces or part of citizenship training.

The Constitution also recognises that every individual is entitled to their personal liberty, and stipulates specific conditions under which it might be denied. These conditions include the execution of the order of a court of law for a criminal offence for which the person was convicted, for the purpose of bringing a person to trial on reasonable suspicion of committing an offence or prevent the committal of an offence, and, in the case of minors, for their protection and welfare. A person may also be denied personal freedom to get him or her to comply with a court order or an obligation required of such a person by law. People can also be deprived of their liberty for their protection and for the safety of the community if they are in a deranged state, or to prevent the spread of infectious diseases.

A person may also be lawfully detained to prevent unlawful entry into Nigeria or in aid of an extradition order. In this regard,

the law says such a person should not be held awaiting trial for longer than he or she would have spent in prison if convicted. Any person arrested or detained will have the right to remain silent until consultation of a legal representative of his or her own choice. However, whenever a person is arrested or detained, the detaining authorities are obliged to inform the detainee within 24 hours, and in comprehensible language, the reason for curtailing their liberty. The law enforcement agency concerned is obliged to charge the person before a competent court of law within two days.

Where the trial period exceeds two months for someone in custody, and three months for someone out on bail, the person or persons concerned, will have to “be released either unconditionally or upon such conditions as are reasonably necessary to ensure that he appears for trial at a later date.”

Where a person happens to be unlawfully denied his or her freedom, they will be entitled to both compensation and a public apology from the agency and the official responsible. Exceptions are made for instances where people are denied their liberty on “reasonable suspicion” that they committed capital offenses.

The foregoing, in summary, are the expectations of the law as regards the personal freedoms of Nigerian citizens. To ensure that these stipulations apply, the Constitution provides safeguards meant to protect personal rights while balancing them out against the security and national interest needs of the broader society.

Yet, it remains the fact that the atmosphere of violence that has pervaded much of the country in recent years makes it impossible to meet the expectations of the law on personal freedoms and liberty. Currently, the country of more than 200 million people is in the grips of a nationwide, low-intensity conflict with active insurgencies in the country’s six major geo-political regions.

In the Northeast where Islamist insurgents launched a full-scale uprising in 2009, the destructive bloodshed has persisted, claiming more than 33,000 lives in 13 years and still counting.¹ During that period, three mutations of jihadists emerged as the original Boko Haram group splintered into the equally violent Islamic State West African Province (ISWAP) and Ansaru. The conduct of both the jihadists and security forces toward the unarmed population have attracted the criticism of the United Nations and international observers.

For a while, the violence appeared concentrated in the Northeast, with occasional flashes in the Northwest. However, in recent years the narrative has changed, with the Northwest reporting some of the worst cases of herders-farmers conflict. Jihadist groups also appeared to have moved to take advantage of this restiveness in the Northwest, moving their fighters there and towards the North-central area both to develop new fighting fronts and to escape increased counter-insurgency campaigns in the Northeast.

¹ Pandemic of hunger symposium: The humanitarian crisis in north-east nigeria—a time to act (2021) *Opinio Juris*. Available at: <http://opiniojuris.org/2021/05/21/pandemic-of-hunger-symposium-the-humanitarian-crisis-in-north-east-nigeria-a-time-to-act/> (Accessed: October 15, 2022).

Part of the northern-central plains, the so-called Middle Belt, that has some of the country's best farmlands, have been the theatre of clashes between pastoralists, moving south ahead of desertification and drying out pasture, and farmers, who on their part see invaders taking their lands. The narratives have also been framed around the country's ethnic and religious divisions, further heightening tensions.

Similar constructs have emerged across the South, where the activities of armed herders, jihadists and other non-state armed actors have either been experienced already or viewed with apprehension. In parts of the South, these activities and perceptions of government partnership have fuelled the rise of secessionist movements in the Southeast and the Southwest and caused further restiveness in the Niger Delta oil region, where armed militants were already active.

In the Southeast, in particular, some pro-Biafra separatist groups have taken up arms, attacking police stations, military checkpoints and citizens viewed as not supporting their cause. There are, as well, cases of criminal activities dressed in political slogans. In the end, innocent citizens lose their personal liberty as they become victims of both increased government repression and the increased criminal violence.

Incidents

Northeast

For years, Nigeria's Northeast had taken the lead in human rights abuses perpetrated by both state agents and non-state actors, with the insurgency in the region now well into its second decade.

In May, it was reported that jihadists of the Islamic State West Africa Province slit the throat of between 25 and 30 local people they accused of being government informants. Most of the victims were young men who were in an internally displaced people's camp in the town of Rann, from where they had trekked some 80 kilometers to the town of Dikwa in search of metal scraps, mainly from vehicles burnt out in the fighting in the area, to sell for a living. They were unfortunate to show up in the area at a time the insurgents were mourning the death of their leaders killed in military air strikes. They now became the scapegoats of insurgent anger.

The plight of these communities illustrate the multiple layers of abuses and violations of fundamental rights the civilian communities are subjected to by both sides in the war. First, they are forced from their homes, denied the right to private and family life, denied the right to live in dignity, denied rights to personal liberty and fair hearing, and ultimately, the right to life.

Since the Nigerian military acquired Tucano attack aircrafts, more suited to counterinsurgency operations, it has increased aerial attacks on the jihadists. The insurgents have in turn increased their ambushes of military convoys and garrisons, setting the stage for increased suspicion of civilian inhabitants of the areas whenever either party gets attacked. Unarmed civilians have borne the brunt of these rights violations.

Particularly targeted are farmers, pastoralists, loggers and fishermen trying to go about their daily activities. It is a situation that has adversely affected agriculture and other economic activities, further subjecting the people to inhumane treatment. The United Nations estimates that, at least 40,000 people have been killed in the region since the insurgency began in 2009, with more than 2 million forced from their homes.

Northwest

Many Nigerians will agree that in that past year, the country's Northwest has supplanted the Northeast as the standard bearer for insurgency in the country, as well as for widespread insecurity and their impact in eroding the basic rights of those caught within its orbit.

The year began rather inauspiciously when a series of attacks by so-called armed bandits left more than 200 people dead and more than 10,000 displaced between January 5 and 6 in Zamfara State alone. A week earlier, military jets had bombed their camps, enraging their commanders who then decided to attack nearby villages in reprisal, leaving long trails

of blood. Locals said more than 300 gunmen riding on motorbikes attacked a string of villages in the Anka and Bukkuyyum districts, shooting, burning and looting.

Like Nigeria's Northeast, the Northwest has some of the worst human development indicators in terms of the number of people living in poverty, those with malnutrition, children out of school, underage marriage and others that point to circumstances that were already undermining fundamental human rights. To that has been added violence that is often characterised as banditry but may have deeper roots pointing to long-standing social divisions.

Understanding the situation in the region will require a bit of history going back more than 200 years to 1804. That was the year the ethnic Fulani, who had migrated eastwards from the Senegal-Guinea region over centuries, made a bid for power over their indigenous Hausa hosts in the name of a jihad to purify Islam. The successful uprising, which led to the establishment of the pre-colonial Sokoto Caliphate, enthroned the Fulani elite as the overlord of the Hausa people. These class divisions have survived into the post-colonial era and remains a source of resentment for the underclass.

However, other aggravating factors have emerged in recent decades, particularly climate change. The relentless, unchecked southward advance of the Sahara Desert has meant that pastoralists, who are mainly ethnic Fulani, are moving into areas occupied by mainly ethnic Hausa farmers in search of pasture, leading to conflict between the two, further inflamed by old grievances.

In the resulting tit-for-tat violence, many pastoralist groups that lost access to grazing grounds have pivoted full-time to banditry and violence. In the meantime, some jihadists groups that were active in the Northeast, including some that split from Boko Haram such as Ansaru and ISWAP, slowly moved many of their fighters over time to the Northwest to escape military pressure and open up new fronts in their violent campaign. There are increasing reports of some of the bandits and the Islamist insurgents finding enough common cause to collaborate.

Signs of this new violent potency in the Northwest have manifested in full in the year under review, especially in such States as Zamfara, Sokoto, Kebbi, Katsina, mostly putting Fulani herders against Hausa farmers. In Kaduna, another Northwest State almost evenly split between a Christian south and a Muslim north, like the country itself, the conflict has broken along sectarian lines. Besides the violence targeting perceived rivals and enemies, the mainstay of many of the armed groups in the region has been kidnapping in exchange for ransom payments.

Armed groups stalk most of the highways in the region with the objective of seizing as many high-value people as possible for hefty ransom payments. When they are not doing that, they are attacking farming communities or forcing them to pay taxes to them before they can be allowed to farm.

Several illustrations of how strong and menacing the various armed groups in the region have become came within days of

each other in March. On the 26th day of that month, gunmen infiltrated the runway of the airport in the city of Kaduna, killing one security guard near the runway before they were repelled by troops.

The shock of that was yet to wear off before gunmen said to be Islamist insurgents ambushed a train bound for Kaduna from Abuja on March 28. The train was halted with explosives between Katari and Rijana communities in Kaduna State by the attackers, who also opened fire on the passengers, killing a number of them before taking scores of them hostage. The last of those hostages released recently spent more than six months in captivity.

When they are not seeking hostages for ransom, the gunmen in the Northwest frequently besiege communities and attack them as part of the cycle of reprisals between pastoralists and farming communities. This was the situation when Yantumaki local market in the Dan Musa local government area of Katsina State was attacked by gunmen on April 1 while it was in session, killing several people. Inhabitants of the community say gunmen arrived at the market around 3 p.m. local time and opened fire. Four days later, a similar attack was carried out, this time targeting the communities of Kadaddaba, Rafin Gero, and Babban Baye in the Anka local government area of Katsina State, leaving 13 people dead.

Around the same period, gunmen invaded the Angwar Maji community in the Kagarko local government area of Kaduna State and

abducted 11 people. In the Birnin Gwari district of the State where gunmen affiliated to the Ansaru jihadist group are based, 10 soldiers were killed in an assault on their military base by gunmen. Then on May 17, an improvised explosive device exploded at a market in the northern city of Kano, leaving nine people dead. A jihadist group claimed responsibility for the attack.

On June 9, gunmen raided several villages in the Kajuru district of Kaduna State and killed 32 people after arriving on motorbikes, with local people claiming the attackers were supported by helicopters. The State government disputed the allegation and said the aircrafts seen about the time of the attack were actually military helicopters responding against the attackers.

This trend was sustained in the region for the rest of the year, with the government unable to offer rural communities much protection. Part of the Zamfara State government's response has been to urge citizens to try and get guns and defend themselves, saying it was putting in place a process for that. In Kaduna State alone, more than 400 people were killed in such attacks in the first six months of the year, according to a security report recently issued by the State government. The worst impact was in the second quarter, when 285 people were killed and 985 taken hostage. In the third quarter, there were 161 deaths and 804 people were seized to ransom.²

In the Birnin Gwari Emirate Council in Kaduna, the armed groups now administer tax on the local communities running into

hundreds of millions of naira. Specifically, the emirate pays between 300 million to 400 million naira in a year to the gunmen. These are broken down into pre-season payments to allow farmers till their land, mid-season payments to allow the farmers tend to their crop, and end of season payments that includes cash and a share of the harvest, according to community leaders.

Middle Belt

North Central Nigeria, the so-called Middle Belt, has been a major theatre of the sort of violent conflicts in which all the fundamental rights of the people are negated. There are historical, political and environmental reasons for the current state of affairs in the region.

In pre-colonial Nigeria, many of the myriad of ethnic groups in the region had formed a bulwark against the southward advance of the Sokoto Caliphate after it had emerged victorious over the old Hausa city States in the 19th century. Even after the alliance of Sokoto and the British colonialists gave the upper hand to the Fulani elite, they were still resented and resisted in the mainly non-Muslim centre, a fact that has remained a part of the country's post-independence political dynamics. The southward advance of the Sahara Desert that saw pastoralists pouring into the rich pastures of the region, which also was the farmlands of the locals, has only made the situation more combustible, with a huge toll on the ordinary people.

One example of this was the April 12 attack by suspected herdsmen on some communities in the Kanam and Wase local government

² In full: '446 killed, 1,789 kidnapped' -- kaduna presents six-month security report (2022) TheCable. Available at: <https://www.thecable.ng/in-full-446-killed-1789-kidnapped-kaduna-presents-six-month-security-report> (Accessed: October 30, 2022).

areas of Plateau State in which, at least, 142 people were killed. A little over a week later, six people were killed in an improvised explosive device attack on a bar in the Iware community of Taraba State. The attack was reportedly claimed by ISWAP.

Painting a picture of the situation in the region, Major-General Ibrahim Ali, the General Officer Commanding the Third Division of the Nigerian Army, in charge of security operations in Plateau and Kaduna States, lamented the widespread availability of light weapons and small arms, given the large quantities recovered from bandits and other criminal elements in the area. Some of them were automatic weapons while a vast majority were locally fabricated arms.

The situation in Kaduna, Plateau, Benue and Taraba was later in April the subject of a meeting of top national security officials and lawmakers from the House of Representatives. The lawmakers were mostly critical of President Muhammadu Buhari and his seeming inaction in upholding one of the fundamental principles of government, which is to uphold the safety of the lives and properties of citizens. They called on the government to invoke emergency powers in tackling the problem and called for the resignation of the defence minister and the national security adviser.

Even the usually conservative and restrained pressure group, the Northern Elders Forum, also demanded Buhari's resignation over the siege of insecurity across the country, with data showing that 2,968 people were killed and 1,484 abducted for ransom between

January and March.³

However, what was to later become a major cause of concern was the threat on the Federal Capital Territory. Before then, there had been anecdotal reports that some insurgent groups were setting up camps in parts of Nasarawa, Kogi and Niger, three States that surround the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. One early sign was the June 29 attack on a mining site in the Shiroro district of Niger State, in which 22 people were killed and four Chinese men were reported abducted.

Barely a week later, on July 5, gunmen attacked an advance convoy of President Muhammadu Buhari that was heading to his home town in Katsina State to prepare for his visit.

On the same day, there was an attack on the Kuje Correctional Centre on the outskirts of Abuja in which insurgents freed more than 1,000 people, including hundreds of terrorists that had been awaiting prosecution. With that successful attempt, many people concluded that it was a question of time before the safety of Abuja was threatened. There have been skirmishes involving terrorists and troops guarding the Federal Capital Territory since then, culminating in the terror alert issued by the United States Government on Abuja in late October and the subsequent evacuation of most of its staff.

That underscores the latest status of the Federal Capital Territory as a place where the safety of life cannot be guaranteed nor respect

³ Babangida, M. (2022) Insecurity: 2,968 killed, 1,484 abducted in three months; Niger, Zamfara, kaduna most violent states, Premium Times Nigeria. Available at: <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/523567-insecurity-2968-killed-1484-abducted-in-three-months-niger-zamfara-kaduna-most-violent-states.html#/~/-/favorites> (Accessed: November 6, 2022).

for the dignity of the human person as the government increasingly loses to capacity to ensure the security of the property and the lives of the people it is supposed to govern.

