

# **NIGERIA**

## **ANNUAL HUMAN RIGHTS**

# **REPORT**

# **2024**





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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS</b>	<b>5</b>
• <b>Violations by the State and Security Personnel</b>	<b>5</b>
- Key Incidents	<b>6</b>
• <b>Religious Attacks</b>	<b>12</b>
- Key Incidents	<b>13</b>
• <b>Violations by Individuals</b>	<b>14</b>
- Key Incidents	<b>15</b>
<b>3. SOCIO-ECONOMIC RIGHTS</b>	<b>17</b>
- Key Incidents	<b>18</b>
<b>4. INSURGENCY AND GENERAL INSECURITY</b>	<b>20</b>
- Key Incidents	<b>21</b>
• <b>Election-related Violence</b>	<b>41</b>
- Key Incidents	<b>41</b>
• <b>Attacks on Security Personnel</b>	<b>41</b>
- Key Incidents	<b>43</b>
• <b>State Response to Insecurity</b>	<b>46</b>
- Key Incidents	<b>47</b>
<b>5. VIOLATIONS AGAINST VULNERABLE GROUPS</b>	<b>49</b>
- Key Incidents	<b>50</b>
• <b>Gender-Based Violence</b>	<b>51</b>
- Key Incidents	<b>53</b>
<b>6. CONCLUSION</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>7. RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>59</b>



# INTRODUCTION

There is growing concern that the human rights situation in Nigeria has taken a deep dive and that incidents of abuse of rights are increasingly rampant.

The 2024 Human Rights Report on Nigeria highlights several incidents of abuse of civil and political rights, a disturbing derogation on the country's democratic governance. Despite Nigeria's Constitution protection of rights and international obligations, violations such as extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests, police brutality, and unlawful detentions continue to undermine the rule of law. Security agencies, tasked with maintaining law and order, have faced accusations of abusing their powers, with instances of harassment, extortion, and sexual violence by officials further eroding guaranteed rights. These issues point to systemic flaws in law enforcement that demand urgent reform and greater accountability. Victims of human rights abuse often face significant barriers to obtaining justice, including delays in prosecution and an overall lack of transparency in investigative processes. This culture of impunity not only exacerbates citizens' frustrations but also hinders efforts to build a society based on justice and fairness.

Freedom of expression, the press, and assembly also came under threat in 2024, as journalists and citizens engaging in peaceful protests faced intimidation, arrests and violence. Reports of media censorship and the misuse of legal frameworks to stifle dissent reveal a disturbing trend of shrinking civic space. These actions contradict the fundamental rights enshrined in Nigeria's Constitution and international human rights instruments, such as the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. The silencing of dissent and peaceful advocacy undermines Nigeria's democratic institutions and discourages civic participation, which are essential for sustainable development and nation-building. Ensuring the safety of journalists and activists and protecting the right to peaceful assembly are urgent priorities that the government must address to preserve democratic freedoms.

Violations against vulnerable groups emerged as a recurring issue, reflecting the deeply entrenched societal and structural inequalities that disproportionately affect women and girls. Cases of domestic violence, rape, and sexual harassment were reported across the country, with limited interventions to provide justice and support for survivors. Child trafficking and exploitation also rose significantly, with multiple syndicates targeting underprivileged children for forced labour, sexual exploitation, and other dehumanizing activities. Reports revealed that trafficked children are often promised better opportunities but instead face a bleak reality of abuse and neglect. The involvement of organized criminal syndicates in human trafficking underscores the need for a coordinated approach to dismantle these networks, protect victims, and hold perpetrators accountable.

Internally displaced persons (IDPs) remain another vulnerable group requiring attention, as conflict and insurgency continued to displace thousands of Nigerians in 2024. The humanitarian crisis facing IDPs is exacerbated by inadequate shelter, limited access to education and healthcare, and the risk of exploitation. Women and children in displacement camps are particularly vulnerable to abuse, including sexual violence and forced marriages. The lack of a comprehensive framework to address the needs of IDPs not only compounds their suffering but also highlights the gaps in Nigeria's social safety net.

Economic inequality and systemic poverty remain underlying factors fuelling these human rights violations. Marginalised communities, particularly in rural areas, face limited access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities, leaving them vulnerable to exploitation. Children from impoverished backgrounds are disproportionately targeted for labour trafficking and other forms of exploitation. These realities point to the urgent need for economic empowerment programs that address structural poverty and provide opportunities for education and skill development to vulnerable populations.

This report serves as a comprehensive overview of Nigeria's human rights landscape in 2024, documenting the ongoing challenges and underscoring the urgency for meaningful reforms. It calls for collective action by the government, civil society, and international partners to ensure the promotion and protection of human rights. Upholding civil and political rights, addressing gender-based violence, protecting vulnerable populations, and fostering economic justice must remain at the forefront of national and global human rights advocacy in Nigeria. Only through sustained and coordinated efforts can the country make meaningful progress toward building a society that respects and protects the dignity and rights of all its citizens.



## **CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS**

In 2024, Nigeria continued to grapple with significant challenges in the protection and promotion of civil and political human rights. Despite constitutional guarantees, persistent issues such as insecurity, limited access to justice, restrictions on freedom of expression, and discrimination against marginalised groups highlight systemic gaps in the enforcement of rights.

Freedom of expression and press freedom faced growing threats, with journalists, activists, and dissenters experiencing harassment, intimidation, and unlawful detention. The Cybercrimes Act 2015, particularly section 24 which defines the offence of cyberstalking has been used over time to arrest and detain journalists and ordinary citizens who speak against the government or other highly-placed individuals. However, a bill to amend the Act was passed by the National Assembly and assented by the President in February 2024. The amendment narrows down the definition of cyberstalking, reducing the tendency for this section to be used to bring frivolous charges against individuals in cases that could be addressed by civil suits.

### **Violations by the State and Security Personnel**

The report on human rights violations by state actors and security agencies in Nigeria underscores critical concerns about the protection of fundamental rights and the need for accountability. It documents numerous cases involving extrajudicial killings, abuses of power, and violations of due process, highlighting systemic issues within the security apparatus. These incidents, including the killings in Tilde-Fulbe, the repression of Shi'ite mourners, and abuses against civilians, demonstrate a pattern of actions that undermine public trust in law enforcement and governance structures. The response from state actors, such as denials by the military and arrests of culpable individuals, reflects the challenges in addressing such violations comprehensively.

The judiciary's interventions, such as the Court of Appeal's ruling in favor of the Shi'ite community for a violent attack on their religious procession in 19 August, 2021, illustrate

the critical role of the legal system in redressing human rights abuses and ensuring accountability. Additionally, cases like the compensation awarded to victims of police misconduct in Ogun State and the judicial reprimand of security agencies highlight progress in upholding justice. However, these steps are often overshadowed by the recurrence of similar violations, pointing to the urgent need for reforms and stronger oversight mechanisms within Nigeria's security and law enforcement agencies.

Amid growing public outrage and international concern, the government has taken measures, such as directing the release of detained minors and addressing specific incidents of misconduct. Nevertheless, a holistic approach is required to address the root causes of human rights abuses, including capacity building for security personnel, adherence to international human rights standards, and fostering better community relations. Strengthening accountability frameworks and ensuring timely justice for victims remain essential for restoring public confidence and reinforcing Nigeria's commitment to protecting the rights and dignity of all citizens.

## Key Incidents

On 7 February 2024, a group of Northern leaders in Kaduna State called on the Federal Government to investigate the alleged killing of 11 Fulani youth in Tilde-Fulbe community, Kachia Local Government Area. The leaders, including prominent figures such as Professors Abubakar Siddique Mohammed and Auwalu Yadudu, issued a statement urging an immediate investigation into the murders reportedly committed by soldiers at the Ladugga Grazing Reserve. They emphasised that failing to investigate these grave allegations would only deepen distrust in state institutions and jeopardise security-community relations.

The report included the names of the victims and highlighted a previous incident where 80 people were killed during an aerial bombardment in Igabi Local Government Area of Kaduna State. The leaders stressed that investigating these incidents is crucial for upholding fundamental human rights and providing solace to the affected communities.

In a statement in reaction to the above report, the Nigerian military denied any involvement in the alleged killing of the 11 Fulani youths. It clarified that on 21 December 2023, troops responded to a kidnapping incident in Kachia, neutralised three kidnapers and arrested one. On 30 December 2023, the military stated that troops conducted a raid in Tilden Fulani, arresting Ibrahim Abubakar, who admitted involvement in insurgent activities and provided names of others with automatic weapons. Despite searching the suspects' homes, no incriminating items were found. The Army emphasised that



no troops had killed any Fulani herders or innocent citizens, nor taken any valuables, suggesting the allegations were part of a smear campaign to undermine their efforts against insurgency and terrorism.

On 12 March, Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Police Command arrested Usman Magaji, an officer of the Nigerian Correctional Service, for shooting Ibrahim Yahaya at Wuse Market in Abuja. The incident sparked an outrage, leading to a mob setting fire to shops in the market. The FCT Police Public Relations Officer, Josephine Akeh, confirmed the arrest and stated that preliminary investigations revealed Yahaya was apprehended by the Abuja Environmental Protection Board's task force and taken before a mobile court. Convicted by the court, Yahaya attempted to escape while being transported to prison, prompting Magaji to shoot him. Yahaya was pronounced dead at a nearby hospital.

On 21 March, the Court of Appeal in Sokoto ordered the Nigeria Police to pay a total of N80 million to the Shi'ite community, followers of Sheikh Ibraheem Zakzaky, for a violent attack on their Ashura religious procession that took place on 19 August 2021. The unanimous judgment was delivered by Justice Mohammed Danjuma, who overturned the earlier trial court's decision of 17 May 2022, on the matter. The appellate court found that the trial judge had unjustifiably formed opinions and raised doubts against the appellants, rather than relying on the facts presented in their affidavits.

The incident involved police officers allegedly attacking Shi'ite mourners, resulting in the deaths of four individuals and injuries to many others. The appellate court declared the police actions as deliberate, unwarranted, inhumane, and unlawful, violating Section 33(1) of the Nigerian Constitution. The court ordered the police to pay N10 million to the families of each of the four deceased mourners and N2 million each to the five injured mourners. Additionally, the police was ordered to pay N30 million to the Shi'ite community in Sokoto for the degrading treatment they suffered during the procession.

On 15 March, the editor of an online media outlet, First News, Segun Olatunji was taken away from his residence in Alagbado, Lagos State by some men who introduced themselves as personnel of the Nigerian Army. He was arrested in connection to a story he had published regarding the President's Chief of Staff. He was released two weeks later in Abuja without any charges brought against him.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Okakwu, E. (2024, October 3). *Chained and blindfolded: Nigerian journalist Segun Olatunji recounts his detention*. Committee to Protect Journalists. <https://cpj.org/2024/07/chained-and-blindfolded-nigerian-journalist-segun-olatumji-recounts-his-detention/>

In the search for suspects involved in the killing of 17 soldiers and alleged snatching of their arms in Okuama, Delta State, neighbouring Olotu community suffered invasion by soldiers, with one Joseph Willie reported dead. In another development in April, soldiers were said to have invaded Olotu again, burning two houses and destroying another, before taking away the community Chairman, Matthew Olokpa, and about nine other persons.

On 2 April, a High Court in Ogun State, Abeokuta Judicial Division, awarded N25 million in damages against the Office of the Ogun State Commissioner of Police and five others for the unlawful arrest and detention of one Sunday Mafe. According to the judgement, the court held that the detention of Mafe several times by men of the Nigerian Police Force was against his fundamental human rights.

A soldier, Private Adamu Muhammad, was reported to have killed his lover identified as Hauwakulu Tabra in one of the Army barracks in Enugu State on 11 April. Her corpse was discovered within the barracks the following day.

On 14 April, three persons were killed, while others sustained injuries after a military patrol vehicle crushed a tricycle filled with passengers in Garin-Alkali community, Bade Local Government Area of Yobe State.

The Abia State Police Command arrested a Police Corporal, Obagi Njok, for shooting and killing a businessman. He was shot by the policeman in Aba, the commercial hub of the State on April 17, for allegedly refusing to give him money at a checkpoint.

On 27 April, the police in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja, arrested an Assistant Superintendent of Police, identified only as Kulu, alongside her accomplice, one Elizbeth, for allegedly abducting five children.

On 1 May, the Lagos State Police Command stated that it had identified the police officer who shot a young man, Togheen Eniafe, at a fuel station in Obalende area of Lagos State, for resisting some security agents who attempted to purchase petrol without joining the queue.

In May, a journalist with the Foundation for Investigative Journalism (FJI), Daniel Ojukwu was reported to have gone missing and unreachable. It was later discovered that he was held at the State Criminal Investigation Department (SCID) of the Nigeria Police in the Panti area of Lagos. From there, he was transferred to the Nigerian Police Force National Cybercrime Centre (NPF-NCCC) in Abuja, Federal Capital Territory (FCT). According to the Police, he was arrested and detained in relation to a petition against him alleging violation of the Cybercrimes Act. The petition was in connection with a story written

by Ojukwu detailing how the Senior Special Assistant to former President Muhammad Buhari on Sustainable Development Goals, Adejoke Orelope-Adefulire, was said to have paid the sum of N147 million to a restaurant for the construction of classrooms in Lagos State. He was released after about nine days in custody.

On 6 May, a woman was shot and many others sustained varied degrees of injury in Ughelli, Delta State, when operatives of the Delta State Police Command resorted to forceful dispersal of a group of protesting women. The women from Oteri-Ughelli in the Ughelli North Local Government Area were protesting harassment and extortion by policemen in the community. According to witnesses, the peaceful protest was interrupted when the aggrieved women, who had mobilised to the Police Area Command office in Ughelli to register their grievances, were rebuffed by the men and officers of the Area Command.

Personnel of the Nigerian Army Corps of Military Police on Saturday, 18 May, stormed Banex Plaza in the Wuse 2 area of Abuja, beating passers-by. The assault on civilians was a reprisal for an earlier fracas that broke out between four military police personnel and some traders at the popular plaza earlier that day. The plaza was subsequently locked down for some time before it was eventually re-opened.

The publisher and editor-in-chief of Global Upfront Newspapers, Madu Onuorah was arrested in his home in the Lugbe area of Abuja on 22 May, by policemen, and taken to Enugu State. His arrest followed a petition by a US-based reverend sister, alleging defamation in an article published by Onuoha. He was later released on 23 May. Although no charges were brought against him at the time of arrest, he stated that the police was still investigating him.<sup>2</sup>

The Rivers State Police Command in a statement on 27 May, disclosed that it arrested 13 persons, including four soldiers for alleged armed robbery, hijacking of food trucks and diverting them to other locations, the Police also arrested an operative of the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC).

On 28 May, two young men were killed by a bullet from a policeman's gun in the Omisanjana Area of Ado Ekiti, Ekiti State. According to news reports, there was an accident in the area, and some irate youths attempted to mob the driver and set the vehicle ablaze. In the process of trying to disperse the youths, there was an accidental discharge from one of the officer's guns, which hit two of the youths.

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<sup>2</sup> Committee to Protect Journalists. (2024, May 29). *Nigerian journalist Madu Onuorah arrested for alleged defamation, released on bail*. <https://cpj.org/2024/05/nigerian-journalist-madu-onuorah-arrested-for-alleged-defamation-released-on-bail/>

A trigger-happy police officer reportedly shot dead a betting agent identified as Anuoluwapo Abiodun in the Imala/Elega area of Abeokuta, Ogun State, on 5 July. Abiodun, a graduate of Moshood Abiola Polytechnic, reportedly operated a betting shop in front of a popular hotel in the area and was closing his shop for the day when he was gunned down. According to an eyewitness, some police officers including the one responsible for shooting Abiodun were drunk and emerged from a hotel when the incident took place.

On 14 July, the Kogi State Police Command confirmed the arrest of a Police Inspector, Aminu Mohammed, over the robbery and car theft in the residences of those around his duty station, 'C' Division in Lokoja, the State capital.

On 6 August, a soldier with the Nigerian Army, shot dead a 16-year-old #EndBadGovernanceInNigeria protester in the Samaru community in Zaria, Kaduna State. The teenage protester was identified as Ismail Mohammed. According to the Director of Army Public Relations, Major General Onyeama Nwachukwu, the incident happened when troops of the Nigerian Army received a distress call to help disperse some hoodlums, who had gathered in Samaru burning tyres and attacking security personnel. He added that the mob attempted to attack the troops, which led a soldier to fire a warning shot to scare the hoodlums away, resulting in Mohammed's death. He also stated that the soldier involved was arrested and was undergoing interrogation.

In the month of August, residents in gabi Local Government Area of Kaduna State were attacked when men dressed in military uniform went into the Sabon Birnin Daji Cattle Market and opened fire, killing three persons and over 100 cows, as traders scrambled for safety. According to a resident of the area, the dead animals were scattered in the market and caused an offensive odour.

On 9 September, the President of Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC), Joe Ajero was arrested by the Department of State Services (DSS) at the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport, Abuja on his way to London to attend a labour union meeting. Ajaero's detention sparked widespread criticism of President Bola Tinubu's administration. Ajero was however released after several hours of detention but his passport was seized.

In the month of November, 76 people, many of them minors, were brought before a Federal High Court in Abuja for an initial hearing on charges related to their alleged participation in the #EndBadGovernance protest<sup>3</sup> in August. The charge sheet showed at least 29 children, aged between 14 to 17, were among those brought before the court. The arraignment sparked an outcry in the country. Most of the minors looked

<sup>3</sup> A protest by Nigerians against the Federal Government's economic reform policies

malnourished and some of them collapsed while in court. Many critics slammed the government saying that arraignment of such number of minors negates every tenet of the protection of human rights.

In response to the situation, the Minister of Information, Mohammed Idris stated that Nigeria's President, Bola Tinubu directed that all minors detained during the #EndBadGovernance protests in August be freed and treason charges against them dropped.

On 18 November, a Federal High Court in Lagos restrained the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC), the regulatory authority for broadcasting in Nigeria, from using its Act or the Nigeria Broadcasting Code to impose fines, threaten sanctions or suspend broadcast stations and other independent media houses. According to a statement published by the Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP), a rights group involved in the suit, Justice Nicholas Oweibo gave the ruling in June 2024 but the certified true copy of the judgment became available in November 2024. SERAP and the Centre for Journalism Innovation and Development (CJID) had filed a suit against the NBC in 2022 for imposing N5 million fines on Trust TV, Multichoice Nigeria Limited, NTA-StarTimes Limited and Telkom Satellite Limited, for broadcasting a report on terrorism.

On December 3, the ECOWAS Court of Justice ordered the Federal Government to pay the sum of N5 million to Oluwatimilehin Adebayo as compensation for the violation of his right to freedom from torture. Adebayo was brutalised by police officers in Ogun State, who beat him with the handle of an axe and tied his limbs to a pole with chains. He sustained physical injuries, including trauma to his scrotum and suffered from psychological distress.<sup>4</sup>

On 3 December, the Ekiti State Police Command arrested a lawyer and author, Dele Farotimi in Lagos State and took him to Ekiti State, where he was arraigned before a Magistrate Court on a 16-count charge bordering on criminal defamation on 4 December. His arrest and arraignment followed a petition to the Police by renowned lawyer, Afe Babalola, alleging criminal defamation by some contents of a book written by Farotimi, 'Nigeria and the Criminal Justice System'. Farotimi was subsequently remanded in prison custody after his arraignment, with the case adjourned to 10 December. He was also arraigned before a Federal High Court in Ado-Ekiti, the Ekiti State capital on cybercrime-related charges and granted bail in the sum of N50 million, with the case adjourned to January 2025.

<sup>4</sup> CCJ Official Website | ECOWAS Court Orders Nigeria to Compensate Torture Victim and Investigate Police Abuse. (2024, December 4). <http://www.court.ecowas.org/2024/12/04/ecowas-court-orders-nigeria-to-compensate-torture-victim-and-investigate-police-abuse/>

There is however concern that the use of the charge of criminal defamation against Dele Farotimi in what may be regarded as civil defamation represents the use of State powers to constrict the human rights of a known critic of government. Given that the allegation of defamation against Farotimi was not a matter bordering on public safety and security, it is unclear why the police will proceed on initiating a matter of criminal defamation. It is even more curious that the magistrate before whom this case was brought, proceeded to deny him bail and instead, remanded him in prison.

## Religious Attacks

The report on human rights violations in the area of religious attacks reveals an alarming trend of escalating violence targeting both Christian and Muslim communities across Nigeria. Since the beginning of 2024, there has been a marked increase in incidents where religious leaders and worshippers are subjected to attacks, kidnappings, and killings in their places of worship. These attacks, often carried out by suspected insurgents, bandits, and armed groups, highlight the vulnerability of religious communities amidst a growing climate of insecurity. The inability of security agencies to prevent these violent acts or bring perpetrators to account remains a significant concern, fuelling fear and resentment within affected communities.

One of the most distressing aspects of these religious attacks is the indiscriminate nature of the violence, with both Christian and Muslim groups facing targeted assaults. Reports indicate that insurgent groups such as Boko Haram have continued to perpetrate attacks in the North-Eastern region, claiming numerous lives and displacing communities. Similarly, bandits have targeted worshippers in the North-Western and North Central parts of Nigeria, causing widespread panic.

The scale and persistence of religious attacks necessitates an urgent response from both national and international stakeholders. Community leaders, religious organisations, and local authorities have called for increased protection and have urged security agencies to intensify efforts to investigate and curb these attacks. Support networks, such as the Stefanos Foundation, have been instrumental in providing aid and trauma counselling to affected individuals, yet the ongoing violence highlights a broader need for robust security measures and a collective commitment to protecting religious freedom in Nigeria. The call for prayers, support, and governmental action is a reflection of the desperate situation faced by these communities, whose right to worship freely is increasingly under threat.