Southeast

Southeastern Nigeria is one region of the country touted for long as relatively peaceful but one where the security of lives and property have deteriorated steadily since 2015. Much of the decline of security can be attributed to the separatist agitations of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), led by Nnamdi Kanu, campaigning for an independent state of Biafra in Southeastern Nigeria, and the government's repressive response, as well as the activities of pastoralists and other gunmen accused of kidnapping for ransom.

IPOB had started out as a non-violent group campaigning for an independence referendum for Southeastern Nigeria. Then it accused Buhari of being partial to his Fulani ethnic group and fellow Muslims, using it as further justification for its separatist agenda. The group's stance, while not a violation of the Constitution, was met with brutal repression by the Buhari administration, resulting in a number of documented instances of extrajudicial killings.

In December 2020, accusing the Buhari administration of being behind the activities of Fulani gunmen across the country, IPOB announced the formation of what it called the Eastern Security Network (ESN), purportedly to defend the southeast region against the activities of armed herdsmen. What emerged

instead, was another front of insurgency, according to the Nigerian Government.

First, there were attacks targeted at police stations as well as police and military patrols, attributed to non-state actors generally described as "unknown gunmen."

Things took a turn for the worse after it emerged that state security agents had abducted the IPOB leader, Nnamdi Kanu, in Kenya in June 2021 and brought him back to Nigeria without due process.

After Kanu was put on trial, his group, IPOB, declared sit-at-home strikes every Monday across the Southeast in protest. Even after IPOB called off the Monday strikes, they persisted, enforced by gunmen who attack unarmed civilians that dare go about their affairs. In the circumstances, the State is unable to assert its authority and guarantee the citizens the protections envisaged by the Constitution. All of these developments intensified in 2022.

The March 21 attack on the Oru Police Station in Imo State in the southeast was typical. The assailants had lobbed dynamites at the police station, killing two officers. Police said four of the attackers were killed. But even then, another group of gunmen had attacked the country home of George Obiozor, President-general of the Igbo advocacy body, Oha n'Eze Ndị Igbo, part of a trend of attacks those whose views were deemed not to be pro-separatist.

However, the skirmishes between the so-called "unknown gunmen" and the security forces continued throughout the year, with

ordinary citizens seeing not only their lives threatened, but also their livelihoods disrupted.

In one of the most grisly incidents, gunmen on April 30 seized two soldiers, a male and a female, who were going to get married in Nkwerre in Imo State and decapitated them. The gory images were recorded and shared on social media, another indicator of the level of depravity the society had reached in its toleration of violations of human person and human dignity. Similarly, in neighbouring Anambra State, Ikechukwu Okoye, a legislator representing the Aguata constituency in the State legislature, was seized on May 15 by gunmen and days later, his severed head was found mounted on a stake in the town of Amichi. These incidents of terror were largely aimed by non-state actors at intimidating civilian communities and making them compliant to their directives.

On May 22, the perpetrators of the violence sought to stoke sectarian violence on a national scale by murdering a Muslim mother and her three children in the town of Isulo in Anambra State. It is the sort of incident that could easily ignite tit-for-tat violence between Muslim and Christian communities across the country, which appears to have been the intended effect the perpetrators wanted to achieve.

To counter the pro-Biafra militia, some governors in the region are alleged to have armed a pro-government militia under the banner of Ebubeagu. They are also accused of targeting people on mere suspicion of

being IPOB sympathisers with consequences that would often include torture and extra-judicial killings. All of these serve to create the type of environment where the fundamental rights of individuals to life, to personal liberty and to the dignity of the person are trampled upon with impunity.

Southwest

While not entirely free of the insecurity that pervades much of Nigeria, the Southwest region was relatively safer. Yet, a recurring incident remained kidnapping for ransom, mainly blamed of herdsmen.

The impact of these kidnappings and other attacks were mostly felt in the farms, where local people were scared away from either planting or harvesting what they had already planted. It was this state of affairs, and the seeming inaction of President Buhari's government in the face of these developments that gave rise to the emergence of Sunday Igboho, the self-styled leader of a Yoruba separatist movement with the objective of achieving a Yoruba nation.

Very much like the Biafra separatist before them, Igboho and Yoruba nation activists were visited with a heavy handed government crackdown. Igboho was forced to flee the country after the state secret police raid of his home left some casualties. He was intercepted in neighbouring Benin Republic at the request of the government and has since been entangled in legal disputes about whether he should be extradited to Nigeria or not. The courts in Benin Republic later freed him and he is reported to be living in

Germany at this time.

However, the June 5 incident in which an Islamist terror cell opened fire on a Catholic church in Owo town in Ondo State while the Sunday service was going on, became a turning point. More than 50 people were reported killed in the attack, which was reportedly claimed by ISWAP.

The situation has led to the radicalisation of elements in the Southwest that appear bent on taking up arms against the State to back up their demands for a separate Yoruba nation. On November 1, a procession of members of this group clashed with a military patrol in the town of Ota, Ogun State, in Southwest Nigeria. That incident resulted in a soldier being disarmed.

Two separate attacks on November 10, both targeting offices of the Independent National Electoral Commission, one in Ogun and another in Osun, were also blamed on the Yoruba separatist agitators, an indication that another front of insurgency may be opening up in the Southwest, with all the negative implications for human rights.

South-South

The South-South region, or the Niger Delta oil region, has its own legacy issues as it relates to human rights. In sum, what it meant was that for the government, oil was pre-eminent to the environment and the rights of the people, and therefore, everything would be done to ensure that oil continued to flow.

It is a stance that was most damaging to the interests of the people and always pitted the government against the people as a repressive machinery doing the bidding of international energy companies. The result is that the region where unrest first began in Nigeria almost two decades ago, remains as restive as ever.

A common complaint is the activities of herdsmen who kidnap for ransom and the brutality of the security forces towards the youth. Early in July, gunmen seized two Catholic priests on the now notorious Benin to Auchu highway. Very often, the security forces strike back, such as in the August 21 incident in which a notorious kidnapper was killed when troops raided their hideout in the Iyuku forest in Edo and four of his hostages freed.

The Udoda community in the Ahoada West local Government Area of Rivers State, in many ways illustrates the current fate of many communities in the Niger Delta in terms of coming under attack in turns from armed criminal gangs and security forces. Each group locks in the community members with distrust. Members of these communities end up being frequently killed, with their houses and valuables destroyed.



3.0

SHRINKING CIVIC SPACE

What has become evident in recent years, and even more so in the past year, is the slow but steady narrowing of the civic space. Like the waters of a drying lake, it has lost its former expanse and is only left with an old core that is nevertheless besieged on all sides.

Yet, this civic space is one that is vital for the survival of democratic freedoms. This is primarily because it is what gives the citizen the faith to believe that laws will be upheld, that grievances, whether personal or group, can be adequately addressed through the civil and political process, and that the institutions of State belong to nobody and are for everybody.

It is this public sphere, where the society brings forth all the knowledge it has about what is wrong and all the possible remedies to heal it. Yet it has come under assault from all sides. In the process, constitutional guarantees for freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom of conscience, freedom to hold and impart ideas without hindrance and other basic freedoms come into jeopardy. Sometimes they come in the form of attacks on fair hearing, negating

the constitutional principle that no one can be convicted of an offence without being afforded the opportunity to defend oneself.

It is primarily to ensure and protect these rights that the judiciary exists, to temper State power so that the rights of the citizens are not violated or redress obtained where violation occurs. For the judiciary it has been very challenging to live up to all expectations given its inherent limitations. Yet, 2022 remains a year in which milestone judgments were made, setting the stage for momentous steps taken to restore the judiciary to its proper role in a constitutional order.

Freedom of Expression and the Press

One major fundamental rights provision of the Constitution that is always in contention is that which provides for freedom of expression and freedom of the press. As expressly stated in the Constitution: “Every person shall be entitled to freedom of expression, including freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart ideas and information without interference.”



Image source: Sunrise News

This right extends to the right to own and establish any medium for the dissemination of information, ideas and opinions. Where there is deliberate spreading of false information, there are legal provisions for libel and defamation to take care of such occurrences. Of course, the law seeks to ensure that confidence is maintained with regard to protected communication, for instance, in maintaining the authority and independence of the courts or regulating wireless telephony and broadcasting. Restrictions on use of information is also imposed on public office holders to the extent that it is a requirement for their office.

What became observable on the part of the government instead, was a desire to muzzle the media and by extension the citizenry from freely expressing themselves on national affairs. One such action which was carried over from the preceding year was the ban placed on the micro-blogging platform Twitter.

The government had banned Twitter in Nigeria in June 2021 in obvious reprisal after a statement by President Buhari on his handle was deemed offensive and deleted for violating Twitter rules. That ban was sustained until January 13. Still, the fact is that while the ban lasted and access to Twitter was suppressed in Nigeria, people still found workarounds that enable them to remain in communication and reduce the impact of the ban.

As in the case of Twitter, the federal authorities have a tendency to deploy their regulatory cudgel whenever they want to beat media organizations into line or take punitive action against them. This is what was at work when the National Broadcasting Commission in August said it was revoking the licences of 53 broadcasting organisations in Nigeria purportedly over outstanding regulatory dues.

The stations, according to Balarabe Ileh, Director General of the National Broadcasting Commission, had been warned in May of their indebtedness and given two weeks to pay up, which they failed to do three months later, providing the justification for their operations to be shut down within 24 hours. This contention was successfully challenged in court by the Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP) and the Nigerian Guild of Editors, which secured a restraining order on the authorities pending the determination of substantive issues.

Some of the worst instances of abuse of power aimed at curtailing the fundamental rights to freedom of expression and of the press have been from the State Governors. For instance, there is the case of Agba Jalingo, a journalist and publisher of an online newspaper, Cross River Watch, who was arrested in August 2019 after his publication ran a story that the Cross River State Governor, Ben Ayade had diverted State funds amounting to 500 million naira. He was subsequently charged with terrorism, cyberstalking, and treasonable felony among others and clamped into detention for six months without trial, which seemed to be the intention of bringing unprovable, trumped up charges against him that were ultimately dismissed by a Federal High Court in March this year.

Then, once again on August 19, Mr Jalingo woke up in the night to find that his residence in Lagos was besieged by armed policemen. They arrested him, saying they had been sent from Abuja. On his being taken to Abuja, it

turned out that the case was in connection with a petition filed by the wife of the brother of Governor Ayade of Cross River State, the same source from which his initial travails emanated. However, given the public outrage generated by the arrest, Jalingo was released by the police, who said the petitioner had withdrawn her complaint. But the incident falls into a pattern of powerful person using their influence over law enforcement agencies, and even the courts, to try to settle personal scores.

Similarly, a journalist, Olamilekan Bashiru, was arrested in May 13 by the State Secret police after his news website, Eagles Fore Sight, published a story alleging that the current Ogun State Governor, Dapo Abiodun was arrested in the U.S. for credit card fraud in 1986. It was a republication of a story that was originally published by The People's Gazette, another online publication. The story was said to have stemmed from a petition by the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) Chairman, Abdullahi Adamu that was seeking to disqualify Abiodun as the party's gubernatorial candidate for the 2023 elections.

Following his arrest, Bashiru was questioned without being allowed access to his lawyers, and was forced to delete the published article, as well as issue a retraction that the story was false.

Even from the security agencies, there have been reported cases of institutional hostility or even personal acts of hostility shown to journalists for just doing their job. A journalist, Shina Oludare, recalled being attacked by a

group of soldiers at the National Stadium in Abuja on March 29 while covering the fracas that followed the World Cup qualifying match between Ghana and Nigeria. Despite his visible accreditation tag and identifying himself as a journalist, Oludare was flogged and beating by the soldiers and policemen, who also broke his phone.

In the case of Olu Phillips, a reporter with Channels Television, his efforts to cover the April 1 reopening of the Lekki Toll Gate (shut down after October 2020 bloody protests there), earned him a roughening and an arrest by policemen at the site. It took the intervention of passersby who queried the grounds for the arrest and harassment to secure his release, according to him.

The Right to Fair Hearing

Closely linked to the issues of freedom of expression, freedom of thought, religion and conscience is the matter of fair hearing. The Constitution provides that everybody's right to fair hearing must be protected and respected. Derogations of this right may only be permitted by the court under clear legal and constitutional standards.

Apart from being considered innocent until found guilty, every accused person is entitled to be informed immediately of his or her offence and given the opportunity of choosing a lawyer of his own choice and afforded the facilities for their defence. The Constitution also does make the point that no person shall be convicted unless the

crime is clearly defined by law and a penalty stipulated.

In reality, there are two dominant tendencies. One is the tendency of those in government to bend the law to meet predetermined goals (in ultimate violation of the law) or that of the disempowered to seek quick or mob justice. Both tendencies seemed to be on the rise this year.

Even though the Constitution provides for the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, including the right to change one's religion or belief, a Nigerian named Mubarak Bala, who is a self-proclaimed atheist, was sentenced to a 24-year jail term April on account of blasphemy.⁴

Bala had made some social media posts which some people considered blasphemous of Islam. But despite the fact that Bala had renounced the religion, with his position fully backed by the Constitution, the judiciary was still used to secure a conviction against him in obvious violation of his fundamental constitutional rights. This was achieved by a flawed prosecution process by choosing to try him in Kano, even though the alleged offence was not committed in Kano, all in a bid to rope him in under a Kano State law. Even while in prison, he was forced to go through Islamic worship despite having renounced the religion.

Somewhat similar to Bala's case is that of Yahaya Sharif-Aminu, a Sufi sect musician sentenced to death by hanging for alleged

⁴ Court sentences Mubarak Bala to 24 years imprisonment for blasphemy (2022) The Guardian Nigeria News - Nigeria and World News. Available at: <https://guardian.ng/news/court-sentence-mubarak-bala-to-24-years-imprisonment-for-blasphemy/> (Accessed: November 20, 2022).

blasphemy after he shared what was considered an offensive song via WhatsApp. It is now a test case before Nigeria's Supreme Court, to decide if the religious laws being applied by some States in blasphemy cases run counter to the provisions of the Constitution.

Yet another issue related to attempts by the government to make the judiciary serve predetermined purposes concerns the trial of Biafra secessionist leader Nnamdi Kanu. While Kanu was for some time known to be on exile, the circumstances in which he was brought back to Nigeria in June 2021 were never quite explained by the government.

Instead, he was put to trial to face a 14-count charge bordering on terrorism and treason. Though his lawyers challenged the validity of the charges and the jurisdiction of the court, a Federal high Court had decided he had a case to answer with seven of the charges. This decision was appealed by Kanu's lawyers, leading to the October 13 Court of Appeal decision. In that judgement, the court of appeal dismissed all cases against Kanu, saying the case was damaged by the illegality of Kanu's abduction from a foreign country, without going through a formal extradition process. In the opinion of the judges, no court in Nigeria can try Kanu given the inherent flaws of the case.

Northwithstanding, the Attorney General of the Federation and Justice Minister Abubakar Malami has acted with impunity and refused to heed to Court of Appeal decision. Instead, he has filed for a stay of execution of the judgement and filed a fresh set of seven-

count charge against Kanu. The defence lawyers have characterised the move as an abuse of court processes.