## Key Incidents

In a significant attack by suspected Boko Haram members, a well-known pastor of the Church of Christ in Nations, Luka Levong, was killed in Geidam, Yobe State, on 5 January 2024. The terrorists launched their assault around 2:00 am, resulting in the deaths of Pastor Levong and the church's treasurer, Maina Abdullahi. The attackers also set fire to several houses and a church. The victims' bodies were taken to the Specialist Hospital in Geidam. Geidam, known for its frequent insurgency-related violence, has seen over 150,000 residents displaced as at 2021.<sup>5</sup> This incident is a confirmation of the intensification of attacks on Christian communities in northern Nigeria into the 2024 new year, following a series of coordinated massacres over the 2023 Christmas period. The Christmas attacks, some of the deadliest against Nigeria's northern Christian community, displaced 20,000 people in Plateau State.<sup>6</sup>

The violence, which began on 23 December and escalated on Christmas Eve, included an attack in Kambarpelli, where Rev. Gideon Dawel lost his wife and five daughters. Witnesses, including survivors who recognised their attackers as former neighbours, described the brutal nature of the assaults. These latest incidents have devastated over 40 villages across the north of Nigeria, with security services unable to effectively respond. Local protection teams, though organised, have been outgunned and overwhelmed, leading to a continued call for urgent support and prayers for the affected communities.

Rev. Father Kenneth Kanwa and Rev. Father Jude Nwachukwu, who were abducted from St. Vincent De Paul Fier Parish of Nigeria's Catholic Diocese of Pankshin on February 1, were later released and admitted to a hospital for examination. The Chairman of the Plateau State chapter of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Rev. Fr. Polycarp Lubo, confirmed their release on 8 February. He did not disclose whether a ransom was paid but mentioned that the priests were undergoing medical check-ups. The Plateau State Police Public Relations Officer, Alfred Alabo, also confirmed their release, noting that no suspects were handed over to the police. The Provincial Secretary of the Claretian Missionaries, Rev. Fr. Dominic Ukpogon, had earlier announced the abduction and appealed for prayers for their safe release.

A series of attacks by armed individuals described as bandits or terrorists occurred in Katsina State on 14 and 15 February. The attacks resulted in at least three deaths and multiple abductions. During Ishai prayers, the assailants opened fire on Muslim

<sup>5</sup> *North-East Nigeria: Flash Update #1, Geidam LGA, Yobe State as of 1 May 2021*. (2021, May 1). OCHA. <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/nigeria/north-east-nigeria-flash-update-1-geidam-lga-yobe-state-1-may-2021>

<sup>6</sup> Christmas attacks in Nigeria: thousands of Plateau residents displaced. (2024, January 11). Christian Solidarity International. <https://www.csi-int.org/news/christmas-attacks-in-nigeria-thousands-of-plateau-residents-displaced/>

worshippers, killing two people within the mosque and a third outside as he attempted to flee. Four others were injured and were taken to a hospital in Kankara. The attackers also abducted a man and two women during the chaos, with the man being killed for resisting capture.

On the night of 19 April, eight gunmen were reported to have invaded Ajadeh event centre in Iperu Remo along Sagamu road, Ogun State, killing a lecturer from Babcock University Ilishan Remo, Prof. Yinka Olowojobi and abducting two others. On the same day, a pastor with the Redeemed Christian Church of God, Olugbenja Olawore, and other passengers in a 14-seater bus were kidnapped in the Maya axis of Lanlate-Eruwa road in Oyo State.

On 15 September, bandits launched an attack on a church in Bakinpah-Maró community, Kajuru Local Government Area of Kaduna State, leaving at least three people dead and many others feared kidnapped. The incident occurred during Sunday service when the bandits, who arrived in large numbers, targeted both an Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) and a Catholic Church. Former Chairman of Kajuru LGA, Cafrá Caino, confirmed the incident, stating that 30 persons were kidnapped, including Pastor Bernard Gajera from one of the churches.

## **Violations by Individuals**

This report documents human rights violations committed by individuals which bring to light a disturbing trend of violent actions and abuses that infringe upon the fundamental rights of citizens. Incidents of extrajudicial killings, mob actions and community clashes have been on the rise, underscoring a concerning disregard for the sanctity of human life and dignity. These violations, perpetrated by individuals across various regions, reveal an urgent need for greater enforcement of human rights standards and stronger community protection measures.

Highlighted cases in this report illustrate the breadth and severity of these individual violations. From vigilante groups executing extrajudicial punishments, to mob violence resulting in deaths, the incidents reflect a complex landscape of personal and communal insecurity. Each story exemplifies the deep psychological and physical scars left on victims and their communities, contributing to an environment of fear and instability that undermines societal harmony and justice.



## Key Incidents

On 25 January, a Kano State High Court presided over by Chief Judge of the State, Justice Dije Aboki, sentenced five members of a vigilante group to death by hanging for the extra-judicial killing of 17-year-old, Ahmed Musa. The convicted individuals, Emmanuel Korau, Elisha Ayuba, Irimiya Timothy, Auwalu Jafar, and Mustapha Haladu, were attached to the Sani Abacha Youth Centre in Sabon Titi, Panshekara, Kumbotso Local Government Area. The offense was committed on January 22, 2022, when the deceased was attacked with a wooden club while crossing the road. Musa was later taken to Kuntau Police Division and then to Murtala Muhammad Specialist Hospital, where he was pronounced dead on arrival.

Tensions escalated in the creeks of River Forcados in Bomadi and Ughelli South Local Government Areas of Delta State following the killing of one Pigha Zipamone from Okoloba community by armed youths of the neighbouring Okuama community. The incident, rooted in a lingering land dispute between the two communities, had heightened animosity before Zipamone was reportedly ambushed whilst working on his mother's farm, killed, and his body thrown into the river. The decomposing corpse was later discovered, sparking further unrest. Following the discovery of Zipamone's body, Okoloba's leadership called for urgent intervention from the Governor of the State and security agencies to disarm Okuama and halt the violence.

On 13 May, the people of Ojoto community in Idemili South Local Government Area of Anambra State protested the killing of a 69-year-old widow, an indigene of the community identified as Ifeoma Ajuluchukwu, who was allegedly murdered by her stepson. They rallied at the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Welfare, seeking justice for the deceased.

A 200-level Engineering student of Ajayi Crowther University, Oyo State, Alex Timileyin, was beaten to death by his colleagues on 25 May, over an allegation that he stole a mobile phone.

The Bauchi State Police Command arrested one Ibrahim Mohamed Liman in connection with the tragic death of 8-year-old Kamal Aliyu, who was abducted and killed on the 4 August 2024, in the Runjin Gani area of Toro Local Government Area of the State.

On 14 August, the Police in Ekiti State arrested a man, Kunle Ogunnusi, for allegedly beating and inflicting serious injury on his four-year-old child in Ado Ekiti, the Ekiti State capital. The suspect confessed to the commission of the crime and stated that his action was out of provocation over his son's misbehaviour.

On 14 August, irate youths in Niger State killed an Immigration officer, Isah Mohammed, following a land dispute between two communities. Mohammed, an indigene of the Zhitsu Babi area of the Doko community was killed on his farmland in a dispute between the Doko and Kupafu communities in Lavun Local Government Area of Niger State. The incident happened when the victim went to his farmland where he was said to have been attacked by some hoodlums suspected to be from the rival community over the land dispute.

On 7 September, the Rivers State Police Command stated that its men arrested a woman for suspected trafficking while 16 children found in her possession were rescued from an estate in Ozuoba in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of the State. This came as some residents of the area raised the alarm over the activities of the woman who they said usually returns home with different children, saying she brings some of them from churches and unknown locations.



## SOCIO-ECONOMIC RIGHTS

The crisis of Nigeria's economy has severely impacted on the socio-economic rights of citizens. The government's policies that led to a removal of subsidy on petroleum products and the floating of the naira, have resulted in serious social dislocation with wide-reaching consequences for social and economic rights of citizens. These policies have resulted to increase in unemployment in the country, worsened insecurity, escalated inflation and impacted on living conditions in the country. The rising prices of goods and services, including necessities like food has further worsened the plight of millions of Nigerians living in poverty.

In 2024, the price of petrol continued to rise, from the increase seen after the removal of petrol subsidy in 2023. In September, the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation Limited (NNPCL) increased the price of petrol from N617 per litre to N897 per litre. In October, the price rose twice - from N897 to N1,030 and then later on to N1,060, in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). Independent petrol marketers however sold above this price and as high as N1,200 per litre. In some parts of the country, the prices are much higher.

Nigeria's inflation rate as published by the National Bureau of Statistics continued to rise. From 29.9 percent in January 2024, the rate went up to 33.88% in October 2024.<sup>7</sup>

The economic downturn has had a profound effect on citizens' access to education, healthcare, housing and utilities. The right to an adequate standard of living is severely compromised.

The biting hardship occasioned by government policies gave rise to demands by the labour movements led by the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and the Trade Union Congress (TUC). An increase in the national minimum wage had stood at N30,000 since April 2024 was a key demand of the labour movements. From an initial demand to increase the minimum wage to N615,000 to N250,000 and rejection of the government's proposal of N62,000, the National Assembly eventually passed an executive bill, increasing the

<sup>7</sup> Reports | National Bureau of Statistics. (n.d.-b). <https://tinyurl.com/45hxjn9j>

minimum wage to N70,000. Several States have since announced various new minimum wage rates starting at N70,000.

Nigeria's economic situation in 2024 has underscored the importance of prioritising socio-economic rights in national policymaking. By adopting inclusive policies and addressing structural inequalities, Nigeria can work towards a future where the rights and welfare of all citizens are protected and promoted.

## Key Incidents

On 3 March, the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) warned the Federal Government of an impending strike action over the prevailing hardship citizens were going through in the country. It called on the government to honour the agreement made with labour unions. In a letter addressed to the Minister of State for Labour and Employment, NLC's Acting General Secretary, Ismail Bello, dismissed the government's claim of having fulfilled 80 percent of the agreement reached with the union on 2 October 2023. The NLC urged the government to clearly specify which parts of the agreement had been fully implemented and warned against using propaganda and disinformation, which was increasing public unrest. The letter emphasised the need for the government to expedite the agreement's implementation by the 13 March 2024, deadline to avoid a looming industrial crisis.

The NLC highlighted several unmet or partially fulfilled commitments from the October agreement, including the N35,000 wage award, which has only been partially paid, causing financial strain on workers. The Port Harcourt Refinery was yet to resume production despite previous assurances, and the promised N25,000 cash transfers to 15 million poor households were yet to be delivered, with reports of corruption in the programme's management. Additionally, implementation of tax waivers for workers and small businesses, intended to alleviate financial hardship was pending. The NLC expressed concern that these unfulfilled promises undermine public trust and could lead to an industrial crisis if not addressed promptly.

On 4 March, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Police Command denied reports of an attack and looting of a truck carrying food items in the Dei-Dei area of Abuja. The FCT Police Command Public Relations Officer, SP Josephine Adeh stated that the police were unaware of such an incident and encouraged anyone with evidence to come forward. There was a report of another warehouse looting incident in Gwagwa-Tasha, which belongs to the Agriculture and Rural Development Secretariat of the Federal Capital Territory Authority (FCTA).

The Secretariat's spokesperson, Zakari Aliyu, and the FCT Police Command's PRO confirmed the warehouse vandalism and the arrest of 15 suspects. In response to the incident, FCT Minister of State Dr. Mariya Mahmoud, after visiting the warehouse, announced plans to reinforce security around government-owned warehouses. Mahmoud emphasised the importance of securing food supplies, indicating the administration's commitment to preventing future occurrences. The incident, however, indicated the desperation of citizens in the context of increasing food insecurity and an economic crisis.