Where it is not the government trying to subvert the law, it is the mass of the people, the dis-empowered, who are taking the laws in their hands. At the heart of such self-help actions is a belief that the judicial and criminal justice system is rigged and does not deliver justice.

Therefore, the result is that often disproportionately severe punishment is often meted even for what should be minor offences. For instance, two unidentified men were burnt to death on May 11 in the Ijesha area of Lagos for allegedly stealing mobile phones. Two days later, it was reported that another mob lynched a young man in Auchi in Edo State for alleged stealing, and in the Lugbe district of Abuja in June, a mob killed a member of a vigilante group for allegedly making a blasphemous statement.

Then take the case of David Imoh, a sound engineer, who had a minor argument with a motorcycle rider in the Lekki area of Lagos on May 12 and was pounced upon by other motorcycle riders, who then beat him to death. A similar incident in Abuja on May 18 degenerated into a riot in the Dei-Dei area, resulting in the death of at least, five people.

On May 29, a mob of motorcycle riders attacked the Same Global Estate in the Lokogoma district of Abuja and set, at least, one building on fire after a driver who was involved in an accident with one of their members fled there.



Image source: Channel Television

Gender issues

Also prominent in the year under review are issues related to gender and the treatment of women. Perhaps, the most noteworthy development was the votes taken by lawmakers on 68 bills intended for the fifth alteration of the 1999 Constitution. Five bills specifically meant to improve the rights of women were shut down by the lawmakers, including that intended to raise the quota of seats for women in the National Assembly.

The rejection of the bills not only reflect the male-dominated composition of membership but also that the mindset of those members is one of hostility towards the rights of women. It is, therefore, not surprising that in the wider society, women are also denied their rights and frequently victimized as well for their gender.

For instance, a widow from Aguleri community in Anambra State, who was accused of killing her husband without evidence, was stripped naked, paraded through the community in April and humiliated just because of her gender. Seven people were later arrested by the police for their involvement in the incident.

In another incident on August 29, some members of the Amaegbuato community in the Bende district of Abia State were reported to have subjected a widow to flogging on the allegations that she is a witch. The State authorities were reported to have intervened in the matter as well.

Yet, there are cases of violence against women indicating they were targeted precisely because of their gender. There is the unfortunate story of Oluwabamise Ayanwole, a bus passenger in Lagos raped and killed by the driver and the case of a 15-

year old secondary school student raped by her teacher.

It is worth noting that there is a National Gender Policy that requires that 35 percent of appointments in the public sector should be reserved for women. This policy has been implemented more in its breach than in compliance.

This is what prompted a Federal High Court suit in April by Funmi Falana on behalf of several women organisations including Nigerian Women Trust Fund (NWTf). In his April 6 ruling, presiding judge, Donatus Okorie agreed with the argument of the plaintiffs and noted the gross under-representation of women in the ministries, departments and agencies.

Other violations

Other commonly violated rights in Nigeria include the right to peaceful assembly, association and peaceful protests. This right extends to being able to form and join any lawful organisation of one's choice, including political parties. The government and the security forces tend to view every protest as an affront to their authority rather than a right of the citizens.

This partly explains the response to the #EndSARS protests against police brutality, which upset the government so much that troops were sent in to quell the demonstrations which started out peacefully. The brutal attack was aimed at shutting those voices of protests reminding the government and the

security forces of their acts of impunity.

Two years after those events, the government has avoided any accountability or steps to hold to account those who unleashed state violence on unarmed protesters. Instead, it appears, every effort is being made to cover up what happened.

It is also ironic that even policemen who felt aggrieved over their poor conditions of service and attempted to organize fellow police to protest were dismissed in April from the force. The nine officers were accused of using their phones to plan and coordinate a protest by lower-ranked officers.



4.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

As a compass, the Nigeria Annual Human Rights Report 2022 is showing that Nigeria still has a long way to go towards fulfilling its human rights obligations to the country's citizens as articulated in the Constitution. Indeed, as the report shows, the country may in some ways have been blown off course, with the government that is the custodian of law and order often appearing lost as to what its true responsibilities are.

Another key finding is that Nigeria is going through a period of great economic difficulty, which on its own has exacerbated current human rights concerns. Economic difficulties inherently imply that all is not well and that the ideal conditions for meeting basic human rights do not exist. With the current government on the verge of leaving office and general elections looming, the government is facing plunging revenues, increased borrowing and a foreign-exchange crisis that helps to feed the beast of inflation.

This in turn has exacerbated social tensions, worsened insecurity and crime and helped intensify a spreading conflict over grazing land between the country's pastoral and crop-farming communities. Some of these tensions have further deepened the country's ethnic and religious fault lines. This has been the background against which Nigeria's human rights record for 2022 is written.

There are two broad thematic tendencies observable from the incidents of violation of human rights in Nigeria during the year under consideration. One pertains to issues related to the fundamental rights to life, to respect and dignity of the human person, the guarantee of personal liberty and the right to a private and family life. These rights have been egregiously violated during the period under review through the various communal conflicts, banditry, kidnapping and the insurgencies going on in different parts of country. What is more, these incidents underscore the failure and inability of the government to guarantee the citizens the right to life and personal dignity, to maintain law and order and protect the properties of its citizens.

The second aspect of the violations is that related to the administration of justice, the application of the principle of fair hearing, the protection of the right to freedom of expression, thought, religion and conscience as well as the role of the government in undermining these constitutional rights and protections. The government should be the prime defender and protector of these rights, yet we find that very often it is the prime violator of the rights.

The threat to personal freedom, including the right to life and dignity, appears to be the biggest threat currently confronting Nigerians. While the Constitution is specific about the circumstances under which personal freedom may be taken and the right to life denied, the violations have become quite wanton, with the government seemingly helpless to protect its citizens. It is obvious that the atmosphere of violence that has pervaded the country in recent years makes it well-nigh impossible to meet the expectations of personal freedoms and liberty.

The narratives have been framed around the country's ethnic and religious divisions, have further heightened tensions. In some parts of the country there are perceptions that the Federal Government is abetting, if not aiding, the activities of armed herders that have decimated many farming communities. This has fuelled secessionist movements in the Southeast and Southwest and further intensified the unrest in the Niger Delta, where armed groups have been active for years.

What has become evident in recent years, even getting more pronounced in the last year, is the steady erosion of the civic space that democratic rule has afforded Nigeria since the end of military rule in 1999. The government and its officials at federal and state levels have demonstrated high intolerance of criticisms and have chosen to clamp down on critics by deploying its regulatory powers to that end as well as using the security forces. Examples include the ban of Twitter and the numerous occasions government officials unlawfully arrest and detain critics. Even from the security agencies, there have been reported cases of institutional hostility or even personal acts of hostility shown to journalists for just doing their job.

The absence of an effective and transparent system of the administration of criminal justice that ensures fair hearing and commands the trust of citizens, has led to the proliferation of self-help, including mob actions such as lynching and the burning of the properties of suspects. For the judiciary it has been very challenging to live up to all expectations given its inherent limitations.

States in Muslim-dominated parts of Northern Nigeria that have made convictions of people for blasphemy are in violation of the fundamental rights provisions of the Constitution. And as the law provides, the Constitution takes precedence whenever there is a conflict with an existing law. In the case of Mubarak Bala, sentenced to 24 years for blasphemy, the conviction was achieved by a flawed prosecution process that tried him in Kano State instead of Abuja,

where the offence was alleged to have been committed. A somewhat similar case is being faced by Yahaya Sharif-Aminu, a musician sentenced to death for blasphemy by a Sharia Court in Kano State.

The year under review was also one in which five bills designed to improve the rights of women failed to get the approval of a male-dominated parliament. Among them was a bill that intended to raise female membership of the National Assembly to, at least, 35 percent. The rejection of the bills reflect a mindset of those members hostile to the rights of women, which is a reflection of the situation in the wider society, women are also denied their rights and frequently victimised as well for their gender and subjected to harmful traditional practices.

Recommendations

There is a need for the Nigerian Government to commit itself to the respect for human rights and the rule of law as entrenched in the Constitution and various human rights instruments to which it is obligated. The police and other security agencies should be re-orientated to respect human rights with human rights training provided for all cadres of police and security personnel.

The government needs to see itself as the prime defender of human rights rather than a beneficiary of their violation. This it can do by adhering to the rule of law in all its conduct. It needs to see its role in terms of the need to expand the application of democratic principles, advocating for and protecting the constitutional order.

There are still cases of political prisoners in Nigeria. The human rights activist and



Photo: PLAC's Stakeholders' Dialogue on the State of Human Rights in Nigeria

publisher of Sahara Reporters, Omoyele Sowore remains restricted from travelling out of the country with his passport seized. The so-called leader of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), Nnamdi Kanu remains in prison facing a web of complicated political cases in the courts after his illegal rendition and forced return to Nigeria from Kenya where he was seized. The Nigerian Government will need to release all political prisoners and refrain from clamping down on its perceived opponents in violation of constitutional safeguards. In addition, democracy comes with practice of respect for human rights and due process, which culture the Nigerian Government has not lived up to.

The state of the economy will inevitably affect the state of human rights. Nigeria has faced severe economic difficulties in the past year including low revenue, high inflation and an exchange-rate crisis, made worse by poor economic management and waste. The government needs to improve its economic management, given that the welfare of the people is the primary responsibility of government. There is urgent need to tackle the grazing conflict sweeping the country as it is directly implicated in food shortages and their rising costs.

The government should redouble efforts to tackle pervasive insecurity in the country and reassert its control over the country's territory. The authorities should launch investigations into allegations that some members of the security forces are showing partisanship to some sides in the grazing conflict, to nip such practices in bud, if true, and boost the citizens' trust in the armed forces.

The government has not been even-handed in the manner it has overseen the administration of justice, often tending to high handed news and arbitrary decisions often in violation of the rule of law under Attorney-General of the Federation and Justice Minister Abubakar Malami. The Buhari administration should desist from these illegalities which undermine the rule of law and abide by court rulings. In particular, the government needs to heed the decision of the Court of Appeal that dismissed charges against the leader of the Indigenous People of Biafra Nnamdi Kanu on the grounds that his abduction from Kenya and return to Nigeria without due process nullified the state's case against him.

The government should take steps to ensure that States that make laws that are in violation of the Constitution are reprimanded and asked to reverse course, given that the Federal Government is the custodian of our constitutional order, with the President and the Governors swearing an oath to abide by the Constitution. The authorities should avoid the temptation of serving two agenda, defending the Constitution with one hand and sabotaging it at the same time with the other hand.

The failure of the National Assembly during the fifth alteration to the 1999 Constitution to pass laws to improve the lot of women in Nigeria, remains a major act of omission by the country's lawmakers. The Federal Government should initiate steps towards representing those amendments while engaging in the necessary sensitization that will make it clear that passing laws that improve the lot of women ultimately improves the society as a whole.

APPENDIX

A LIST OF KEY INCIDENTS OF HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN 2022

The following list of incidents affecting human rights in Nigeria in 2022 is not exhaustive, and was not intended to be so. Being mostly excerpts taken from the media with the dates of reporting, they are meant to show the current trend and not designed to be definitive. One reason for this approach is because sometimes the most telling incidents may fail to make it to the mass media.

Much like in the preceding sections, it classifies the incidents, for ease of management, into those that pose threats to life and personal freedom, as distinct from those that seek to contract what remains of the National civic space, those that border on fair hearing as well as gender issues. There is not doubt that some of these issues do overlap, which is not surprising given that the subject is fundamental human rights.

Threats to Life and Personal Freedom

January 9

An estimated 200 people were killed and 10,000 displaced in attacks by armed bandits in the Northwestern Nigerian State of Zamfara. The

attacks were carried out as a reprisal following military air raids on their hideout.

Sadiya Umar Farouq, the Minister of Humanitarian Affairs, said more than 200 bodies were buried. Farouq called the past week's attacks in Zamfara State "horrific and tragic," giving the first official toll after details began filtering out early Saturday. The minister said more 10,000 people were displaced when "their homes were razed by the bandits while scores are still missing". The state government had previously said 58 people were killed in the attacks. Local people returned to their villages on Saturday to organise mass burials.

The military conducted air attacks on on targets in the Gusami forest and west Tsamre village in Zamfara, killing more than 100 bandits including two of their leaders, it was reported. More than 300 gunmen on motorcycles stormed eight villages in the Anka local area in Zamfara on Tuesday and started shooting indiscriminately, killing at least 30 people. Attackers also rampaged through 10 villages in Anka and Bukkuyum districts on Wednesday through Thursday, firing at residents and looting and burning homes. Babandi Hamidu, a resident of Kurfa Danya village, said the assailants were shooting "anyone on sight".

February 1

Gunmen in Nigeria have killed 11 security agents and several villagers after attacking remote villages in the North-central State of Niger, its governor Alhaji Bello said on Monday. Gangs have been terrorising areas of northern Nigeria in recent years, forcing thousands to flee and perpetrating mass kidnappings for ransom. Bello said the latest incident, which he blamed on “terrorists”, had happened on Sunday (31st January) afternoon in the Shiroro local government area. Local officials said last year that suspected Boko Haram militants were now present in Shiroro. The Islamist group has been engaged in an insurgency in Nigeria’s Northeast for more than a decade. “Terrorists, numbering over 100 are said to have invaded the community in broad daylight, killing about 11 Joint Security Taskforce members, several villagers and leaving many injured,” Bello said, adding that scores of gunmen were killed during a gunfight with security forces. Dahiur Muhammed, a resident of Galadiman Kogo village in Shiroro, told Reuters via phone that at least 30 villagers were killed and dozens more abducted after gunmen on motorbikes attacked three villages and set houses on fire. Several people were fleeing to Niger state capital Minna where there is better security, he said. Niger shares a boundary with the capital Abuja.

February 23

Dozens of Nigerian soldiers were killed and wounded in recent attacks in Nigeria’s insecure northeast region, according to a statement from the Islamic State group, which said its West Africa members carried out the assaults. The attacks using explosives targeted soldiers on patrol at various checkpoints in Borno State, killing and wounding

more than 30 soldiers, said the statement on the latest of the attacks released late Tuesday. The Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP) is a breakaway faction of the Boko Haram extremist group which launched a rebel insurgency against the Nigerian government more than a decade ago. Nigeria’s military did not immediately respond to an inquiry for comment to confirm the attacks, but also reported killing “several” extremists and recovering a “large cache of weapons” and vehicles from the militants during “clearance operations” on Monday in Borno State in a location different from where IS said its fighters attacked.

On 22nd February, IS militants targeted a Nigerian army patrol team with four explosive devices followed by mortar shells launched at a military camp in the town of Mallam Fatori, a few miles (kilometers) away from Nigeria’s northern neighbor Niger, the group said in one statement. An explosive device detonated during another ambush resulted in the death of three Nigerian soldiers in Mallam Fatori, it said, while “all those onboard” a military truck were either killed or wounded in yet another ambush on a Nigerian army convoy in Jiri town on the outskirts of Borno. Three attacks on Sunday and Monday killed and wounded “several” Nigerian soldiers, IS also said in separate statements, as the security forces continue to fall prey to the militants’ adoption of ambushes in areas where they seek to dominate and control especially along the Lake Chad axis.