Driven by the adverse impact of these government policies and, Nigerian citizens in various quarters opted to register their displeasure and call for government intervention through a nationwide protest themed, *#EndBadGovernance*. The protest held in the first 10 days of August 2024, with protesters calling for the reversal of President Tinubu's economic reforms, particularly the removal of petrol subsidy and the floating of the Nigeria naira. In reaction to the protest, groups of 'counter-protesters' also assembled in some parts of the country, including the Federal Capital Territory, bearing placards with inscriptions such as 'No Protest'.<sup>8</sup> The unrest that resulted from the infiltration of the protest by criminal elements led to curfew in a few States such as Kano, Kaduna, Borno and Gombe.

In the course of the protests, about 40 individuals were arrested in across some Northern States for waving Russian flags – an act described by the Chief of Defence Staff, Gen. Christopher Musa as a treasonable offence.<sup>9</sup> This raised questions as to whether the government was trying to use this as an excuse to further stifle human rights in the country, particularly the rights to freedom of assembly and expression. The Russian Embassy in Nigeria denied any involvement in the incident, stating that the action of the protesters reflected their personal choices.<sup>10</sup> Also, the Department of State Services on 1 August, announced that it had arrested seven Polish nationals in Kano State for waving Russian flag during the protest.<sup>11</sup>

On Nigeria's 64<sup>th</sup> Independence Day anniversary on 1 October 2024, there were still pockets of protests in some States of the Federation, in what was supposed to be an extension of the August protests. However, the momentum was not nearly as intense as that of the *#EndBadGovernance* protests in August.

<sup>8</sup> Meshioye, D. (2024, August 1). *#endbadgovernance: Counter protest breaks out in Abuja*. The Guardian Nigeria News - Nigeria and World News. <https://guardian.ng/news/endbadgovernance-counter-protest-breaks-out-in-abuja/>

<sup>9</sup> Nairobi, C. E. I. a. & W. M. I. (2024, August 6). *Nigeria protests: About 40 arrested for waving Russian flags*. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cgl22630pzeo>

<sup>10</sup> Yusuf, K. (2024, August 8). *Updated: #EndBadGovernance protests: Nigeria arrests seven Polish citizens*. Premium Times Nigeria. <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/722164-updated-endbadgovernance-protests-nigeria-arrests-seven-polish-citizens.html>

<sup>11</sup> Nigeria arrests seven Polish nationals for raising Russian flags at protests | reuters. (n.d.). <https://www.reuters.com/world/afri-ca/nigeria-arrests-seven-polish-nationals-raising-russian-flags-protests-2024-08-07/>



## **INSURGENCY AND GENERAL INSECURITY**

Focusing on general insecurity in Nigeria, this report highlights a year marked by significant challenges to human rights and security across the country. With the escalating violence perpetrated by armed groups, banditry, kidnappings, and insurgency, many Nigerian communities continue to suffer. These insecurity issues are not only a threat to physical safety but also impact the socio-economic well-being of countless individuals, leaving many deprived of basic necessities and access to essential services. As insecurity grows, it undermines national development and destabilises local economies, compounding the struggles faced by those in affected regions.

The incidents documented herein highlight prevalent security challenges, pointing to trends and patterns that underscore the gravity of Nigeria's insecurity crisis. These incidents offer an overview of the systemic human rights abuses occurring in areas plagued by insecurity.

Multiple armed groups continued to kill and jeopardise the livelihood of millions of individuals across the country. In the North West, gangs of so-called bandits have been carrying out widespread killings, kidnappings, sexual violence, and lootings, while in the North East, there has been a resurgence of attacks by the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), a breakout faction of Boko Haram.

These kidnappings are often carried out with brutal efficiency by organised syndicates. High-profile cases, such as the Al-Kadriyar family's ordeal, in which six female family members were abducted from their home in Abuja, shed light on the psychological and financial toll on victims and their families, who are thrust into life-threatening negotiations with abductors. The conflicting narratives between law enforcement and affected families further underscore the challenges in addressing kidnapping as a national crisis. Such incidents erode public trust in the criminal justice system while normalising the payment of ransom as a desperate recourse.

Decades of long intercommunal conflict between farmers and herders in the Middle Belt and North Central region have continued to claim lives, while the authorities struggle to

contain the clashes around land and other resources, which are exacerbated by ethnic and religious tensions.

In their responses to the security crisis across the country, security forces continue to be implicated in gross human rights abuses, including indiscriminate airstrikes, while the authorities have repeatedly failed to hold officers accountable for the abuses using the justice system. With the rising crime rate all over the country, one could argue that indicators like high unemployment and poverty rates contribute to the rise in crime and insecurity with significant consequences.

Presented below is the trend of violations that have occurred this year in the area of general security and threat of insurgency.

### Key Incidents

In the new year, insecurity in Nigeria intensified as Boko Haram terrorists, disguised in military uniforms, attacked Gatamarwa and Tsiha near Shikarkir in Chibok Local Government Area of Borno State. The incident took place on 1 January 2024 during the new year celebrations. The attackers killed **11 people** and abducted a young woman, and also stole food and livestock. Despite reports of the incident, no immediate action was taken by government. This attack followed an insurgent attack two weeks prior, which resulted in two deaths and looted homes. In addition, terrorists bombed 33KVA power lines/towers connecting Yobe and Borno States during the Yuletide, further destabilising the region. The Middle Belt Forum expressed deep shock over the renewed violence and urged the military to take decisive action.

In Nasarawa State, abductors of the **Akwanga Local Government Chairman and another individual**, demanded a N50 million ransom for their release. The victims were kidnapped on 01 January 2024, along the Adaha-Akwanga road.

Meanwhile, in Cross River State, **a family of seven** was abducted on the Ikom-Ogoja highway, with three members shot and hospitalised. The police released a statement noting that they were investigating the incident in collaboration with the Nigerian Army to ensure the victims' safe return and restore security to the area.

The Al-Kadriyar family became the face of Nigeria's kidnapping crisis when their five daughters and a female relative were abducted for ransom on 2 January, following a violent encounter that resulted in the deaths of several policemen and a family member. The incident highlighted the pervasive and random nature of abductions in the country, where kidnappers target victims in both homes and on highways without



prior information. The kidnappers demanded exorbitant ransoms, testing the families' willingness to pay.

**Mansoor Al-Kadriyar**, the father of the abducted girls, was initially taken but later released to raise the ransom. When he failed to meet the deadline, the kidnappers killed one of his daughters, 21-year-old Nabeeha Al-Kadriyar, to hasten the fundraising process. Although the remaining five girls were eventually freed, conflicting accounts emerged about their release. The Federal Capital Territory Police Command claimed a joint operation with the Nigerian Army secured their release, while the family insisted, they paid a ransom. This discrepancy highlights broader issues of public trust and the effectiveness of law enforcement, as well as the societal implications of acknowledging ransom payments in high-profile cases. The situation underscores the need for coordinated narratives between police and families to maintain public confidence and discourage kidnappers.

On 2 January, unidentified gunmen, suspected to be members of a cult group, invaded Ikem Community in Etche Local Government Area of Rivers State, shooting six people. Among the victims, two were feared dead, while the remaining four were left in critical condition. The cultists carried out the attack under heavy gunfire, operating freely for over two hours despite the proximity of a Police Divisional Office just ten minutes away. Community members reported that there was no immediate security response during the attack. The Public Relations Officer of the State Police Command, Superintendent Grace Iringe-Koko, stated that the District Police Officer (DPO) in the area was mobilised to the scene to assess the situation.

In a series of attacks on Kunkurai, Dokan Karji, and Angwan Sako communities in Kuru Local Government Area of Kaduna State, bandits abducted at least 38 locals and killed approximately 17 on 3 January. The Chairman of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) in Kaduna State, Rev. Joseph John Hayab, acknowledged the tragic events calling for continued efforts from the Governor and security agencies to combat banditry despite the progress made so far. Local sources reported that the bandits operated for around six hours, causing extensive terror.

On 3 January, in the Bwari Area Council of the Federal Capital Territory, two policemen sustained bullet injuries, and **seven family members** were abducted during an attack by bandits. The incident occurred in the early hours of the day in the Zuma 1 area. A middle-aged man known as **Alhaji**, who led the police to confront the kidnappers, was shot dead by one of the bandits. The police engaged in a gunfire exchange with the bandits, resulting in injuries to the two officers. The family had contacted Alhaji upon



hearing strange noises, leading to his tragic death and the subsequent abduction of the family members.

This incident is part of a troubling rise in bandit attacks in the nation's capital, with recent invasions and abductions reported across multiple communities in Bwari. On the day before, bandits also attacked Barangoni, also in the Bwari area, abducting **three members of a family** and injuring **a vigilante member**. Residents reported that the bandits strategically positioned themselves around targeted homes in pursuing their objective. Despite the police's intervention, the bandits succeeded in abducting the family. The continuous attacks have left the Bwari Area Council in a state of siege, with residents living in fear.

on 7 January, over **30 individuals** were abducted by bandits at Dogon-Fili near Katari, along the Kaduna-Abuja highway in Kachia Local Government Area of Kaduna State. Despite the presence of increased security on the road, the bandits blocked both lanes and operated for about 45 minutes. According to local accounts, the gunmen, armed with AK-47 rifles, forced travellers out of their vehicles and into the bush after deflating the tires of several cars with gunshots.

An explosion rocked major parts of Ibadan, the capital of Oyo State on Tuesday, 17 January. The explosion was attributed to explosives stored by illegal miners, with three fatalities confirmed. The Governor of the State, Seyi Makinde and a survivor, Alhaji Mohammed Musa both linked the blast to foreigners involved in illegal mining activities. President Bola Tinubu directed security agencies to identify and apprehend those responsible in the aftermath of the incident. The explosion resulted in widespread panic and confusion, and left significant damage, shattering windows, caving in roofs, and causing extensive damage to various government buildings and private residences.

The Governor assured victims that the State government would cover their medical bills and provide temporary accommodation for those displaced. Makinde revealed that foreign names linked to a mining company were implicated in the explosion and vowed that all responsible parties would be held accountable.

**Godwin Emezue**, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Abia State University, Uturu, was released after being held captive for 11 days. Emezue was abducted on 26 January while refuelling his vehicle at a petrol station in Umuekwule, Amachara, in Umuahia South Local Government Area of Abia State. The gunmen, numbering about three, dragged him into their Lexus SUV after taking his wife's ATM card. Emezue was reportedly released following the payment of a N25 million ransom, although this detail was not officially confirmed by the university or the police.

In the early hours of Wednesday, 24 January, gunmen attacked Kwahaslalek village in Mangu Local Government Area of Plateau State, killing at least 30 people, mostly women and children. The victims had sought refuge in the house of a community leader following earlier unrest in Mangu town. According to local sources, the gunmen surrounded the house and killed all those inside. Mark Haruna, a community leader, confirmed the death toll, stating that the attack seemed to be a coordinated effort, with an earlier disturbance in Mangu town acting as a distraction.

The Chairman of the Lagos State chapter of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), **Philip Aivoji**, and several other party leaders were abducted on 25 January 2024 by gunmen at the Ogere area of the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway. They were returning from a Stakeholders' Zonal Caucus Meeting convened by Oyo State Governor Seyi Makinde in Ibadan. The kidnappers demanded a ransom of N200 million for their release. The Ogun State Police Command confirmed the abduction and stated that efforts were underway to rescue the victims.

Chairman of Oyo State Tipper, Lorry, and Quarry Park Management System, **Alhaji Akeem Akintola** was abducted by unknown gunmen in the early hours of 27<sup>th</sup> January. The incident took place around the Ajiboye area, Omi Apata, Ibadan, the State capital of Oyo State. According to sources, the assailants stormed Akintola's residence and took him to an unknown location without facing any resistance.

In Katsina State, at least **35 women** were reported missing after armed bandits ambushed a convoy returning from a wedding in the Sabuwa area on 1 February. Police spokesperson, Abubakar Aliyu confirmed the abduction, while the State's Internal Security Commissioner, Nasiru Muaz stated that over 50 people were seized after escorting the bride to the groom's home in Damari village.

The mass abduction followed a disturbing trend of kidnappings targeting various sectors of Nigerian society, including schools, communities, and now wedding guests. It reflects broader security concerns under President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's administration, which has faced mounting pressure to curb rising insecurity exacerbated by jihadist groups in the North East, criminal militias in the North West, and intercommunal violence in central States.

Suspected gunmen attacked Iwili community in Umogidi Ward and Entekpa community in Adoka District of Otukpo Local Government Area, Benue State, killing several people. The attacks began on Saturday, 3 February and continued through 5 February. Ada Ocholi, a local legal practitioner, reported that the gunmen migrated from the Agatu

area and launched their assault by hiding in trees and ambushing the communities. The violence left multiple corpses in the bush. The attackers were noted to be armed with sophisticated weapons and dressed in military uniforms.

The attacks caused significant fear and displacement among the local population. An anonymous source indicated that the gunmen had been attacking the Agatu area since the beginning of the year and moved through Upaha in Apa LGA to access Iwili and Entekpa in Otukpo LGA.

**Several travellers** from Umuahia, Abia State, were abducted when two luxury buses belonging to GIG and ABC Transports were hijacked in Inyele Eteke, Olamaboro Local Government Area of Kogi State on Friday, 3 February. Although the exact number of kidnapped individuals was initially unknown, Kogi State's Police Command confirmed the abduction, while stating that the Area Commander and other security personnel were conducting a search. Police Public Relations Officer, SP William Aya reported that efforts including deployment of tactical squads and collaboration with local vigilantes and hunters were being undertaken to rescue the victims. The kidnappers reportedly contacted families of the victims demanding a ransom of N15 million, further intensifying concerns over security along Nigeria's highways.

On 13 February, armed men attacked Kaura Namoda in Zamfara State, North West Nigeria, killing **four people**, including **two policemen**, and kidnapping at least **40 others**. The assailants launched their attack on the local police station before moving into residential areas, taking mostly women, children and elderly men hostage. Zamfara State Police Command spokesperson, Yazid Abubakar confirmed the incident and stated that reinforcements had been deployed to the Kasuwar Daji district where the attack occurred.

Residents described the ordeal, which began with sporadic gunshots around 1:00 am. **Hussaini Mohammed**, who escaped, recounted how the attackers first targeted the police station and then invaded homes. **Hamisu Kasuwa Daji**, head of the town's Transport Union, reported that his son and two grandsons were among those kidnapped. This incident is part of a larger security crisis in Nigeria's North West, where heavily armed gangs, referred to locally as bandits, have been terrorising communities for the past three years. The widespread insecurity is exacerbating an already severe cost-of-living crisis in the country.

On 13 February, GUO Transport Company confirmed a tragic incident where one of its buses traveling from Lagos to Abuja was attacked by suspected gunmen along the Ikare-Akoko Road of the Akure Expressway. The attackers ambushed the bus, resulting in the

death of the driver at the scene while all passengers aboard were kidnapped, except for a three-year-old child who was left behind.

In reaction to the incident, a serving Senator from Delta State, Senator Ned Nwoko drew attention to the incident on social media, advocating for citizens to be allowed to bear arms for self-defence, suggesting that such measures could prevent similar tragedies in the future. The call for enhanced security measures has sparked debate among Nigerians, with some supporting the idea of a right to self-defence, while others caution about the complexities and implications of such a policy in the current security climate.

On Thursday, 15 February, bandits targeted the home of vigilante member **Sani Maikifi** in Ungwar Tudun Boka, Kankara, Katsina State. While Sani managed to escape, his wife and son were abducted. Another attack occurred around 11:30 pm on the same day in Dangani, Musawa LGA, where the assailants reportedly trailed a wealthy individual who managed to escape. In retaliation, the attackers abducted several people from the area. These incidents highlight the ongoing insecurity and violence plaguing Katsina State.

In the third week of February, students of Delta State Polytechnic, Ogwashi-Uku in Aniocha South Local Government Area, were reported to be abandoning their off-campus hostels due to repeated attacks by suspected armed robbers. The assailants would rob students of valuables such as laptops, handsets, and personal effects, and force them to transfer money from their bank accounts. The robberies, which took place over a few weeks in a neighbouring community, spread to parts of Ogwashi-Uku town, causing panic among the students and leading many to vacate their hostels.

Despite rumours that the school had been shut down, the State Police Command clarified that the institution remained open and that students were merely on their annual mid-term break. The Police Public Relations Officer, Bright Edafe, assured that security measures were intensified, with additional police personnel deployed to prevent further incidents. The Rector of the Polytechnic, Prof. Emmanuel Achuenu, emphasised that the attacks occurred in rented apartments within the town, not on campus, and reiterated the institution's commitment to ensuring students' safety.

On 29 February, terrorists attacked the community of Gangara in Jibia Local Government Area of Katsina State, resulting in the deaths of five residents and injuries to seven others. The assailants also abducted **24 residents**, primarily women and children, and set fire to six houses and the local market. The attack began around 10:00 pm, with the terrorists moving unchallenged through the community, shooting and causing widespread destruction. The Village Head, Aliyu Abubakar, reported that all the deceased were married men and that the injured were receiving medical treatment at various hospitals.

The prompt intervention of local vigilante members prevented further casualties and damage.

The attack on Gangara is part of a surge in terrorist activities in the regions surrounding Rugu and Dumburun forests, which span both Zamfara and Katsina States. Added to this, multiple incidents also occurred, including attacks on a military camp and a mobile police checkpoint in Batsari, and the killing of over **ten people** in Zurmi. These areas, which share boundaries with Jibia Local Government, have been targets of renewed terrorist activities.

On 5 March, armed conflict erupted in Gbagir community, Ukum Local Government Area of Benue State, resulting in the deaths of at least **50 individuals**, including **a family of seven** caught in the crossfire. The violence involved rival militia groups, with casualties primarily among the armed factions, although innocent farmers and residents were also affected. The clash was sparked by a kidnapping incident involving a Tiv militia leader from Ukum and a Fulani militia leader from Taraba, which escalated into a larger conflict involving support from local Tiv bandits.

Member of the Benue State House of Assembly, Ezra Niyiyongo confirmed the recovery of 20 bodies, underscoring the severity of the conflict which led to widespread fear and displacement among local communities. The National Assembly, in response to the violence, called for urgent security reinforcements and a review of the security architecture in affected areas to mitigate future incidents.

On 7 March, robbery incidents at two banks in Anyigba, Kogi State, led to the death of a police constable and a security guard during a shootout with armed robbers. The attack, which occurred around 5:00 pm involved a group of over a dozen assailants armed with sophisticated weapons. The robbers successfully looted substantial amounts of money from the banks before fleeing the scene.

On the morning of Thursday, 7 March, bandits invaded LEA Primary School in Kuriga, Chikun Local Government Area of Kaduna State, abducting scores of pupils, including the head teacher and other staff members. According to local residents, the bandits stormed the school around 8:00 am, shortly after assembly, taking at least **100 pupils**. The incident led to a mass protest by residents who barricaded the Kaduna-Abuja Expressway, demanding government action against the increasing bandit attacks in the area.

Also on 7 March, **a Chinese engineer** was kidnapped from his road construction site in Obangede, Okehi Local Government Area of Kogi State by a gang of gunmen. During

the invasion, an officer of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), **Bajeh Abdulwahab**, who was protecting the engineer, was killed. The abduction occurred just two days after Kogi State Governor, Ahmed Usman Ododo inspected the construction site.

Following the incident, Kogi State's Commissioner of Police, Bernard Onuoha, conducted an on-the-spot assessment and assured that efforts to apprehend the perpetrators were underway. The Deputy Commissioner of Police for Criminal Investigation was tasked with leading a thorough investigation into the robbery and subsequent attacks on police stations.

**Eli Ugwu**, a lawyer from Enugu State, tragically lost his life in Kogi State under contentious circumstances on 8 March 2024. Reports indicated he was shot dead shortly after delivering ransom to kidnappers who had abducted his cousin. Initially, it was believed that the kidnappers killed him after receiving the ransom. However, alternative accounts suggest he was mistakenly shot by policemen as he emerged from the bush with his cousin, who had just been released by the kidnappers.

The incident deeply affected the community in Nsukka, where Ugwu was well-regarded as a prominent member of the Nigerian Bar Association. The details surrounding his death remain unclear, with conflicting reports about whether it was a case of mistaken identity by law enforcement or not. As investigations continue, there has been no official statement from the Kogi State Police Command regarding the tragic event at the time of reporting.

Gunmen fatally attacked **Danjuma Emokpaire**, a middle-aged man, on his farm in Ubune-Ivbiaro Community, Edo State, on 9 March 2024. Emokpaire, who had gone to plant yam seedlings, was reported missing the following morning when he did not return home after heavy rainfall. Concerned residents discovered his body on the farm, where signs indicated he was ambushed while on his motorcycle. His belongings, including a cutlass and mobile phone, were stolen. The incident sparked fear among community members, who became hesitant to visit their farms due to security concerns.

Abdul Saliu Emokpaire, a family member and member of the local vigilante group, confirmed the incident and appealed to security agencies and the Edo State Government for assistance, highlighting the community's vulnerability during the farming season. The Edo State Police Command's Public Relations Officer, Chidi Nwabuzor, acknowledged the incident and assured that the State Commissioner of Police would be briefed promptly to address the escalating security concerns in the area.



On 9 March, bandits kidnapped at least **15 Tsangaya students** from Gidan Bakuso in Gada Local Government Area of Sokoto State. The school proprietor, Liman Abubakar, confirmed the abductions, noting that the bandits also shot one person and abducted a woman during the attack. Abubakar mentioned that while the village had been previously attacked by bandits, this was the first instance where students were kidnapped.

On the morning of 12 March, armed hoodlums suspected to be kidnappers attacked the University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital (UNTH), Ituku Ozalla, in Enugu State. This incident followed an earlier attack where a **resident doctor** was abducted within the hospital premises but later escaped. During this latest attack, the kidnappers abducted a **female Deputy Director** of the hospital and a **security man**. A viral video showed the woman's SUV abandoned with bullet-perforated glass on the front passenger side.

On 12 March, Bandits who abducted **16 residents** from Gonin Gora, a suburb of Kaduna metropolis in Chikun Local Government Area demanded an unprecedented ransom of N40 trillion, along with 11 Hilux vans and 150 motorcycles for their release. This ransom demand closely followed another abduction incident in Kuriga where **287 schoolchildren** were taken just four days earlier, with the kidnappers demanding N1 billion for their release. John Yusuf, a community leader, disclosed these details during an interview with The Nation Newspaper, emphasising the dire financial impossibility of meeting such exorbitant demands, which exceed Nigeria's national budget.