February 27

At least eight persons were killed in attacks by Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP) insurgents in the Biu local government area of Borno State. The insurgents invaded

Mandaragirau and Ghuma villages in the LGA on Saturday night, killed eight residents and wounded a number of persons. Military sources said troops had thwarted an attack by ISWAP terrorists along Mandaragarau road in the early hours of Saturday. Nigerian troops, under Operation Desert Sanity, on a long range patrol in the general area were said to have intercepted communication of the terrorists on a mission to plant improvised-explosive devices (IEDs) on the routes and attack a military base. But the troops stormed the scene and tackled the insurgents. Following the interception, nine insurgents on three motorcycles were said to have stormed Mandaragirau and Ghuma, accusing the locals of disclosing information of their plans to the military. The insurgents also burnt some shops, looted foodstuff and livestock of the residents. The troops had successfully repelled an attack by another ISWAP group in Konduga LGA. Sources said the insurgents attempted to attack a military formation along Bama Road, when they met a stiff resilience by the troops in the location.

March 3

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) in a statement by its Deputy Director, Public Affairs, Fatimah Agwai Mohammed, stated that the legal team of the Nigeria Police has been almost absent from the sitting of the Independent Investigative Panel on Alleged Human Rights Violations by SARS, which resumed on 1st March 2022. According to the statement, the panel had only one police counsel, Mr. Kenneth Egbuchua who represents the institution, and policemen that are listed as respondents in all the cases before the panel. When contacted by the Commission, lead counsel for the police at the panel, Mr. James Idachaba, who was also not present at the panel, told the Commission that he had detailed

members of the police legal team to be at the panel unfailingly as he had an assignment outside his jurisdiction. The Commission stated that the proceedings of the Investigative panel had several times suffered setback and adjournments due to lack of cooperation on the part of the police, whose counsel has either refused to appear before the panel or refused to send representation. The statement, therefore, called on the hierarchy of the police institution to do the needful and take the IIP-SARS panel seriously adding that it is determined to fight for the rights and dignity of every person living in Nigeria. It also stated that, “During last year’s proceedings at the panel, the police paraded a reasonable number of counsel who barely struggled with the enormous cases brought against them. Now that the police have only one counsel, it logically raises doubt as to the seriousness of the institution concerning the serious human rights allegations against them.”

March 8

Police authorities in Lagos State have taken into custody the driver of the BRT Bus involved in the murder of 22-year-old fashion designer, Oluwabamise Ayanwole.

The driver, Andrew Nice Omininikoron, and another accomplice were arrested by DSS operatives in Ososa, Odogbolu area of Ogun State on Monday night. They were eventually handed over to the police. The Commissioner of Police, Abiodun Alabi while parading the suspect on Monday explained that following the arrest, the investigation will be expanded to bring everyone who is part of the crime to justice. Alabi told Channels Television that the preliminary response from the suspect has not been satisfactory, but it has been established that he is a prime suspect in the incident that led to the death of the victim.

Speaking on the allegations of sexual assault and missing body parts, the CP said police officers and family members of the victim were all at the mortuary, and there was no part of the victim's body that was mutilated.

He added that the post-mortem process has been initiated and the result will clarify if there was any form of sexual abuse on the victim.

March 11

The wives of slain soldiers alongside other women on Thursday stormed the residence of 223 Tank Battalion Commanding Officer to protest the killing of their husbands by suspected bandits in Kanya Village of Danko/Wassagu Local Government Area in Kebbi State. Some of the protesting women dressed in black attires were holding sticks to protest the killing of the operatives while others took to burning tyres in front of the residence of the commanding officer. In a video obtained by Channels Television, some soldiers were seen dragging out the women who had earlier gained access to the house, while those who wanted to gain access were prevented by the few soldiers around. The commanding officer was in the company of the Kebbi state Deputy Governor, Colonel Samaila Yombe (rtd), who was in the area on an assessment visit. Most of the protesting women lost their husbands when armed bandits stormed Kanya village on Tuesday and engaged the soldiers in a fierce gun battle that led to the death of some soldiers. A military source told Channels Television that the General Officer Commanding of 8 Division, Major General Uwem Bassey is scheduled to visit the area to access the situation.

“On Saturday, 19th March 2022, a medical doctor, Owen Edo-Ojo was going to visit a spa when he

parked his car on Gbamgbala street, Elegushi in the Lekki area of Lagos State. He was approached by a man in mufti, who knocked on his vehicle. On enquiring what the problem was, the man, a Naval Rating asked him to move his car or be moved by him. Apparently, his car was parked in front of a building reportedly owned by a senior military personnel. Dr. Edo-Ojo expressed dissatisfaction at the Naval Rating's manner of approach, upon which the latter threatened to inflict harm on Dr. Edo-Ojo and boasted that there will be no repercussion. Three other military personnel guiding the building joined the Naval Rating and dragged Dr. Edo-Ojo out of his car and beat him thoroughly. In the process, they inflicted him with stab wounds to his neck and hand and shot at him when he was struggling to make his way to a near-by police station.

Following the incident, the Director of Naval Information, Commodore Adedotu Ayo-Vaughan disclosed that the Naval Rating in question has since been arrested and detained, with investigation on-going. He also expressed the Navy's commitment to the respect and protection of law-abiding citizens. “

March 21

“Gunmen using dynamite have attacked a police station in Southeastern Nigeria, a day after two police officers were killed in another attack in the area, police said.

Sunday's attacks in the State of Imo were the latest violence in the region where separatist violence is on the rise. “The gunmen came with dynamite in the early hours of today and bombed part of the station at Oru but the assault was repelled,” state police spokesman Michael Abattam told AFP. He said four of the attackers were killed. “Four

of the gunmen were neutralised and five IED (improvised explosive devices) were recovered.”

Abattam had said on Saturday that a number of gunmen armed with explosives attacked Umuguma police station outside Owerri, the state capital, leaving two police constables dead.

He said some gunmen also invaded the residence of professor George Obiozor, leader of Igbo cultural union Ohanaeze, and destroyed part of the building with explosives.

Obiozor was not at home at the time of the attack, he said.”

March 26

Some unidentified gunmen on Saturday attacked the Kaduna Airport, killing an official of the Nigerian Airspace Management Agency (NAMA), identified as Shehu Na’Allah, at the runway.

The manager of the airport, Amina Salami, confirmed the incident to Channels Television.

She stated that the bandits invaded the airport through the perimeter fence from a nearby forest at about 1 p.m.

She stated that the deceased security guard, Mr Na’Allah, was patrolling the runway when he was shot by the assailants. However, soldiers at the airport responded immediately and repelled the attack. According to her, “The sound of gunshots attracted the attention of armed security operatives who arrived the scene, and were able to repel the bandits from gaining access into the main airport complex.” The attack delayed the takeoff of a scheduled Lagos-bound aircraft.

Armed operatives of the Nigerian Airforce and other military personnel took over the inner and

outer areas of the airport to fish out the bandits, Channels Television reported.

The Kaduna State government also confirmed the incident. Governor Nasir El-Rufa’i commended the security forces for their prompt response to the attack, and for repelling the attackers, and condoled with the family of the victim, the State Commissioner for Internal Security and Home Affairs, Samuel Aruwan, said.

March 28

Terrorists Monday night attacked a Kaduna-bound train in Northern Nigeria. The train left Abuja, the Nigerian capital, at about 6:00 p.m. and was heading to Kaduna when it was attacked between Katari and Rijana communities. The terrorists, also referred to as bandits in Nigeria, planted explosives on the train track and immobilised it before firing gunshots at passengers as they tried to open the doors.

Both the Kaduna State Government and the Nigeria Railway Corporation have confirmed the attack. The exact number of people on the train at the time of the incident has yet to be confirmed but there are media reports that over 970 people were aboard the train. The Kaduna government has confirmed fatalities but did not say the number of people killed so far.

In a Tuesday morning statement signed by Samuel Aruwan, the Commissioner for Internal Security and Home Affairs, the State Government said the evacuation of the trapped passengers has been concluded but search and rescue operations continued. A former Kaduna Senator, Shehu Sani, wrote on Twitter, that not only were some people killed but many others were also kidnapped by the terrorists.

April 1

At least one person has been killed by terrorists at Yantumaki market in Danmusa Local Government Area of Katsina State. The terrorists who invaded the market on Friday afternoon were said to have wounded seven traders and abducted an unspecified number of people during the attack. Sources in the affected community explained that the terrorists arrived at the market at about 3:00 p.m and started shooting sporadically. The sources further confirmed that the terrorists have killed three traders, injured seven and abducted several others into the nearby forest. The Police Public Relations Officer of the command, SP Gambo Isah, confirmed the incident to Channels Television but he insisted that one person was killed. “Today some terrorists riding on four motorcycles, attacked the GSM section of Yantumaki Market and started shooting sporadically,” SP Isah said. “They shot six people and stole many handsets. One died and five were taken to Danmusa General hospital. Some of them were later transferred to Dutsinma and Katsina General Hospitals. The situation is under control now”. Several traders were said to have scampered for safety while the terrorists seized the opportunity to also cart away food items and other materials.

April 2

At least 13 persons have been killed by armed bandits in attacks on different communities in Anka Local Government Area of Zamfara State. The affected communities are Kadaddaba, Rafin Gero, and Babban Baye, all in Anka Local Government Area of Zamfara State. The police spokesperson in the State, Muhammadu Shehu, confirmed the attacks to Channels Television on Saturday. He stressed that 13 persons were killed

during the separate attacks on Thursday (31st March 2022) evening. Locals, however, insist that 15 persons were killed during the attack. An indigene of Anka community, Yusuf Anka, told Channels Television that no less than fifteen persons were killed in three villages of Anka Local Government. “15 people were killed on Thursday evening by bandits in three villages, Kaddadaba, Babban Baye, and Rafin Gero. One of the villages is less than five kilometres away from Anka Local Government Headquarters,” he said.

April 5

At least 10 soldiers have been killed and some others injured by bandits proscribed as terrorists who attacked a military base in Birnin-Gwari Local Government Area of Kaduna State. The incident happened at about 6:30pm on Monday, security sources told Channels Television. Birnin-Gwari is one of the hotspots of banditry in Kaduna, where many people were killed, thousands were kidnapped, and socioeconomic activities were disrupted in the past five years. A security source in the area told Channels Television on Tuesday that the soldiers were attacked at an Army Forward Operational Base located around the Polwire area close to Mikati Farm along the Kaduna- Birnin Gwari Road. He explained that the soldiers, who were few in number, were taken unaware by the terrorists who stormed the base in large numbers on motorcycles with sophisticated weapons and immediately opened fire on the soldiers. According to the source, the bandits monitored the movement of the soldiers and when some of them went out to the headquarters of the Forward Operational Base located inside Birnin-Gwari town, they immediately launched an attack on the few soldiers at the FOB extension. The superior firepower of the bandits led to the death

of about 10 soldiers, while a patrol vehicle was also destroyed during the attack.

April 12

Gunmen have reportedly killed at least 142 persons in fresh attacks on some communities in Kanam and Wase Local Government Areas of Plateau State, North-central Nigeria. The attacks, which happened on Sunday, were carried out in Kukawa, Gyambawu, Dungur, Kyaram, Yelwa, Dadda, Wanka, Shuwaka, Gwammadaji, and Dadin Kowa communities of the State. The two local governments share boundaries but are not in the same senatorial districts. Ishaku Takwa, the media officer of Operation Safe Haven (OPSH), a military task force maintaining peace in Plateau State and environs, confirmed the attacks to journalists on Sunday in Jos.

April 14

One week after a marathon meeting with leaders of Nigeria's security team, the House of Representatives, yesterday, lamented rising insecurity in several parts of the country, especially Kaduna, Benue, Taraba and Plateau states. The lawmakers took turns to criticise the action and inaction of President Muhammadu Buhari, restating their earlier call for a declaration of emergency on security. While some called for the sacking or resignation of the National Security Adviser, Maj. Gen. Babagana Monguno (retd.) and the Minister of Defence, Maj. Gen. Bashir Magashi (rtd.), others called for the shutdown of the National Assembly, partly blaming the parliament for not doing enough in its oversight of the executive arm. This is coming a day after the Northern Elders Forum demanded the immediate resignation of President Buhari over killings across the country. Placing a handle on

the dire straits regarding the state of the nation, at least, 2,968 people have been killed, while 1,484 were abducted in the country from January to March 2022, according to data released by the Nigeria Security Tracker (NST). NST, a project of the Council on Foreign Relations, gathered data through weekly surveys of Nigerian and international media.

April 14

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) on Thursday suspended the Continuous Voter Registration Exercise (CVR) exercise in Ihitte Uboma Local Government Area of Imo State. The decision was taken after an INEC staff was shot dead by gunmen, a statement signed by INEC National Commissioner, Festus Okoye, said. According to Mr Okoye, the staff, Mr. Nwokorie Anthony, was shot dead at Nkwo Ihitte (PU 004) in Amakohia Ward (RA 02) of Ihitte Uboma Local Government Area. Two other staff involved in the registration exercise at the polling unit are also missing. INEC said it was making efforts to locate their whereabouts. "Prior to this incident, the Commission had suspended the CVR in Orsu and Njaba Local Government areas of the State on account of insecurity while the exercise is taking place only at the INEC LGA office in Oru East, Oru West, Orlu and Ohaji – Egbema Local Government Areas of the State," Mr Okoye said.

April 21

President Muhammadu Buhari has ordered security agencies to rescue persons kidnapped during the Kaduna train attack and others still in captivity. On March 28, a Kaduna-bound train was attacked by gunmen, with eight passengers killed and many kidnapped. Since the Kaduna

train attack, the spate of violent attacks has continued unabated, especially in the northern part of the country. TheCable, in a data analysis, reported that 1,743 Nigerians were killed in the first quarter of 2022 as a result of insecurity. On Thursday, Buhari met with the service chiefs, ministers and heads of security agencies over the security challenges. Speaking after the meeting, Babagana Munguno, national security adviser, said the president has ordered that the security of the land borders be tightened in a bid to address the rising insecurity. “Mr. President has directed all the operational and intelligence elements to rescue these innocent people immediately and unhurt,” he said.

April 21

Six persons have been confirmed dead with an unspecified number injured following a bomb explosion that rocked a drinking bar in Mashaya market, Iware Community located in Ardo-Kola Local Government Area of Taraba State. The blast occurred on Tuesday, 19th April 2022. The Anti-bomb squad of the Nigeria Police Force were also on ground combing the area for a possible bomb detonation. Meanwhile jihadists affiliated to the Islamic State have claimed responsibility for the attack. In a statement released in Arabic on Wednesday, the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) said it had detonated the bomb, “killing and wounding nearly 30 Christians and damaging the bar.” The statement, translated by SITE Intelligence which monitors jihadist activities worldwide, said the attack was “revenge” for the death of two of the group’s leaders, without giving further details. The blast occurred in a crowded open-air moonshine bar in the town of Iware.