On 16 March 2024, terrorists launched an attack on Dogon-Homa community and abducted **15 women and one man** in Kajuru LGA of Kaduna State. The attack came barely three days after **one person** was killed while **eight women** were kidnapped in Banono Angwaku community in the same Local Government.

On the night of 17 March, terrorists kidnapped **87 people** in a fresh attack on the Kajuru-Station community in Kajuru Local Government Area of Kaduna State. Harisu Dari, a member of the Kajuru-Station Youths, confirmed the incident and reported that the terrorists also broke into shops, stealing food items and other valuables.

On 24 March, the abductors of **Tony Aziegbemi**, the Edo State Chairman of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) demanded a ransom of N500 million from his family. Aziegbemi was kidnapped on 15 March on Idaro Street, Benin, after leaving a meeting at the Government House. The incident occurred in the presence of his driver, who was attempting to navigate a speed breaker when they were ambushed.

Gunmen suspected to be kidnappers attacked a Celestial Church in Ogun State on 28 March, resulting in the abduction of two worshippers named **Oladapo Seyifunmi**

and **Oluboboye Abiola**. The incident occurred near Oriyarin village, Mowe, within the Obafemi Owode Local Government Area. According to a statement by the Ogun State Police Public Relations Officer, SP Omolola Odutola, the perpetrators fled into a dense forest behind the church following the abduction.

In response to the incident, the Commissioner of Police, Alamutu Abiodun, was briefed and directed an immediate mobilisation of security personnel to pursue the kidnappers. The abduction has raised concerns about security in the area, prompting heightened vigilance and efforts by law enforcement to apprehend the perpetrators and ensure the safe return of the victims.

On Friday, 29 March, **9 students** were kidnapped by gunmen while traveling along East-West Road in Ughelli, Delta State, South-South Nigeria. The students were returning from their school in Calabar, Cross Rivers State, when they were abducted from their minibus. The driver of the vehicle escaped unhurt. According to Bright Edafe, the police spokesperson in Delta State, all 9 were successfully released subsequently, although it was unclear if a ransom was paid.

On 4 April, two communities, Agojeju Odo and Abejukolo in Omala Local Government Area of Kogi State, were invaded by gunmen. At least **19 people** were killed and several houses were razed. On the same day, armed Boko Haram members ambushed a military vehicle conveying a lieutenant and other soldiers along Biu-Buratai-Buni Yadi road, between Borno and Yobe States. The ambush resulted in the killing of the officer, a driver, a gunner and four other soldiers.

On 11 April, gunmen kidnapped a journalist with Channels Television, **Joshua Rogers**, at his residence in Rumuosi in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

On 13 April, a group of persons who identified themselves as Yoruba nation agitators invaded the Oyo State Government Secretariat in the Agodi area of Ibadan, as well as the Oyo State House of Assembly. The agitators occupied and attempted to overpower security operatives at both the State Assembly complex and the entire secretariat. They also removed the Nigerian flag within the Assembly complex and hoisted their own.

On 13 April, gunmen killed the secretary of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) in Tsafe Local Government Area of Zamfara State, **Musa Ille**. He was killed in his residence at about 8:30 pm by gunmen suspected to be bandits.

Bandits killed about **26 people** in renewed attacks on three different communities in the Gwer West Local Government Area of Benue State. Among those killed were six personnel of the state security outfits known as the 'Benue State Community Volunteer



Guards'. According to locals, the attacks happened between Saturday, 13 April and Monday, 15 April in Mbakunwande and Jaora communities and along the Naka/Adoka road.

On the 17 April, bandits in large numbers attacked Anguwar Danko village in Birnin Local Government Area of Kaduna State and killed over **20 persons**. On the same day, gunmen abducted the Assistant Controller of Corrections of the Niger State Correctional Centre in Minna, ACC, Abdulrahman Ibrahim Galele.

On 19 April, **two Nigerian Army officers** and **four other soldiers** were killed by terrorists in an ambush in the Shiroro Local Government Area of Niger State. The military personnel were killed while on a fighting patrol in the area.

On 21 April, bandits stormed a market in Tsafe town, in Tsafe Local Government Area of Zamfara State and opened fire on the traders. At least **three persons** were killed, while several others were injured. On the same day, a police officer attached to the traditional ruler of Nakera community in the Wamba Local Government Area of Nasarawa State was allegedly killed following an attack by gunmen on the community. The gunmen also abducted the traditional ruler's wife, Patience Tari and one of his aides, Kefas Shehu.

On the 23 April, the Edo State Police Command confirmed the killing of an alleged Eiye cult member in the South Ibie area of the State, the deceased was gunned down in the presence of his daughter following a violent clash between members of two rival groups.

On 24 April, bandits attacked Dauran and Zurmi towns in Zurmi Local Government Area of Zamfara State, killing **three persons** and abducting several others. The bandits also razed a telecom service mast, shutting down the network service in the area.

On 26 April, bandits shot dead a driver, identified as **Danladi Jobe** and abducted **two others** along the Abuja-Kaduna highway

On 27 April, **Alaba Excel Abbey**, one of the campaign coordinators of the Ondo State Governor, Lucky Aiyedatiwa, was assassinated in his home in Supare Akoko, Akoko South West Local Government Area of the State.

On 28 April, at least **four people** were reported to have been killed and many wounded as suspected herdsmen invaded Nimbo community in Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area of Enugu state.

On 2 May, terrorists killed **eight vigilante members** and **two other persons** in Kakangi and Unguwan Matinja communities in the Birnin Gwari Local Government Area of Kaduna State. On the same day, at least **twenty-four persons** were reported to have

been killed and several others injured in an attack by bandits in Unguwar Sarkin Noma Community in Sabuwa Local Government Area of Katsina State.

On 3 May, gunmen numbering up to seven reportedly killed **one person** and abducted **seven other travellers** along Sagamu-Ijebu Ode Expressway Ogun State. The gunmen armed with AK 47 rifles were said to have waylaid and attacked the travellers.

On 6 May, terrorists launched a fresh attack in Ambe community in Sanga Local Government Area of Kaduna State, killing **six persons** while **nine others** sustained gunshots. On the same day, gunmen suspected to be bandits were reported to have killed a commander of the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps identified as **Mike Ode**, in Shaapera community in Gwer West Local Government Area of the Benue State. Also, **two people** were killed and 18 others kidnapped in an attack by terrorists in Ungwan Dantata in the Gefe community of Kallah Ward, Kajuru Local Government Area of Kaduna State, on the same day.

On 7 May, bandits abducted **a manager** of TAJ Bank in Zamfara State Branch, Mansur Kaura. The bandits invaded his residence at Rijiyar Gabas area in Gusau, the State capital and took him away. There were reports that the abductors were asking for the sum of N900 million as ransom for his release.

Terrorists killed **three football fans** and abducted **10 others** on 8 May in an attack on the Idah community of the Kagarko Local Government Area of Kaduna State. The incident happened when the victims were watching a football match.

On 9 May, some students of Confluence University of Science and Technology in Osara, Kogi State were abducted by gunmen, while on campus preparing for their first semester exams. They were however, later rescued by security agents, including vigilante men.

On 12 May, a 28-year-old man, **Gyang Samson**, was killed in an attack by gunmen in Kan-Zot Foron community in Barkin Ladi Local Government Area of Plateau State. Two of his colleagues, however, escaped during the attack.

On 14 May, gunmen suspected to be bandits attacked the Ogbaulu community in Agatu Local Government area of Benue State and killed four people.

The Akwa Ibom State Police Command reported the abduction of the traditional ruler of the Mbo Local Government in the State, **HRM Ogwong A. Abang**. He was kidnapped by unidentified gunmen at his residence on 18 May.

On 19 May, about **20 residents** of Dawaki, a community near Kubwa in the Federal Capital Territory were kidnapped. On the same day, **two persons** were killed while

**seven others** were abducted by some gunmen in an attack on Ikachi village in Akparata area of Effium in Ohaukwu Local Government Area of Ebonyi State.

On 20 May, bandits operating in the Shiroro Local Government Area of Niger State abducted and killed a pastor, **Joshua Musa**, after collecting a ransom for his release. Musa, who hails from Nasarawa State was a pastor of the Evangelical Church of West Africa (ECWA) at the Sarkin Pawa community in Niger State. On the same day, bandits reportedly attacked Zurak village in Basar District of Wase Local Government Area of Plateau State, killing more than **40 persons**, including vigilantes. According to the residents of the community, they were going about their usual activities when the attack occurred.

On 30 May, bandits in large number laid siege at the residence of Zamfara State Hajj Commission Chairman, **Alhaji Musa Mallahu**, in Gusau, the State capital. They killed his **son, security man** and abducted **three relatives**.

On 1 June, tension arose in Ukpata and Opanda communities in Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area of Enugu State following the killing of **two young men** by suspected herdsmen. One of those killed was a student of Nsukka High School and was shot at Ukwuakpu, between Ukpata and Uvuru communities. The other victim was shot by the herdsmen at Opanda.

On 2 June, the **Village Head of Usmanu village** in Karim-Lamido Local Government Area of Taraba State was killed by gunmen. According to the Chairman of the Local Government, the deceased's brother was killed a few months before.

Bandits killed at least **42 persons** in different attacks on several villages in Zamfara and Katsina States in the month of June 2024. In Zamfara State, **12 people**, including **seven policemen** were killed at Magarya village in Zurmi Local Government Area on 6 June. Among the victims were a member of the Zamfara State Community Guards and four residents of the village. According to the Commissioner of Police in the State, CP Muhammad Shehu Dalijan, the bandits, numbering about 300, stormed the village on motor bikes. Different sets of bandits were also reported to have killed at least **30 persons** in attacks on villages in Dutsinma and Safana Local Government Areas of Katsina State, on 4 June 2024.

On 7 June, about **30 travellers** including some students of the Federal Polytechnic Nasarawa were abducted by kidnappers along the Abuja-Nasarawa highway. The kidnappers laid siege to the vehicles conveying the travellers and abducted them into a nearby bush in the Uke area of Nasarawa State.

On 9 June, bandits abducted **Rev Fr. Gabriel Ukeh**, the presiding priest of St. Thomas Catholic Church parish in Zaman Dabo community in Zango Kantaf Local Government Area of Kaduna State.

In the month of June, **Daniel Umaru Lagi**, the father of the former Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice in Nasarawa State, Innocent Lagi, was killed following his abduction on 28 May, in Wamba by unknown gunmen. According to news reports, he was killed for refusing that a ransom be paid to secure his release.

On 14 June, armed men abducted the **Managing Director** of Fouani Company and three Lebanese nationals around Falomo bridge, as they were travelling from Apapa to Victoria Island in Lagos, by boat.

On 16 June, at least **six persons** were reportedly killed and more than 100 persons abducted, when gunmen attacked Tundun Doki in Gwadabawa Local Government Area of Sokoto State.