April 22

About 517 small arms and light weapons have been recovered from bandits and criminal elements by the military within its area of operation in Plateau and Kaduna States. The General Officer Commanding 3rd Division Nigeria Army, Major General Ibrahim Ali, disclosed this on Thursday, 21st April 2022 during a press briefing in Jos. He subsequently handed over the small arms and light weapons to the National Centre for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons at the headquarters of Operation Safe Haven in Jos. Ali, said, “The operational successes recorded by troops of Operation Safe Haven recently have led to the recovery of 517 small arms and light weapons from criminal elements. These comprise 40 automatic weapons and 477 locally fabricated firearms. Receiving the weapons, the Zonal Coordinator, North Central, National Centre for the Control of Small Arms, Major Gen. Hamza Bature (retd.), appreciated the troops.

May 2

Gunmen, on Saturday, 30th April 2022, killed two soldiers, at an unknown location in Imo State. The victims, A. M. Linus, said to be a Sergeant of the Nigerian Army, and his unidentified wife, said to be a lance corporal in the Army, were reportedly beheaded after being shot dead by the gunmen. Their corpses were said to have been dismembered by the gunmen. A gory image of their heads has gone viral on various social media platforms.

A phone conversation with the suspected gunmen, believed to have been initiated by a friend to the slain female soldier, has also surfaced online. In the phone conversation, a suspected gunman admitted that he killed the couple. The gunman

said they were aggrieved that the military has been consistently killing innocent residents in efforts to attack them (gunmen). Confirming the attack, Army spokesperson, Onyema Nwachukwu told PREMIUM TIMES, Monday, that military authorities have received information about the killing of two of their personnel. Mr Nwachukwu said the military personnel were travelling for their “traditional marriage formalities” in Imo State when they were attacked by the gunmen.

May 23

It was another black Sunday (22nd May 2022) in Anambra State, following the killing of seven persons in various locations in the State. Out of the number, four were siblings. Their mother was also among the dead. The attack took place at Isulo in Orumba North council. One person was killed at Abatete in Idemili North council while another was killed in the Nanka Orumba North Local Government Area of the State.

May 28

Some bandits in the early hours of Saturday, 28th May 2022, invaded Jere town in Kagarko Local Government Area of Kaduna State, killing one and abducting scores including four members of the same family. It was gathered that the bandits killed a newly wed man and took away his pregnant wife. The bandits also went away with four members of the family of Abdulrahman Ibrahim Jere, a former Commissioner of Poverty Alleviation in the State. According to a source, the bandits that stormed the community were more than 50, on bikes, moving from house-to-house to carry out “their nefarious activities.”

May 29-31

A Prelate of the Methodist Church of Nigeria, Dr Samuel Uche, has been kidnapped by yet-to-be-identified men in Abia State. The Police Public Relations Officer in the state, Geoffrey Ogbonna, confirmed this to Channels Television on Sunday in Umuahia, the state capital. According to him, the clergyman was abducted alongside two others – the Bishop of Methodist Church, Owerri Diocese, and the prelate’s chaplain. Ogbonna explained that the clergymen were abducted at about 2pm on their way from a church event in Okigwe (Imo State) to Isuochi in Umu Nneochi Local Government Area of Abia State.

June 5

There was pandemonium at Saint Francis Catholic Church, Owa-luwa Street, Owo, the headquarters of the Owo Local Government Area of Ondo State as gunmen attacked the church on Sunday. It was learnt the gunmen, who attacked the Catholic church, arrived at the premises, which is less than 200 metres from the palace of the Olowo of Owo, at 12pm when the Sunday mass was being rounded off. The PUNCH gathered that worshippers, mostly children and women, were killed in the attack, by gunmen, who were said to have thrown an improvised explosive device before they started shooting sporadically. Workers of the Federal Medical Centre and Saint Louis Hospital, both in Owo, where the dead and the injured were taken to, told one of our correspondents that a total of 35 people were brought in dead. But the State Police Command told The PUNCH at 8:30pm that it was still compiling the casualty figure. Also, the Church and the State government did not specify the casualty figure.

June 6-7

Gunmen suspected to be armed bandits have invaded Furfuri town of Bungudu Local Government Area of Zamfara State and abducted 23 persons including two wives and three children of the former Accountant General in the State. It was gathered that the armed bandits stormed and attacked Furfuri town which is 7 km away from Gusau, the State capital, late Sunday (5th June 2022) night and kidnapped many people. A source from Furfuri town, Mallam Sani, explained that the gunmen abducted two wives of the former Accountant General of the State, Abubakar Bello Furfuri, his three children and 18 other persons.

June 9

The Kaduna State government has confirmed that gunmen on Sunday raided villages in Kajuru in the south of the State, killing 32 people. In a statement on Thursday, the State's Commissioner for Internal Security and Home Affairs, Samuel Aruwan, said the gunmen attacked the communities on motorcycles, killed several villagers and burnt their houses. Mr Aruwan, however, debunked the rumour that the gunmen attacked the villages with a helicopter. He said the helicopter seen during the attack belonged to the Nigerian Air Force, who arrived to engage the bandits. The statement can be found below: KDSG Security Update: Thursday 9th June 2022. Bandits raid villages, kill 32 in Kajuru LGA. – KDSG debunks reports of aerial attack by terrorists. NAF helicopter arrived to engage bandits. The Kaduna State Government received initial reports from security agencies, that bandits attacked the villages of Dogon Noma, Ungwan Sarki and Ungwan Maikori in Kajuru local government area on Sunday.

June 12-13

The Nigeria Police Force has ordered Lagos State Police Commissioner, Abiodun Alabi, to conduct investigation into the alleged shooting of two persons by five Police escorts attached to the popular musician, Damini Ogulu, popularly known as Burna Boy. The shooting occurred on June 8, 2022, at Club Cubana in Victoria Island, Lagos. It was learnt that the musician and five police escorts visited the club at about 4 am on the day. While the clubbing was in top gear, the musician spotted another woman whom he made advances at. Unfortunately, her husband who was present, was said to have rebuffed the musician, asking him to keep off. This was said to have led to argument between the man's friends and Burna Boy's team, which resulted in the alleged shooting of two persons - Irebami Lawrence and another simply identified as Tolu, while the musician fled the scene on realising what transpired. Force Headquarters spokesperson, Muyiwa Adejobi, in his tweet, yesterday, said the escorts have been identified, arrested and detained over their misconduct. However, the spokesperson added that the Force Headquarters has ordered the CP to forward the result of the investigation for appropriate action.

June 14-23

Medical doctors in Abia State have suspended further rendering of medical services in all public and private hospitals across the state to register their grievances over the abduction of their colleague, Professor Uwadinachi Iweha. Iweha, who is the Provost of Gregory University College of Medicine, Umuahia campus and former Chief Medical Director of Abia State University Teaching Hospital (ABSUTH) was kidnapped on Sunday, June 5, 2022, by unknown

hoodlums as he was driving out of his residence at Umuajameze Ezeleke Umuokpara Umuahia South Local Government. The Chairman of the Nigeria Medical Association (NMA), Abia State, Dr. Chimezie Okwuonu, on 14th June, announced the withdrawal of medical services in a statement he jointly signed with the State Secretary of NMA, Dr. Robinson Ugwuanyi, after the prayer/rally the NMA held simultaneously in Umuahia and Aba. The Abia NMA leadership stated that “with the current state of fear caused by the kidnap and detention of our colleague, safety cannot be guaranteed and it will be difficult to attend to duties as normal as no one knows who will be the next victim.”

June 15

An Abia journalist, Mr. Chuks Onuoha has been kidnapped by armed men who gained entry into his home at Umungasi Ohuhu in Umuahia North local government and took him away in his jeep. Mr. Onuoha, who is the editor-in-chief of All Facts Newspaper, an Umuahia based publication, was until last year, the state correspondent of the Sun Newspapers. Wife of the kidnapped journalist, Mrs. Udodirim Onuoha said that her husband was whisked away by three armed men who entered their house at about 10.45pm on Tuesday while he was resting after returning from work. She told a delegation of journalists led by the chairman of Abia State Council of Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), Comrade Victor Ndukwe, that she was also in the sitting room with her husband when the hoodlums slipped in through the back door. According to her, the first gun man that entered the house immediately pointed a gun at her husband and demanded for his phones and ATM card while the other gunmen emerged from different directions.

June 21

Bandits stormed the Maranatha Baptist Church and St. Moses Catholic Church in Rubu Village, Kajuru on Sunday, killing three locals in Kaduna State. The victims were identified as Peter Madaki (Ward head of Ungwan Fada), Elisha Ezekiel, (Resident of Ungwan Fada) and Ali Zamani (Youth leader of Rubu). Daily Trust gathered that two persons were left injured in the attacks—one Aniro Mai, a yet unidentified woman and an unspecified number of locals were also kidnapped. “The bandits came on motorcycles and attacked our people shortly after closing from church service. The two communities attacked were inside Rubu village. The ward head of Anguwar Fada is among those killed,” a resident who simply identified himself as Maigari said. He stated that other worshippers escaped through the nearby bush. While confirming the incident, the State Commissioner, Internal Security, and Homes Affairs, Samuel Aruwan, said the attackers started from Ungwan Fada and moved into Ungwan Turawa, before Ungwan Makama and then Rubu village. He explained that the bandits looted shops and carted away some valuables from the villages. Aruwan said security patrols were being conducted in the general area as investigations proceed.

June 26

Gunmen attacked a farm on Saturday and killed the Catholic priest, Vitus Borogo. The chancellor of the Catholic Archdiocese of Kaduna, Christian Emmanuel, confirmed the incident in a statement to journalists. “It is with a heavy heart, but with total submission to the will of God that we announce the death of Rev. Fr. Vitus Borogo, which sad event took place today, at Prison Farm, Kujama, along Kaduna-Kachia road, after a

raid on the farm by terrorists,” Mr Borogo said in a statement. “Until his death, late Fr Vitus aged 50 years was the Chaplain of the Catholic Community of the Kaduna State Polytechnic, and the Chairman of the Nigerian Catholic Diocesan Priests Association (NCDPA), Kaduna Chapter.

June 26-27

About a week after gunmen attacked two churches in Kaduna, armed persons killed a Catholic priest in the State. Now, the Catholic Diocese of Auchi in Edo State has confirmed the death of Christopher Odia, a reverend father, who was abducted on Sunday by gunmen in the State. Mr Odia, 41, was the administrator of St. Michael Catholic Church, Ikabigbo, Etsako West Local Government Area and also the Principal of St. Philip Catholic Secondary School, Jattu, in the State. He is said to have been abducted while coming out for Sunday Mass at his rectory, St. Michael Catholic Church, Ikabigbo and killed a few hours after he was abducted. Peter Egielewa, the director of communication in the diocese, confirmed the priest’s death in a statement on Sunday.

June 27

Zamfara Government on Sunday advised individuals to obtain guns and defend themselves in the height of the resurgence of insecurity in the State. The State government, in a statement by the Commissioner for Information, Alhaji Ibrahim Dosara, said: “The government has henceforth, directed individuals to prepare and obtain guns to defend themselves against the bandits. Government has directed the State Commissioner of Police to issue licence to all those who qualify and are wishing to obtain such guns to defend themselves. Government is ready to facilitate

people, especially our farmers, to secure basic weapons for defending themselves. “Government has already concluded arrangements to distribute 500 forms to each of the 19 Emirates in the State for those willing to obtain guns to defend themselves.” He explained that the government directive followed the increase in the activities of bandits in various parts of the State. The Commissioner, however, noted the State government’s commitment to ensure adequate security and protection of lives and property of citizens, particularly during the rainy season. Dosara said the government had resolved to deal with the recent escalating attacks, kidnapping and the criminal levies being enforced on innocent communities.

The government also banned the use of motorcycles, otherwise known as Okada, in the State and directed security to shoot at sight any violator of the Okada ban. This is aside from banning the sale of petrol to bike operators in the State. It equally gave orders for immediate closure of markets in three districts in the State.

June 29

Nigerian soldiers have reportedly killed 6 people and displaced several others in Nko community in Cross River State. The soldiers were said to be on a reprisal attack on 26th June in Nko community, Yakurr Local Government Area (LGA) of the State, after one of their commanders was killed in the community. The soldiers also razed some houses in the community. The slain soldier was a part of the troops on a peacekeeping mission in the central part of Cross River where Nko and another community – Onyadama in Obubra LGA – have been engaged for about a decade in a violent dispute over farmland. Piqued by the action of the youths, Cross River State Government ordered immediate dethronement and de-certification of

the Obol Lopon of Nko, Obol Etim Ayomobi, in Yakurr, and the clan head of Onyadama, Ovarr Vincent Erena, in Obubra, over the attack of six officers by youths of Nko community. The State government also sacked all village chiefs in Nko and Oyadama, even as it has taken over the disputed land until those behind the shooting of officers are produced or fished out.

June 30

Terrorists on Wednesday, 29th June 2022, attacked Ajata village, a mining community in Erena district of Shiroro Local Government Area of Niger State. Reports said no fewer than 22 persons, including soldiers, were gruesomely murdered by the terrorists who invaded the mining site believed to belong to some influential Nigerians but managed by some Chinese, in broad daylight. It was learnt that during the invasion of the site, four Chinese were abducted in addition to a number of other people believed to be workers at the mining site. The large number of terrorists, according to a report from the area, stormed the village riding on motorcycles and armed AK – 47 rifles.

June 30

Two police officers were on Thursday feared killed when gunmen attacked a police checkpoint along Agbani Road in Enugu South Local Government Area of Enugu State, Nigeria's South-east.

The incident happened at about 9 a.m. The gunmen were said to have opened fire on the police officers at the checkpoint, killing two on the spot.

June 30

The Nigerian Medical Association (NMA),

Anambra State branch, has complained about the rising cases of kidnapping, especially of its members in the State. The association issued a statement on Wednesday in Awka, calling on Governor Charles Soludo and security agencies in Anambra to take more proactive measures to check kidnapping in the state. The NMA said at least three of their members had been abducted in the state since January this year. It said the most recent case was on June 25, where a doctor who works in a private hospital was abducted at Nimo, Njikoka Local Government Area on his way from work. "He was kidnapped alongside a friend, a pharmacy student, and they were both held in captivity for over 24 hours by their abductors. It warned that doctors may not guarantee the provision of healthcare services to the people if the government did not take urgent measures to ensure their security.

July 1

A community leader from the Birnin Gwari Emirate Council in Birnin Gwari Local Government Area of Kaduna State, Alhaji Zubairu Abdulra'uf, has lamented how members of the communities paid N400m to bandits to enable them to go to their farms. He also stated that people of the emirate had resorted to defending themselves against terrorists that had over the years taken over the area. He told journalists in Kaduna on Thursday, 30th June 2022, that the constant attacks on communities had paralysed economic activities in their rural areas and made travelling in the area impossible. On payment to bandits, Abdulra'uf on the State owned radio – the Kaduna State Media Corporation, stated thus: "Yes, N200m was paid to bandits in Randegi district alone. "When you talk of Birnin-Gwari Local Government as a whole, it's between N300m to N400m paid to these bandits. "There are three stages of paying

these types of taxes to these bandits. You have to pay pre-season and mid-season when the crops are about to start yielding. You will pay these bandits because they will not allow you to have access to your farm. Then, at the end of the season when you are harvesting, you will give these bandits money before you access your farm. And when you access your farm after paying these taxes, they will now tell you that apart from giving them money, you will give a ratio of two bags to 10 bags of all the assorted grains.”

July 1

Suspected terrorists operating in the forest area of Danmusa Local Government Area of Katsina State, have shot and killed Bara’u Dantudu, the Dandire ‘B’ ward Chairman of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). A source who confirmed the incident stated that the attack occurred on Thursday, 30th September 2022, while Dantudu was on his farmland. Acting Chairman of the PDP in the State, Salisu Uli confirmed the incident.

July 3

The Udoda community in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State, has protested continual attacks by thugs, military invasion and air raids in the area. Raising the alarm on Sunday, 3rd July 2022, the Paramount Ruler of the community, HRH, Okaya Gospel, and the Youth President, Peter Francis, stated that over 30 indigenes including a chief had been killed since the raids and attacks started in 2019. King Gospel also explained that the community was deserted because people’s houses and valuables were burnt and stolen in the various invasions and attacks. The king blamed surveillance contractors securing pipelines that criss-crossed the community’s forest for their travails, saying

that each time the people requested for basic amenities, their voices were quelled with attacks and raids. Giving the timelines of the attacks, he stated that many people have died in these attacks and air raids and they have been occurring since 2019.

July 3

Gunmen have kidnapped two Catholic priests in Edo State, amid the continued abduction of clergymen in the country. Police authorities in the State have confirmed the incident which occurred on Saturday night (2nd July 2022) around Ehor and Iruokpen communities along the Benin-Auchi Expressway. In a statement on Sunday, 3rd July 2022, the Police Public Relations Officer in Edo, Chidi Nwabuzor, identified the victims as Reverend Father Udo Peter of St. Patrick’s Catholic Church, Uromi, and Reverend Father Philemon Oboh of St. Joseph Retreat Centre, Ugboha in Esan South East Local Government Area (LGA) of the State.

July 4

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) office in Igboeze North Local Government Area office in Enugu State has been set ablaze by arsonists.

National Commissioner and Chairman, Information and Voter Education Committee of INEC, Festus Okoye, disclosed this on Monday, 4th July 2022 in Abuja. According to Okoye, the Resident Electoral Commissioner (REC) Enugu State, Mr. Emeka Ononamadu, informed the INEC headquarters that during the attack, 748 ballot boxes, 240 voting cubicles, office furniture and other equipment were destroyed in spite of the best effort of the Enugu State Fire Service deployed from Nsukka. Okoye also stated that,

“The commission is working to ascertain the status of voter registration machines for the ongoing Continuous Voter Registration (CVR) exercise, as well as uncollected Permanent Voters Cards (PVCs) locked up in the fireproof cabinet.” He also stated that the incident has been reported to the Nigeria Police for investigation and further action. He said the attack, coming in the middle of the voter registration exercise and other preparations for 2023 General Election, is worrisome.

July 5

An advance convoy of Nigeria’s President Muhammadu Buhari was ambushed and attacked on Tuesday, 5th July 2022 in his home State, Katsina. The attack happened in Dutsinma, about 152 kilometres from Buhari’s hometown of Daura. Buhari’s spokesman Garba Shehu said the convoy included an advance team of security guards, protocol and media officers. According to Garba, “The attackers opened fire on the convoy from ambush positions but were repelled by the military, police and DSS personnel accompanying the convoy.” He also stated that two persons in the convoy were receiving treatment for the minor injuries they suffered and that all the other personnel, staff and vehicles made it safely to Daura. However, a policeman spokesman in Katsina stated that an Assistant Commissioner of Police, Aminu Umar and another police officer were killed in a terrorist ambush in Dutsinma on the same day. Umar and his team were on a “clearance operation” when they were ambushed by “terrorists numbering over 300 on motorcycles, shooting sporadically with AK 47 rifles and General Purpose Mac+D11:D12hine Guns.”

July 5

The Kuje Custodial Centre located in Nigeria’s Federal Capital Territory came under attack late Tuesday night apparently to free jailed criminals, despite an earlier warning by the country’s intelligence service. A prison source told PREMIUM TIMES that the State Security Service had “earlier today (Tuesday)” warned of an impending attack on Kuje prison. The source, however, could not describe the level of measures put in place to forestall the attack. In the later update that emerged, the source said the attackers used three bombs and forcibly gained control of four entry and exit points. Dangerous criminals, including apprehended Boko Haram terrorists, are held in the prison, which also houses high profile public officers standing trial or already convicted. The The prison source revealed that three weeks ago, several high profile terrorists were relocated to Kuje prison and this is the earliest link officials are analysing to trace the motivation for the attack.

July 20

On Wednesday, 20th July 2022, five policemen and three civilians were killed and many others injured by gunmen suspected to be terrorists in an attack on Gatigawa village in Kankara Local Government Area of Katsina State. The armed terrorists numbering over 300 were said to have stormed the community on over 200 motorcycles. The Katsina State Police Public Relations Officer, Gambo Isah, who confirmed the incident to journalists stated that the slain policemen were on special duty in Katsina State from Kano State. A resident of the area, Kabir Tukur, told THISDAY that the terrorists also left many residents with varying degrees of injuries and rustled unspecified numbers of animals belonging to

members of the community. He added that those who sustained injuries during the invasion were rushed to hospitals by security personnel, just as the military positioned its vehicles with heavily armed personnel in the area in the early hours of Thursday, 21st July 2022.

July 25

Terrorists have released three victims among the passengers abducted in the Abuja-Kaduna train on March 28. The victims, who consist of two males and a female, secured their freedom around 11 am on Monday, 25th July 2022. So far, 22 victims have regained their freedom. It is however not clear if any money was paid to the terrorists to release the abducted victims.

July 28

The Nigerian Army In a statement on its official Twitter handle on Wednesday, 27th July 2022 stated that its troops have rescued four women in Borno State. Two of them were identified as girls abducted from the Government Girls' Secondary School in Chibok, Borno State. Boko Haram terrorists had in April 14, 2014 attacked the school and abducted 276 girls. The Army stated that the women were intercepted by Troops of 202 Battalion during a clearance operation and had been taken for medical treatment.

August 2

After 125 days in captivity, five more hostages who were abducted on 28th March aboard an Abuja-Kaduna train, were released by their terrorist abductors on 2nd August 2022, making it the fourth batch of victims that have secured their freedom. A member of the negotiating team, Tukur Mamu, publisher of Kaduna-based Desert Herald

and media consultant to controversial Islamic cleric, Sheikh Ahmad Gumi, told newsmen that the victims were released on Tuesday, 2nd August 2022. He gave the names of the five released hostages as Prof. Mustapha Umar Imam, Akibu Lawal, Abubakar Ahmed Rufai, Mukthar Shu'aibu and Sidi Aminu Sharif. Recall that a week earlier, three victims of the train attack were released shortly after the terrorists released a viral video of some of the captives being flogged. They also threatened to abduct President Muhammadu Buhari and Kaduna State governor, Nasir el-Rufai. The terrorists had earlier released 11 victims in the first batch, seven victims in the second batch, three in the third and five victims in the fourth batch respectively. So far, 35 victims are still in captivity.

August 9

Terrorists in large numbers invaded Yakwada village in Giwa Local Government Area of Kaduna State and kidnaped the daughter-in-law to the Convener of the Northern Elders' Forum, Prof. Ango Abdullahi, her four children, and others on Tuesday, 10th August 2022. It was gathered that the terrorists abducted at least nine persons in total and a patrol guard, Aminu Lawal was killed in the process. The daughter-in-law, Ramatu Samsila, is married to the Village Head of Yakawada, Alhaji Rilwan Saudu, who is the son of the elder brother to Abdullahi, a former Vice Chancellor of the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria in Kaduna State. Some of those abducted include neighbours of the Village Head, two of who are nursing mothers. Three residents of the area also sustained injuries.

August 11

Terrorists who attacked the Abuja-Kaduna bound train on 28th March 2022, on Wednesday, 10th August 2022 released seven more hostages, including a family of six and a woman, The PUNCH reports. The identities of the family of six are the father, Abdubakar Garba; his wife, Maryam; and their 10-year-old son, Ibrahim; Fatima (7); Imran (5); and Zainab, who is one-and-a-half-year old. Also released is a 60-year-old woman, Aisha Hassan, who was said to have been released due to life-threatening health challenges that deteriorated recently. Five hostages were earlier released on August 2.

With the release of the seven hostages, 32 others are still being held by the terrorists.

August 15

Gunmen have abducted a Catholic priest along Okigwe-Umunneochi Road, between Imo and Abia States in South-East, Nigeria. The incident happened on Friday, 12th August 2022. The abducted priest, Chinedu Nwadike, is the deputy registrar of the Spiritan University, Abia State. He was abducted alongside a Catholic seminarian, Emmanuel Nwafor, while they were on their way to Enugu State. The Director of Communication of the Enugu Catholic Diocese, Benjamin Achi, stated that the kidnappers were demanding N50 million ransom.

August 15

Troops of Sector One, Operation Hadin Kai, have rescued another Chibok girl in Bama Local Government Area of Borno State. The Chibok girl, identified as Aisha Grema, was rescued alongside her four-year-old child on Friday, 12th August 2022. The Nigeria Army disclosed this

on its Twitter handle on Saturday, 13th August 2022. On the same day, the Army also stated that three persons amongst whom was a 12-year-old child who was abducted since her infancy, were also rescued by troops of 242 Battalion. It will be recalled that on April 14, 2014, Boko Haram terrorists attacked the Chibok Girls' Secondary School and whisked away 276 girls.

August 19

The terrorists that attacked the AKT-9 Abuja-Kaduna train passengers on 28th March, on Friday, 19th August 2022, released four more hostages including an 85-year-old woman, Hajiya Halimatu Atta, her daughter, Adams Aliyu and two others after spending four months in captivity. Tukur Mamu, Publisher of Kaduna-based Desert Herald and Media Consultant to controversial Islamic cleric, Sheikh Ahmad Gumi, confirmed the release of the four hostages to newsmen in Kaduna. Mamu gave the identities of those released as Mama Halimatu Atta (oldest victim aged 90 years), her daughter, Adama Atta Aliyu, Mohammed Sani Abdulmaji (M.S Ustaz), as well as a Sokoto indigene, Alhaji Modin Modi Bodinga. There was no mention of whether or not ransom was paid for the release of the four hostages but the terrorists had demanded N100m per each victim before those earlier set free, were released. With the release of the sixth batch of four hostages on Friday, 23 hostages are still in the custody of the terrorists.

August 21

Four reverend sisters were abducted by gunmen in the Okigwe-Umulolo axis of Okigwe Local Government Area of Imo State. They were abducted on their way to a thanksgiving mass in the LGA. Zita Ihedoro, Secretary-General of

The Sisters of Jesus The Saviour Generalate, confirmed their abduction in a statement issued on Sunday, 21st August 2022. The kidnapped persons were identified as Johannes Nwodo, Christabel Echemazu, Liberata Mbamalu and Benita Agu.

September 9

The Defence Headquarters on Thursday, 8th September 2022 stated that troops of Operation Hadin Kai arrested a terrorists' informant in the Asokoro area of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Also, a foreign terrorist logistics supplier and arms dealer identified as Abatcha Bukar and 13 other terrorists were arrested in Borno State. The Director, Defence Media Operations, Major General Musa Danmadami, disclosed this while briefing journalists on the activities of the armed forces between August 25 and September 8, 2022. He also stated that three abducted Chibok girls and 19 other kidnap victims were rescued within the period under review.

September 10

Armed bandits on Saturday, 10th September 2022 attacked a military base in Zamfara State, leaving at least a dozen security personnel dead. Those familiar with the incident confirmed that at least 12 personnel were killed while three were wounded in the attack on Forward Operating Base in Mutumji, Dansadau Local Government of Zamfara State. The sad incident came amidst heightened offensive by security forces against bandits in the North-West region of Nigeria. Scores of bandits were reportedly killed and many arrested in several operations which necessitated the shutdown of telephone networks in Zamfara and some parts of neighbouring Katsina State. The latest attack on the military

base, according to sources, left a casualty of nine Air Force personnel, two Police personnel and one Nigerian Army personnel. The bandits also carted away weapons and other equipment from the slain security personnel while also setting the base ablaze.

September 11

The Police in Anambra State stated that five people were killed on Sunday, 11th September 2022, when gunmen attacked the convoy of Nigerian Senator, Ifeanyi Ubah. The incident happened in Enugwu-Ukwu, a community in Njikoka Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria's South-East. The Police spokesperson in the State, Tochukwu Ikenga, stated that the five persons killed by the gunmen were two police officers and three civilians, two of whom were aides of Ifeanyi Ubah. Mr. Ikenga, a Deputy Superintendent of police, also stated that another two Police officers were receiving treatment in a hospital in the State.

September 18

Scores of armed bandits were reportedly killed on Saturday, 17th September 2022 as the Nigerian Air Force (NAF) bombed their base in Zamfara State. The victims were said to be members of the gang of the deadly banditry kingpin, Muhammad Bello, aka Turji. The kingpin, it was learnt, narrowly escaped the bombardment which left many others injured. The attack which was carried out at Fakai area where Turji was suspected to be residing was said to have been carried out by two NAF fighter jets, following reliable intelligence. The notorious North-West Nigerian banditry kingpin, was reported to have relocated his headquarters from Fakai in Zurmi, Zamfara State, to the east of Isa Local Government Area of Sokoto State last in 2021.

October 1

The Registrar of the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN), Professor Josiah Olusegun Ajiboye, said attacks on schools by insurgents have claimed the lives of more than 2,295 teachers in the North East between 2009 and 2022. Prof Ajiboye, who said this while delivering a paper at the 2022 National Delegates Conference of the Nigeria Union of Teachers (NUT), in Ibadan, called for the full implementation of the Safe Schools Declarations guidelines endorsed by Nigeria in 2015 and ratified by President Muhammadu Buhari in 2019. He further said that over 1,500 schools were forced to close due to insurgency and more than 600,000 children have lost access to education. The TRCN boss, therefore, called on the federal government to review its security architecture to address the deteriorating security situation because of terrorism and violent attacks on education. He noted that as a way forward, federal, state and local education authorities should facilitate the immediate implementation of the National Policy on Safety, Security and Violence Free Schools (NPSSVFS) by making budgetary provisions.

October 8

A terrorist kingpin, Ali Dogo, a.k.a Yellow, and 30 of his fighters have been killed in airstrikes executed by the Air Component of Operation Whirl Punch on October 8, 2022 at a location in Kaduna State. Military sources said Yellow and his fighters had fled from Niger State to one Alhaji Gwarzo's house at Yadi in Giwa local government area of Kaduna State for safety. He said Yellow fled following continued NAF aircraft bombardment on his location in Niger State. "Unfortunately for Yellow and his fighters,

while they were having a meeting, NAF aircraft struck Alhaji Gwarzo's house leaving everybody in the building neutralised including Yellow."