On 17 June, **six persons** were killed and several others kidnapped when some bandits invaded the Bauda and Chibiya communities in Maro Ward in Kajuru Local Government Area of Katsina State. On the same day, tension arose in the Nnewi community in Nnewi North LGA, as well as the Nnobi community in Idemili South LGA of Anambra State, when gunmen invaded both communities, to enforce the Monday sit-at-home order, shooting sporadically. They killed **a vigilante commander, three security personnel and three other persons**, dispossessed some residents of their belongings and left many others severely injured.

On 18 June, bandits launched an attack on the Gugur community in the Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State and killed **six people**.

A traditional title holder, the Madakin of the Shabu Community in the Lafia Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, Musa Shuaibu was kidnapped by gunmen and whisked away to an unknown destination on 20 June.

On 22 June, a 70-year-old retired Brigadier General, **Uwem Udokwere**, was stabbed to death by robbers who invaded his home at Sunshine Home Estate in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

At least **seven persons** were killed when bandits attacked Mai Dabino village in Danmusa Local Government Area of Katsina State, on 22 June. The bandits abducted an unspecified number of persons, mostly women and children and took them into a nearby forest.

The bandits also burnt down several houses, shops and motor vehicles belonging to residents of the village.

On 24 June, suspected bandits killed the Deputy Vice Chancellor of the Usman Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, **Prof. Yusuf Saidu**, on his way to Kaduna from Sokoto. On the same day, a judge of the Borno State High Court, **Justice Haruna Msheila** was abducted at Jiba town along Biu-Maiduguri Road in Borno State. The judge was abducted alongside **his wife and driver**.

On 26 June, herdsmen attacked a community in Kwall district of the Bassa Local Government Area of Plateau State. **Five persons** aged between 7 and 67 years old were killed, one person was injured, while three houses were razed in the attack. The attack came when residents of the community had retired for the night.

On 28 June the Police command in Katsina State confirmed the kidnapping of a 75-year-old, **Hauwa'u Adamu**, mother of a popular Hausa singer, Dauda Kahutu Rarara. The elderly mother was kidnapped at her residence in Kahutu Danja Local Government Area of the State.

On 29 June, gunmen abducted **Anthony Ebele**, a cleric of a church in Ondo State, from his farm. He was abducted at his Ogbese farm, in Akure North Local Government Area of the State. On the same day, suicide bombers attacked funeral and wedding ceremonies in Gwoza, Borno State, with reports indicating that up to **30 persons** were killed and more than 100 persons injured.

On 30 June, a band of terrorists invaded the Guto area of Bwari Area Council in Abuja, killing **one person** and abducting **four others**.

On 2 July, bandits killed **Dr. Tiri Gyang**, a lecturer at the Federal University Dutsinma, Katsina State. Two of his children were also abducted during the attack in the school neighbourhood. The deceased, Dr. Gyang, was the Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture at the University. It was reported that the bandits invaded his residence at Low-cost Quarters, behind Comprehensive Hospital in Dutsinma at about 1:00 am, firing gunshots. On the same day, gunmen killed **two vigilante members** guarding the headquarters of Isiala-Mbano Local Government Area of Imo State. The gunmen also set ablaze some cars parked within the premises. Eyewitness reported that the gunmen stormed the secretariat around 8.30 pm and shot sporadically, killing the two vigilante members on duty and setting part of the council building ablaze.

In the month of July, gunmen were reported to have killed **three persons**, including an aged couple in Ikpele community in Agatu Local Government Area of Benue State.

Several people were reportedly injured during the attack but residents of the area could not ascertain those responsible for the invasion.

A former President of the Nigeria Labour Congress, **Takai Shamang** was abducted by gunmen in his hometown, Biniki, in Kaura Local Government Area of Kaduna State, on 5 July.

On 6 July, at least 25 persons, mostly women and children, were feared kidnapped by terrorists reported to have been dressed in hijabs at the Runka community in the Safana Local Government Area of Katsina State. They stormed the community in large numbers and moved from house to house, taking away residents into the nearby Rugu Forest. On the same day, some bandits invaded Dahjonu community in Millennium City of Chikun Local Government Area of Kaduna State and abducted two journalists - **Abdulgafar Alabelewe** who works for The Nation newspaper and **AbdulRaheem Abdu** who works for Blueprint newspaper, as well as their wives and children.

On 9 July, gunmen invaded a community in Agatu Local Government Area of Benue State and killed at least **10 persons**. The attackers were reported to have unleashed terror on the Olegumachi community in Agatu and burnt down houses during the attack.

On 10 July, bandits invaded Akwando community in the Kachia Local Government Area of Kaduna State. The bandits were reported to have kidnapped an unspecified number of residents and burnt a house and two shops in the attack.

Gunmen kidnapped **eight persons**, including a Naval Rating in Ibaka community in Mbo Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State, on 15 July. It was gathered that the victims were abducted at one Classic Point Hotel, Ibaka.

On 19 July, armed men suspected to be kidnappers killed **two commuters** and kidnapped five others, including a National Youth Service Corps member, along the Ifon-Owo highway in Ondo State. The driver of the commercial vehicle and a female passenger were shot dead at the scene of the incident. However, two of the victims managed to escape, with varying degrees of injuries. On the same day, gunmen suspected to be bandits invaded the Mbacher community in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State and killed **18 people**. The bandits who defied the curfew imposed by the State Government raided the community at about 11 pm and killed several villagers. Still on the same day, gunmen ambushed and killed the Gara of Chanchanji, **His Royal Highness Tanimu Kunbiya**, and his son, **Yusuf**, along the Takum-Chanchanji road in Takum Local Government Area of Taraba State. The incident happened when the traditional ruler and his son were returning from a funeral event in Takum.



In the month of July, gunmen held **two indigenes of Abavo community** in Ika South Local Government Area of Delta State hostage, insisting on the full payment of a N7 million ransom earlier demanded for the release of a kidnapped person. **Anthonia Jegbefume** was kidnapped a week earlier at her residence in Okpe-Abavo by the gunmen who also shot and killed her 55-year-old husband, **Friday Jegbefume**. It was learnt that the kidnappers released the woman and abducted the two persons who had brought the sum of N1.7 million (being the sum the family was able to raise), for failing to bring the full amount they demanded.

On 30 July, gunmen suspected to be bandits stormed Karfen Sarki Village in Gudu Local Government Area of Sokoto State and killed **five members** of the recently established State Community Guards and **two farmers**. The deceased were ambushed by the bandits while on patrol, trailing the movement of bandits who were said to have set up a camp in the area.

On 30 July, gunmen kidnapped a former member of the National Assembly representing Aniocha/Oshimili Federal Constituency of Delta State, **Joan Mrakpor** and killed a police officer attached to her. Mrakpor who is the immediate past Commissioner for Technical Education in the State was abducted in her Church, located off Delta Broadcasting Service, DBS Asaba. The driver of the former legislator was also reported to have been shot.

On 3 August, gunmen killed **Chief Hyginus Ohazurike**, the President General of Umucheke Okwe Autonomous Community, Onuimo Local Government Area of Imo State. They also killed **six other leaders** of the community. The community leaders were having a meeting at the President General's shop when the attackers came. The gunmen who stormed the area in a vehicle, shot the seven persons in the meeting and set the place ablaze.

On 7 August, bandits killed a woman identified as **Shoni Michael** in Plateau State. Her daughter who was with her at the time of the attack, escaped with gunshot injuries. The victims were attacked in their house in Mangu community.

On 8 August, gunmen suspected to be cult members shot dead the manager of a hotel in Ilorin, Kwara State. The gunmen shot the hotel manager at a very close range and thereafter macheted his lifeless body in what many believed was a cult-related attack. The deceased, whose name was given as **Anthony Balogun**, was the one running the hotel owned by his mother before the unfortunate incident which took place within the hotel premises.

On 9 August, some suspected cultists reportedly killed a 48-year-old POS operator, **Fatai Kehinde** under Kuto bridge, Abeokuta in Ogun State. The POS operator popularly called Faithy and son of the Baale of Kuto Community, was said to have been killed by assailants who chased him from his shop inside Kuto market and to the bridge.

On 12 August, gunmen reportedly killed **His Royal Highness Shagari Ebije'ego Job**, the traditional chief (Onu) of Itama in Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State in his residence. The assailants, who were heavily armed, trailed the monarch to his home in the evening before opening fire on him. On the same day, one **Doctor Ishaya** was killed and about **8 locals** were abducted by bandits who invaded Kwassam community in Kauru Local Government Area of Kaduna State. The bandits also went away with an people's property. Still on the same day, **six people**, including the driver of a commuter vehicle, were killed by gunmen on their way to Wukari from Takum, in Taraba State. The bus was ambushed at a village near Sai in neighbouring Benue State.

A 31-year-old volunteer security agent and member of the Hunters Association of Nigeria (HAN) identified as **Aliyu Yahaya** was brutally murdered, his body and home set ablaze, and his family kidnapped along with three neighbours by bandits, in Magamar-Jibia town, Jibia Local Government Area of Katsina State, on 13 August.

On 16 August, gunmen kidnapped more than 20 medical and dental students, along with a House Officer, in Benue State. The students were en route the Federation of Catholic Medical and Dental Students (FECAMDS) annual convention in Enugu when they were ambushed by gunmen. The victims, reportedly from the University of Maiduguri and the University of Jos, were traveling together when the attack occurred in the Otukpo area of the State. On the same day, the Anambra State Commissioner for Youth Development, **Patrick Aghamba and his wife** were kidnapped by gunmen in Kogi State, while their aide, A. B. Affiah, who was traveling with them was killed during the attack. The incident took place on their way to Abuja to attend the wedding ceremony of the daughter of the Anambra State Governor, Chukwuma Soludo.

On 17 August, the Police in Enugu State confirmed the kidnap of **three students** of the State College of Health Technology, Oji-River, in Oji-River Local Government Area of the State. It was gathered that some gunmen suspected to be herdsmen invaded the school complex and abducted students, around 7:30 pm.

On 19 August, bandits reportedly killed **13 farmers** in the Alawa community of the Shiroro Local Government Area of Niger State. The bandits were said to have tracked down the farmers to their farms and killed them over a claim that they supplied intelligence on the movement of the bandits to security agencies.



On 21 August, bandits raided Moriki community in Zamfara State at night, kidnapped over **10 locals** and demanded a ransom of N50 million. According to a resident of the community, the bandits disturbed the community and had earlier kidnapped other locals. He added that any time they needed money, the bandits had often, attacked the community to kidnap people and kept them in captivity until ransom was paid. On the same day, bandits attacked Galadimawa village in Igabi Local Government Area of Kaduna State, where they kidnapped the Village Head, **Alhaji Aliyu Haruna Galadimawa, his wife** and their **two children** from their residence in the community.

On 24 August, gunmen reportedly kidnapped a Director of the Rivers State Board of Internal Revenue Service (RIRS), Sir Aribibia Fubara. The victim was picked up in the evening by gunmen, who reportedly came through Okirika waterfront on a speedboat to the Port Harcourt Marine Base area. On the same day, a middle-aged lady who owns a business outlet around the Gyado Villa axis of Makurdi town, identified as **Theresa Awuhe** was gruesomely murdered by an unknown assailant. It was gathered that the victim was gunned down at about 10:00 pm while on her way home from her shop at the end of the day's business activities.