October 21

At least 36 people were killed in an attack by herdsmen on Gbeji community in Ukum Local Government Area Local Government Area of Benue State. The attack took place on Wednesday, 19th October 2022, with a police man and 22 others killed, while 12 were critically injured. However, two days later, 18 more bodies were discovered, bringing the death toll to 36. In reaction to the attack, the Benue State Government reiterated an earlier request to the Federal Government for a licence for local volunteer security guards to bear sophisticated weapons to protect their land, as State security forces are overstretched.

Shrinking Civic Space

January 13

The Federal Government sustained a ban on micro-blogging social media platform, Twitter for seven months, since 4th June 2021. The ban was eventually lifted from midnight on 13th January 2022.

January 13

The Ebonyi State Government arrested and detained a Social Media Influencer, Paschal Etu on allegation of offences contained in the Ebonyi State Cybercrimes (Prohibition) Law 2021. Mr.

Etu has been in detention since 30th November 2021. The State Government, which has been accused of stifling free speech, has arrested several persons since the enactment of this law (in September 2021), which has been described as faulty. The law (both soft and hard copy) is not readily accessible to the public. Also, it contains certain positions that are not in tandem with the Constitution, such as section 8 which provides that no person shall be prosecuted under the law without the consent of the Attorney General. This is perceived as a reinvention of Decree No. 4 (Public Officers Protection Against false Publications) of 1984 and the infamous Hate Speech Bill.

February 14

Lecturers in Nigerian universities are to commence a four-week strike starting today, their union has said. The Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) announced this as part of its resolutions at the end of its National Executive Council (NEC) meeting in Lagos Monday morning. "... NEC resolved to embark on a four-week roll-over total and comprehensive strike action beginning from Monday 14th February 2022," the communique stated. The union gave various reasons for embarking on the strike. PREMIUM TIMES had exclusively reported that the union had agreed on a one-month strike at the end of its meeting early Monday.

March 1

The Nigerian National Assembly voted on 68 Constitution bills for the 5th Constitution Alteration exercise. Five (5) bills to improve the rights of women failed to pass. These include the bills to create specific seats for women in the National Assembly and State Houses of Assembly.

March 17

In the aftermath of a visible threat by personnel of the Nigeria Police Force to embark on strike over non-implementation of new salary structure approved for them by the Federal Government and denial by Force Headquarters of such a plan, the Inspector General of Police, Usman Alkali Baba, has ordered the immediate commencement of financial computation and adjustments of Police emoluments in line with the new salary structure.

A wireless message, dated March 15, 2022, with reference number, CB:4001/DOPS/FHQ/ABJ/Vol, said heads of departments and state commissioners of police were told to sensitise their officers on why they should not try to go on strike as steps had been taken to address the issue.

The signal read: "Intelligence reports available to the Inspector General of Police indicate that some members of the rank and file are intending to embark on strike over non-payment of the new Police salary structure, and failure in providing sophisticated weapons to fight crime and poor general welfare of policemen. "Note that Inspector General of Police has directed the immediate computation of salary, under the new salary structure, tax relief/exemption for officers and men for immediate implementation. "Distribution of kits and other accoutrements have been initiated with Force Headquarters already concluded." It would be recalled that the Force Headquarters, while earlier denying insinuations that personnel of the Nigeria Police Force were planning to embark on strike over non-implementation of the new salary package, warned that any strike or disruption of law enforcement services would be treated as mutiny."

March 21

A Federal High Court, Calabar, has dismissed the terrorism, treasonable felony, and cybercrime charges against Agba Jalingo. The judge, Ijeoma Ojukwu, on Monday, dismissed the charges against Mr Jalingo, the publisher of an online newspaper, CrossRiverWatch, after the Cross River State Government withdrew the charges against him, according to a report published by CrossRiverWatch. Mr. Jalingo was arrested in August 2019 for accusing the Cross River State Governor, Ben Ayade, of diverting N500 million belonging to the state. He was charged for terrorism, treasonable felony, and cybercrime, and incarcerated for about 179 days, despite global outrage against the government's action. Mr Jalingo's lawyer, Adeyinka Olumide-Fusika, SAN, commended Cross River State Attorney-General for withdrawing the charges against his client. Mr Jalingo told PREMIUM TIMES he always knew that the court would rule in his favour in the case. "I knew from day one that I did not commit the offence, I knew it was just a matter of time for the court to throw the matter away," he said. "It's just painful that our system is skewed in this manner where three years of my time has been wasted coming from Lagos to Calabar because of a sham trial," he said. The journalist said he was waiting for advice from his lawyers, whether to sue the government or not, even though he had told his wife he was leaving vengeance to God. He said he was arrested in Lagos and taken to Calabar like a cow, and that the intention of those who locked him up was to break him. He also said there was pressure on him, while under incarceration, to write an apology letter to the Cross River government, which he refused. "Their intention was to scare me, push me until I break. So the lesson I have learnt is that it is better to hold on. Even when

at the breaking point, take a deep breath, pray to God, believe in God and ask him to give you strength. "I think today, the person that will really feel bad is the governor of Cross River State and those who locked me up. Wherever they are now, I think their conscience is talking to them," he said.

March 29

Shina Oludare narrated his ordeal with security agents at the Moshood Abiola Stadium in Abuja at the World Cup Qualifiers match between Nigeria and Ghana on Tuesday, 29th March 2022, via his Twitter handle. According to him, while trying to cover the stampede which had ensued after the match, he was attacked by three Nigerian Army personnel and several Policemen who flogged him and broke his phone despite identifying himself as a journalist with his accreditation tag.

May 20

Nigerian authorities should immediately and unconditionally release journalist Olamilekan Hammed Adewale Bashiru, who has been arbitrarily detained since May 13, and allow him to work without intimidation, the Committee to Protect Journalists stated on Friday, 20th May 2022. On May 13, Nigerian Department of State Security (DSS) officers arrested Bashiru, founder of the privately owned news website EaglesForeSight, after the outlet republished a report about the "alleged criminal records" of Ogun state governor Dapo Abiodun, according to Festus Ogun, Bashiru's lawyer who spoke to CPJ by phone, and a report by the privately owned Punch news website. The article said that Abiodun was arrested for credit card fraud and forgery in the United States in 1986. Bashiru was detained at DSS headquarters in the state capital

Abeokuta after going there for questioning on April 29, Ogun said. After his arrest, the DSS transferred the journalist to the state police headquarters, where he is still held without charge. The report, which was similarly republished by various news websites, originated from the privately owned Peoples Gazette and included a reply by Abiodun's lawyers to a petition written to Abdullah Adamu, the national chairman of the ruling All Progressives Congress political party, seeking to disqualify Abiodun from seeking a second term as governor of the southwestern state because of the fraud allegations. When Bashiru appeared for questioning on April 29, he was denied access to lawyers, Ogun said, adding that authorities allegedly forced Bashiru to delete the republished article from the EaglesForeSight website. The article is still missing from the website, according to CPJ's review of the publication. Authorities also allegedly compelled Bashiru to publicly apologize for republishing the article and describing the reporting source as "false information," which he did on the website on April 29, Ogun told CPJ. Ogun was finally allowed to visit the journalist at the police station on May 16, but was not told the charge his client faced or when he would be released, Ogun told CPJ.

April 1

A reporter with Channels TV, Olu Phillips was harassed and manhandled by Police Officers stationed at the Lekki Toll Gate on Friday morning. Phillips was covering the re-opening of the Toll Gate which has been shutdown since the October 2020 #EndSARS protests when armed police officers attacked and bundled him into a waiting van. According to Phillips, It took the intervention of some pedestrians and commuters who witnessed

the incident and challenged the officers before he was released. In March 2021, the Lekki Concession Company, LCC generated controversy when they announced plans to resume tolling. The move was seriously resisted by many Nigerians who are still aggrieved by the shooting of unarmed protesters by military personnel at the toll gate in the heat of the #EndSARS protest in 2020.

April 5

The Inspector-General of Police, Usman Baba, has ordered the dismissal of nine police officers for allegedly spearheading a planned strike by members of the Nigeria Police Force over poor conditions of service. Those affected are two Inspectors, five Sergeants and two Constables. A police signal issued by the Commissioner of Police Provost, Force Headquarters, Abuja, said the men were dismissed from service following their orderly room trial for planning and coordinating a strike within the ranks and file of the police. The offenders were said to have been identified and subsequently arrested after their phone calls were tracked. The wireless message, which was addressed to various State police Commands, read, "Be informed that following the conclusion of the orderly room proceedings of the undermentioned Inspectors, rank and file for the offences of discreditable conduct, improper conduct, breach of confidence, to wit: planning, organising, coordinating industrial strike within the ranks of the Nigeria Police Force; the Inspector-General has approved the dismissal from service of the following: AP/No. 245800 – Insp Nanoll Lamak; AP/ NP 287568 – Insp Amos Nagurah; F/No. 271367 – Sgt Onoja Onuche; F/No. 442680 – Sgt Franklin Agughalau; F/No. 495378 – Sgt Emmanuel Isah F/No. 508168 – Sgt Adesina Ismail; F/No. 508282 – Sgt Osoteku Ademola; F/No. 525839 – Police Constable

Ehighamhen Favour Ebele and F/No. 528222 – Police Constable Ubong Inem.

June 10

On 10th June 2022, traders of the Alaba International Market, Ojo, Lagos State who had shut down their shops to register for their Permanent Voter's Card (PVC) were attacked by hoodlums. According to reports, officials of the market had instructed that all shops be shut to give traders ample time to register at the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) office in the Igbede area of Ojo, to get their PVCs. There was a massive turnout of traders at the registration point. However, while the registration exercise was ongoing, thugs armed with machetes, sticks and clubs were said to have stormed the venue to disrupt the process and also made moves to cart away INEC registration machines but they were overpowered by the traders.

June 11

The kidnapped cameraman attached to the Ebonyi State Government House Uchenna Nwube has regained freedom from his abductors. A source, who confirmed the development to Channels Television on Saturday, said Nwude was freed after the abductors were given an unspecified sum of money. The source, however, explained that the amount was a shortfall from the N50m earlier demanded by the kidnappers. The Ebonyi State Police Command is yet to confirm his release as of the time of publishing this report. Mr Nwube is said to be in a police station in Enugu. The photographer was abducted along the Okigwe-Aba-Enugu road on Wednesday, 8th June 2022.

August 19

The National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) has revoked the licenses of the AIT/Ray Power FM (DAAR Communication L.td.), Silverbird TV Network and 50 other stations over N2.6 billion debt. The Director-General of NBC, Malam Balarabe Ilelah, who made the disclosure at a news conference on Friday, 19th August 2022 in Abuja, ordered the affected stations to shutdown in the next 24 hours. Ilelah directed NBC offices nationwide to collaborate with the security agencies to ensure immediate compliance. He explained that in May 2022, the Commission published in the national dailies, the list of licensees that are indebted to NBC, granted them two weeks to renew their licences and pay their debts or consider their licenses revoked and frequencies withdrawn. According to him, "Three months after the publication, some licensees are yet to pay their outstanding debts, in contravention of the NBC Act CAP N11, laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004, particularly section 10 (a) of the third schedule to the Act. In view of this development, the continued operation of the debtor stations is illegal and constitutes a threat to national security. Therefore, after due consideration, the NBC hereby announces the revocation of the licences of the under-listed stations and give them 24 hours to shutdown their operations."

October 16

Zamfara State Governor, Bello Matawalle, has ordered the immediate shutdown of some media organisations in the state for allegedly breaking journalism laws. This is contained in a statement signed by the Commissioner of Information Ibrahim Dosara. The affected media stations are Radio Nigeria, Pride FM Gusau, NTA Gusau,

Gamji Television, Vision FM, and Al Umma TV. According to the statement, the government also directed the Commissioner of Police in the state to arrest all pressmen that attended the event organised by the PDP governorship candidate, Dr Dauda Lawal Dare. Zamfara State Government earlier announced a suspension of all political activities among other new security measures in the state over the resurgence of insecurity. However, the PDP went ahead to received political decampes on Saturday which led to the clash between some supporters of PDP and the All Peoples Congress (APC) in the State, resulting to the death of one person, with 18 others injured. Zamfara government subsequently withdrew its order shutting down the media stations. According to the government, the affected stations violated an Executive Order by covering an alleged “illegal political activity.”

October 20

Two years after the #EndSARS protests, over 40 protesters are still languishing in prisons across Nigeria, Amnesty International said today, while panels set up to investigate police impunity have failed to deliver justice to hundreds of victims of police brutality. Amnesty International has found that the vast majority of #EndSARS protesters arrested in October 2020 are still being arbitrarily detained without trial.

November 28

A Nigerian university student, Aminu Muhammad over a Tweeter post he made about Nigeria’s first lady, Aisha Buhari.

Muhammad had made a tweet in June that implied Mrs Buhari was growing fat on resources meant for the poor. The student of the Federal

University Dutse, in Jigawa State, was reportedly arrested and beaten by state security agents before being charged to court for defamation. The case was later withdrawn and the student freed amid public outrage.

Gender Issues

April 6

The Federal High Court in Abuja, on Wednesday, ordered the Federal Government to enforce the National Gender Policy by allotting 35 per cent of appointments in the public sector to women. The action was brought by Funmi Falana on behalf of the Incorporated Trustees of Nigerian Women Trust Fund, Women Empowerment Legal Aid, and Centre for Democracy and Development West Africa, Women Advocates Research and Documentation Centre, Vision Spring Initiative, and Women in Politics Forum, among others. They sought the implementation of the 35 per cent Affirmative Action in appointments of women into public office. Delivering his judgement on the suit on Wednesday, the judge, Donatus Okorowo, agreed with the plaintiff that Nigerian women had been subjected to various forms of discrimination concerning appointments into key positions of government. The judge dismissed the preliminary objection of the federal government’s lawyer, Terhembra Agbe, who had argued that the plaintiff’s case did not disclose any cause of action. Referencing Section 42 of the Nigerian constitution as it relates to the suit, the judge upheld the plaintiff’s contention to the effect “that of all the 44 ministries, there are only about six female gender, and that the situation is worse in other MDAs and agencies.” Mr Okorowo noted that the defendant, by its conduct, insinuates that there are no competent and reliable women that

should be appointed to “stop the apparent male dominance as witnessed in the appointments” of men into key government positions. “I agree with their (plaintiff) contention that this cannot be possible out of 70 million women in Nigeria,” Mr Okorowo stated. The judge held that the Attorney-General of the Federation (Abubakar Malami) who was the sole defendant in the case, “failed to disprove the material allegations contained in the affidavit, and led no credible evidence to debunk material evidence of the plaintiff.”

March 31

A 15-year-old student of Government Technical College, Ikorodu (names withheld) has revealed how one of her teachers, Adefemi Adewunmi, allegedly raped her in a hotel in their area and threatened to kill her if she told anyone. The student who lives in Lowa community in Ikorodu, as gathered, was on her way to school on Monday, when her teacher who was driving in his car offered to give her a ride to school. But he allegedly detoured and took her to an undisclosed hotel in Ikorodu where he allegedly forced his way into her. She was said to have opened up to her mother, who subsequently reported the case at the Ikorodu division, consequent upon which the Divisional Police Officer ordered for the arrest of the father of one. Explaining, the 15-year-old girl said: “I didn’t know where he was going until we reached the hotel in Ikorodu. He forced his way into me and said he would kill me if I tell anyone.” The survivor was said to have been taken to Italewa Health Care centre for treatment. Spokesman for the Lagos State Police Command, SP Benjamin Hundeyin confirmed the arrest. He stated that investigation was still ongoing, adding that the case had been transferred to the Gender Officer, at the Command headquarters for further investigation.

April 13

Seven persons have been arraigned over the inhuman treatment of a widow accused of killing her husband in Aguleri community, Anambra State. The victim was stripped naked and paraded round the community by her in-laws, as curses were rained on her for allegedly causing the death of her husband through adultery. The State Commissioner of Police, Echeng Echeng, Tuesday, said the seven persons were also remanded in prison, adding that the Anambra State Police Command had continued the search for other suspects involved in the act. Echeng stated these during a courtesy visit by the Ultimate Business Women and Farmers Association of Nigeria at the police headquarters in Awka. He said those involved in the torture of the widow would face the full wrath of the law, stressing the need to protect the dignity of womanhood.

May 9

The Academic Staff of Union of Universities (ASUU) has announced the extension of its three-month prolonged strike by an additional three months. This announcement was made on Monday morning by the union’s president, Emmanuel Osodeke, at the ASUU headquarters at the University of Abuja, Nigeria’s capital territory. The decision, according to the Lagos zonal coordinator of ASUU, Adelaja Odukoya, followed an extensive meeting of the leadership of the union on Sunday and early Monday morning. This is as students and other concerned parties, including members of civil society organisations have continued to stage protests to demand an immediate resolution of the crisis between the workers’ unions and the Nigerian government.

August 29

Youths from Umueghu in Amaegbuato autonomous community, Nkpa in Bende Local Government, Abia state over the weekend, gave several cane lashes to a widow from the area, Mrs. Amarachi Okechi. Mrs. Okechi according to information, was accused of being a witch and having a hand in the death of her husband. The widow was said to have been brought out in the village square, her hands tied at her back, two feet tied together and flogged in turn mercilessly by some youths of the community.

September 22

The Police have arrested a human rights activist, Zainab Duke, and her two domestic staff for allegedly assaulting and brutalising a female Police officer. Force spokesperson, Muiyiwa Adejobi, disclosed this in a statement released on Thursday, 22nd September 2022. He identified the policewoman as Teju Moses, an inspector, who was assigned to the activist as an orderly. A video of the brutality went viral on Wednesday, 21st September 2022 when the incident was said to have occurred at the Area 11 axis of Abuja.

October 1

Troops of the Nigerian Army have reportedly rescued one of the Chibok schoolgirls abducted by insurgents in 2014. The girl, identified as Yana Pogu, was rescued on Thursday, 29th September 2022 in Borno by the troops of the Nigerian Army under Operation Hadin Kai. Pogu, who was rescued with her four children, gave birth to a set of twins four months ago.

Fair Hearing

May 11

Two unidentified men have been burnt to death by a mob at Ijesha axis of Lagos over alleged theft of mobile phones. The victims were said to have been found with 18 mobile phones, which were suspected to be stolen items, in the early hours of Wednesday, 11th May 2022. According to NAN, during a visit to the scene at Ogunlana Street, Ijesha, along Cele bus-stop bridge at about 1.20pm on Wednesday, the charred bodies of the suspects were still in the area. "The two guys, before their death, were interrogated and confessed that they were from Ajegunle area," a source told NAN. "They were mobbed following accumulated anger from frequent thefts around the shops in the area in the last few weeks." Speaking on the incident, Benjamin Hundeyin, Lagos police spokesperson, said the police have launched a manhunt to arrest those involved in the act of jungle justice. "Jungle justice is a crime in our law. People should not take laws into their own hands. When you see a crime, report to the police," Hundeyin said.

May 12

A female student of the Shehu Shagari College of Education has been stoned and killed in Sokoto by irate youths. According to the police, Deborah Samuel, a level-two student, was accused of making a social media post that blasphemed the holy Prophet Mohammed (SAW). The police said the students forcefully removed the victim from the security room where she was hidden by the school authorities, killed her and burnt the building. Videos on social media show men stoning and flogging a motionless body draped in red attire. Some footage also captured a raging

fire as a man faced the camera, claiming that he killed and burnt her, and brandishing a matchbox. In a statement signed by spokesperson, Sanusi Abubakar, the police said it has arrested two persons in connection with the killing.

May 14

A teenager accused of stealing a motorcycle has been burnt to death by a mob in Auchi, Etsako west LGA, Edo State. The incident happened on Friday, 13th May 2022.

The video of the mob action, shared on social media platforms, shows that two male teenagers were stripped naked and beaten over alleged theft. One of the teenagers was later burnt to death. Kontongs Bello, Edo police spokesperson, in a statement on Saturday, said some vigilantes aided the mob who set ablaze the suspect in Auchi. Bello stated that, “The Edo State Commissioner of Police, CP Abutu Yaro, fdc has ordered a thorough investigation into the barbaric and dehumanizing act of jungle justice meted on an alleged suspect by some purported irate youths masquerading as vigilantes in Auchi. The Commissioner of Police while reacting to the ugly incident, frowned at the action of the vigilantes, who instead of taking the suspect to the Police for proper investigation and prosecution, aided the irate mob to burn the suspect allegedly arrested for stealing to death without any recourse to the law. CP Abutu Yaro, fdc who described the act as barbaric and inimical to the law governing our dear country, warned Edo State indigenes that the Command under his watch will not allow disgruntled elements in the society to take laws into their hands by killing suspects arrested for alleged crimes in such a dehumanizing and unlawful manner.”

May 15

Commercial motorcyclists have reportedly lynched a sound engineer identified as David Imoh in the Lekki axis of Lagos State. The incident happened on 12th May 2022, following a misunderstanding between David, who is said to be a father of two, and a motorcyclist. A misunderstanding over N100 balance was said to have degenerated, resulting in some motorcyclists present at the scene joining their colleague to beat up David and two of his friends. The commercial motorcyclists were said to have set the deceased ablaze after beating him unconscious. Benjamin Hundeyin, Lagos Police spokesperson stated that four suspects have been arrested in connection with the murder of the sound engineer. Hundeyin added that the deceased’s friends had been taken to a hospital for treatment.

May 18-20

At least five persons have been reportedly killed and houses set on fire in a clash between traders and okada riders at Dei Dei, a community in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC) of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). A resident told Daily Trust that an accident involving a bike man led to the break down of law and order in the community. “Five persons that I know have been killed in this incident. We have been calling for security intervention to no avail. We are really worried that this crisis is tilting towards ethnic dimension.”, said the resident. The traders were said to have attacked the rider, whom they blamed for recklessness which led to the death of the passenger. The okada riders colleagues reportedly moved to rescue him from the attackers and the situation degenerated afterwards. Daily Trust gathered security operatives have moved to the scene to prevent further violence.

May 29

Over 100 motorcyclists have attacked Same Global Estate in the Lokogoma area of Abuja to avenge the death of two colleagues. The incident happened after a motorist reportedly hit two Okada riders on Sunday, 29th May 2022 and ran into the estate for safety. The motorist was chased by a crowd of motorcyclists after he ran over two motorcyclists. The motorcyclists attacked the estate in their bid to apprehend an unknown motorist. The entrance to the estate was set on fire, and the inferno affected the gatehouse of the estate. Meanwhile, Josephine Adeh, spokesperson of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) police command, told TheCable that no house was razed during the incident. She however confirmed that police operatives have been deployed to the area and the situation is “under control”.

June 4

A mob has killed a member of a vigilante group in Lugbe area of Abua, for reportedly making a blasphemous statement. It was gathered that members of the vigilance group guarding the popular Timber Shed market at the Federal Housing Estate (FHA) Lugbe in Abuja, had wanted to arrest some residents wandering around the market in the early hours of Saturday, 4th June 2022. The residents were said to have begged the Vigilantes to free them in the name of God but one of the vigilantes kicked and made comments said to be blasphemous. Witnesses told LEADERSHIP the vigilante was beaten and stoned before he was set ablaze, a development that caused commotion in Estate. Policemen were later deployed to the scene of the incident in order to calm down frayed nerves.

June 9

There was tension on Thursday, 9th June 2022 when an angry mob burnt over 30 motorcycles on Jakande Estate, Isheri Road, Lagos State, after an okada rider crushed a man to death. PUNCH Metro gathered that the yet-to-be-identified okada rider was plying one way when he rammed into the victim, who was standing by the roadside at First Junction Bus-Stop. The victim was said to have died due to the impact of the collision. Our correspondents learnt that youths angered by the incident protested against the victim’s death. During the protest, the mob pounced on the okada rider and was on the verge of lynching him when some policemen rescued him. The protesters were said to have also seized motorcycles from other riders who plied the scene of the accident during the demonstration. While some riders attempted retrieving their motorcycles, others, out of fear of being attacked by the mob, abandoned theirs and fled. The police were said to have rushed the injured okada rider to a nearby hospital for treatment when the mob set the abandoned motorcycles ablaze.

August 15

A Federal High Court in Abuja on 22nd July 2022, sentenced a kidnap kingpin, Hamisu Bala, also known as Wadume, and two others, to seven years imprisonment. Justice Binta Nyako convicted Wadume of two of the 13-count charges against him and two others. Wadume was convicted on counts two and 10 bordering on escaping from lawful custody and unlawfully dealing in prohibited firearms. The court also convicted Aliyu Daje, a Police Inspector, who was the station officer at the Police headquarters at Ibi Local Government Area of Taraba State, to three years imprisonment for tampering with the

record to conceal a crime. The charges followed the killing of three police officers and two civilians on August 6, 2019 by some soldiers. The policemen, who were from the Intelligence Response Team, Abuja, had arrested Wadume at Ibi before they were ambushed on the road by the military men. Ten military officers who were charged with the convicts, and whose trial were separated for departmental reasons, are: Captain Tijjani Balarabe; Staff Sgt David Isaiah; Sgt Ibrahim Mohammed; Corporal Bartholomew Obanye; Private Mohammed Nura; Lance Corporal Okorozie Gideon; Corporal Marcus Michael; Lance Corporal Nvenaweimoeimi Akpagra; Staff Sgt Abdulahi Adamu and Private Ebele Emmanuel.

August 17

“Agba Jalingo, publisher of CrossRiverWatch was arrested by police at his residence in Lagos State. Jalingo, in a series of Facebook posts on Friday, 19th August 2022 stated that his residence had been besieged by police officers. The journalist alleged that the police officers held his wife and daughter hostage, adding that they were “sent from Abuja”. Jonathan Ugbal, editor of CrossRiver Watch, told TheCable that Jalingo was taken to Alapere police station and that the activist will be transferred to Abuja. Ugbal stated that the arrest was connected with a petition of alleged defamation of character, which was filed by the wife of Frank Ayade, the brother of Ben Ayade, Governor of Cross River State. Lagos State Police spokesperson, Benjamin Hundeyin also confirmed the arrest, saying the State command was aware.

September 23

Justice Adenike Coker of the Lagos High Court, Ikeja, on Thursday, 22nd September 2022, sentenced a dismissed cop, Olalekan Ogunyemi, to life imprisonment for killing a football fan, Kolade Johnson. Ogunyemi, who was attached to the Special Anti-Cultism Squad of the Nigeria Police, shot Johnson in the lower abdomen on March 31, 2019, at a viewing centre at Mangoro, Ikeja, Lagos. The victim was watching a football match between Liverpool and Tottenham Hotspur when he was shot by the convict. While delivering judgment on the matter, Justice Coker found the defendant guilty of the charge and accordingly sentenced him to life imprisonment with the caveat of serving a minimum of 25 years imprisonment.

September 28

The Independent Investigative Panel on Human Rights Violations against the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) and other units of the Nigerian Police in Abuja on Tuesday, 27th September 2022 submitted its report to the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) with recommendations and penalties. The panel, in its recommendation, found 72 police officers guilty of the allegations levelled against them. It was reported that while 28 of them were recommended for prosecution, 25 were recommended for dismissal, 15 for disciplinary actions, and four were recommended for demotion. NHRC Executive Secretary, Chief Tony Ojukwu, SAN stated that payment of compensation and holding indicted officers of the Nigeria Police accountable for the violation of the rights of the people were the first steps on the road to justice.

October 23

Angry youths in Uyo, the Akwa Ibom State capital on Saturday, 22nd October 2022, caught and set ablaze two thieves suspected to be specialists in snatching phones and stealing other valuables from members of the public. It was gathered that one of them was caught at Itam Market, in Itu local government area after snatching an Android phone. The owner of the phone raised the alarm which attracted the attention of the youths who chased after the thief caught him and immediately poured petrol on him and set him ablaze. He was said to have been struggling to escape with his body still on fire, when a Police patrol team arrived the scene and took him into their vehicle. The second person was caught along Idoro road in Uyo Local Government Area for allegedly stealing a Plasma television belonging to a pentecostal church. According to local sources, the young man was caught stealing the television at about 2am on Saturday by a vigilante group after he had successfully removed it and called a bus driver to convey it to a buyer. The vigilante group intercepted the bus and the man who stole it confessed that it was removed from the church. The church pastor who was contacted, identified the TV set and returned it to the church while the suspected thief was set ablaze.

October 13

The Court of Appeal in Abuja on Thursday declared as illegal and unlawful, the abduction of the Biafra nation agitator, Nnamdi Kanu from Kenya to Nigeria and quashed the entire terrorism charges brought against him by the Federal Government.

The Court held that the Federal Government breached all local and international laws in the forceful rendition of Kanu to Nigeria thereby

making the terrorism charges against him incompetent and unlawful.

In a judgment in an appeal by Kanu, by Justice Oludotun Adefope-Okojie, the criminal charges by the Federal Government against Kanu was voided and set aside.

The Appellate Court said that the Federal Government having flagrantly breached the fundamental rights of Kanu lost the legal right to put him on trial.

The Court held that laws are meant to be obeyed and that the Federal Government has no reason to have taken laws into her own hands in the illegal and unlawful way the matter of Kanu was handled.

Justice Adebola held that failure of Nigeria to follow due process by way of extradition process as prescribed by law was fatal to the charges against Kanu.

The Appeal Court further held that the failure of the Federal Government to disclose where and when the alleged offences brought against Kanu were committed was also fatal to the terrorism charges and made them liable to dismissal.

ABOUT PLAC

Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre (PLAC) is a non-governmental organization committed to strengthening democratic governance and citizens' participation in Nigeria. PLAC works to enhance citizens' engagement with state institutions, and to promote transparency and accountability in policy and decision-making process.

The main focus of PLAC's intervention in the democratic governance process is on building the capacity of the legislature and reforming the electoral process. Since its establishment, PLAC has grown into a leading institution with capacity to deliver cutting-edge research, policy analysis and advocacy. PLAC receives funding support from donors and other philanthropic sources.