On 26 August, a 50-year-old man identified as **Demola Akinloye** was stabbed to death in his car along Chevron Drive in the Lekki area of Lagos. He was attacked while driving his car near the Bourdillon Court Estate gate. The attackers, driving a white mini bus, shot and stabbed him to death. The deceased was the first son of Tijani Akinloye, the Ojomu of Ajiran land, in the Ajiran community of Agungi Area, Lekki, Lagos State.

On 29 August, bandits invaded a community known as 'Zone A, back of Primary School', in Ushafa, Bwari Area Council of the Federal Capital Territory FCT, killing a man identified as **Felix Chuks** and abducting his entire family. The gunmen reportedly stormed the community around midnight, with heavy gunfire, a development which reportedly overwhelmed the vigilance services in the area.

On 30 August, a group of kidnappers abducted **four family members** in the Federal Capital Territory. The incident occurred at the Tundun Fulani extension area of the Bwari Area Council.

In the month of August, a traditional title ceremony in Amakor village, Nanka Community of Orumba North Local Government Area of Anambra State was turned sour, as gunmen kidnapped **eight guests** and injured twelve others during the event. Policemen guarding the venue attempted to resist the attackers, but were overpowered.

On 2 September, at least **ten passengers** were abducted when suspected pirates attacked a passenger boat in the Bonny waterway in Rivers State. It was gathered that the boat was travelling from Bonny to Port Harcourt, about 10km, when the incident occurred.

On 4 September, a prominent chieftain of the People's Democratic Party in Oyo State, **Benedict Akika**, was reportedly kidnapped. He was said to have been kidnapped at his Olorunda residence in the Lagelu Local Government Area of the State. On the same day, two vehicles travelling along Ife/Osu highway were attacked by armed robbers, who shot the driver and raped a female passenger. The incident occurred between Ife and Osu community in Osun State.

On 5 September, a 66-year-old woman identified as **Elizabeth Uruakpa** was abducted by gunmen in the Ilisan Remo area of Ogun State. Uruakpa, who is an Assistant Chief Nursing Officer with Babcock University Teaching Hospital, was said to be returning from a church service when the gunmen waylaid her vehicle and took her away. On the same day, gunmen attacked the Rivers State secretariat of the Action Peoples Party (APP) located in the Government Reserved Area of Port Harcourt, shooting a security guard. This was the second attack on the APP secretariat in weeks.

On 9 September, bandits invaded the primary healthcare centre at Kuyallo, in the Eastern part of the Birnin-Gwari Local Government Area of Kaduna State, kidnapping **two nurses** and an unspecified number of patients. The bandits initially targeted the nearby Government Day Secondary School. However, upon finding the school empty, they turned their attention to the healthcare centre, which is located within the vicinity of the school.

On 14 September, Chairman of the Ogbete Main Market Traders' Association (OMMATA) in Enugu, **Stephen Aniagu**, was killed by unknown assassins. The incident occurred while he was leaving the market after the day's business. Aniagu was shot multiple times at Moses Ogbodo Junction near Topland Market in the Amaechi area of Enugu South Local Government. His body was found riddled with bullets, and his car was taken away by the killers.

In the month of September, a student of the Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Ogun State, **Christiana Idowu**, who was kidnapped between Ikorodu and Yaba in Lagos State, was reportedly murdered by her abductor.

## Election – related Violence

In the run up to the off-cycle 2024 Edo State Governorship election, the Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room (Situation Room) noted with concern the rising incidents of pre-election violence in Edo State ahead of the September 21, 2024 Governorship election.

Between April and July 2024, Situation Room partner, Kimpact Development Initiative (KDI) recorded 19 major incidents of pre-election violence in its tracking of election-related violence ahead of the polls. In many of these incidents, which included shootings and assaults, victims sustained varying degrees of injuries.

The violence reached a new height on 18 July, with the killing of a Police Inspector, **Onu Ako**, in a violent clash between suspected supporters of various governorship candidates, around the Benin City Airport.

Situation Room expressed concern that if this dangerous trend was allowed to fester, it would have grave consequences for the Governorship election. The Situation Room therefore, called on security agencies to fish out perpetrators of violence and prosecute them accordingly. It also reminded political parties and their candidates that election is a civic affair, not a “do or die affair” and therefore called on participating parties to play by the rules and ensure a violence-free election.

However, the Edo State election witnessed only minimal violence on election day. Despite the late start in several polling units, the voting process went on smoothly. Furthermore, notwithstanding the political tension, due mainly to the identity-driven rhetoric and disinformation that characterised the electioneering campaign, the voting process on Election Day was largely peaceful. Voters cast their ballots enthusiastically, without the fear of violence.

## Attacks on Security Personnel

The human rights report on attacks against security personnel in Nigeria is a sobering narration that underscores the growing threats to national stability and the peril faced by those tasked with safeguarding public safety. It catalogues numerous incidents in which security forces, including police officers, military personnel, and vigilante members, have been targeted by criminal groups, insurgents, and violent actors. These attacks, spanning various regions and involving significant loss of life and resources, highlight the escalating security challenges confronting the nation. This report seeks to provide an overview of these incidents, analyse their implications for human rights, and emphasise the need for urgent and sustained interventions to protect security personnel and the broader population.

Reports of attacks on security agents documented herein begin with a tragic incident in Delta State, where herdsmen abducted three mobile policemen in the line of duty. This act of violence reflects the heightened insecurity in regions plagued by banditry, cattle rustling, and criminal activity. The kidnapping underscores the vulnerability of security personnel, even when armed and actively engaged in maintaining law and order. Similarly, the ambush and killing of three soldiers and two vigilantes in Nasarawa State illustrate the dangers faced by security operatives combating bandits and other violent actors in Nigeria's rural and semi-urban areas. These incidents not only result in the loss of lives but also diminish public confidence in the state's capacity to ensure security and uphold the rule of law.

In the southern regions, particularly in the South-East and South-South, there has been an alarming rise in targeted attacks on police officers and military personnel. The brutal killing of six policemen and two civilians in Ebonyi State, as well as the ambush and death of officers in Delta and Edo States, are indicative of organised attempts to destabilise the region. These attacks often involve the use of explosives and high-caliber weapons, pointing to a level of sophistication and coordination that requires immediate attention. Furthermore, incidents in the North-East, such as the Boko Haram attack on Jakana Police Station in Borno State, remind us of the ongoing insurgency and its devastating impact on security personnel and the communities they protect.

The repercussions of these attacks extend beyond the tragic loss of life; they also create a ripple effect of fear and insecurity in affected communities. Families of slain officers are left grieving, often without adequate compensation or support, while communities lose the protective presence of security personnel. In some cases, these attacks provoke retaliatory actions by security forces, leading to further human rights violations and a breakdown of trust between the state and its citizens. This cyclical violence underscores the need for a comprehensive approach that addresses both the immediate threats and the underlying factors contributing to insecurity.

The incidence of attacks of security agents highlights the need for enhanced training and equipment for security personnel, improved intelligence gathering and sharing, and greater collaboration with local communities, to address security threats effectively. Additionally, it stresses the importance of accountability and justice for victims of violence, including security personnel and civilians caught in the crossfire. Upholding human rights and the rule of law must remain central to any strategy aimed at restoring peace and stability in Nigeria. Only through concerted efforts at all levels of governance and society can the nation hope to overcome these challenges and honor the sacrifices of those who have given their lives in the service of public safety.

## Key Incidents

Herdsmen kidnapped **three Mobile Policemen** from PMF 51, Oghara, who were stationed at the Ohoror axis of the East West Road in Ughelli North Local Government Area of Delta State on 26 January. The abducted officers, all inspectors, were part of a team of six policemen on duty at the location. The incident unfolded when a local resident reported being robbed by herdsmen near a bridge where he had gone to perform rituals to a river deity. Upon receiving this report, the team leader deployed the three inspectors with their AK-47 rifles to accompany the complainant to the scene.

Unfortunately, upon arrival at the location, the inspectors and the complainant were attacked by six herdsmen. The complainant managed to escape while the policemen dispersed into different directions. When the complainant returned alone, unable to account for the whereabouts of the officers, a search and rescue operation was immediately launched. Despite efforts by the anti-robbery team and reinforcements from PMF 51, Oghara, the abducted policemen could not be located, and the kidnappers escaped with the officers and their weapons.

Residents of Katapka community in Toto Local Government Area of Nasarawa State faced heightened tension in the first week of February following the tragic killing of **three soldiers** and **two members** of a local vigilante group by bandits. The incident exacerbated fears in Toto, an area already reeling from previous violent clashes. This was part of a wave of violence which began on 1 February with an attack that resulted in three deaths and extensive property damage in Katapka and Okudu communities.

It was in response to the escalating security threat that the Nigerian Army deployed personnel to the area to restore order. However, on 6 February, the bandits launched a brazen ambush specifically targeting the security forces and local vigilantes. Abdullahi Aliyu-Tashas, the chairman of Toto Local Government Area, confirmed the ambush, stating that the attackers laid in wait and killed three military personnel during a patrol aimed at maintaining law and order in the region. Residents interviewed expressed deep apprehension over the possibility of further attacks, underscoring the urgent need for enhanced security measures.

The Akwa Ibom State Police Command arrested 22 suspects in connection with the murder of a certain Inspector Usang Egbe and for cult-related activities in the State. Inspector Egbe was murdered in his residence in Afaha Ube, Uyo.

On 2 March, In Ikpeshi, Akoko-Edo Local Government Area of Edo State, **two policemen** were beaten to death after their convoy struck a motorcycle, resulting in the death of

the rider and a passenger. The incident involved a Hilux van escorting former Edo State House of Assembly member Emmanuel Agbaje. Following the accident, irate youths attacked the Edo State Security Volunteer Network (vigilante) office where the policemen were taken. While two officers were beaten to death, members of the vigilante group managed to rescue two other officers, who were taken to hospital for treatment. The rifles of the police officers were also recovered. The Edo State Police Public Relations Officer, Chidi Nwabuzor, confirmed the incident.

In the early hours of 8 March, suspected gunmen attacked a police checkpoint at Ebiya Bridge in the Hilltop area of Ebonyi Local Government Area, Ebonyi State, resulting in the brutal murder of **six policemen** and **two civilian girls**. This violent attack mirrored a similar incident on 17 November 2023, at the same checkpoint, where **two police officers** on patrol were killed by gunmen.

This attack is part of a troubling pattern of assaults on the police and public infrastructure in the South-East region, with security personnel frequently targeted. The recurring violence underscores the ongoing security challenges in the area, as numerous public facilities have faced attacks, resulting in significant loss of life and property among security agencies and civilians alike.

On 14 March, residents of warring communities ambushed and killed **16 officers** and personnel of the 181 Amphibious Battalion of the Nigerian Army during a peace mission to Okuoma community in Bomadi Local Government Area of Delta State. Among those killed were the commanding officer, two majors, one captain, and 12 soldiers. The Acting Director of Defence Information, Brigadier General Tukur Gusau, disclosed, explained that the troops were responding to a distress call about a clash between Okuoma and Okoloba communities when they were ambushed. Chief of Defence Staff Christopher Musa ordered an immediate investigation and the arrest of those involved in the attack.

On 19 March, **two policemen** from MOPOL 18, Owerri, were killed when gunmen attacked their patrol vehicle along Old Gariki Road, Okigwe, in Imo State. The officers, ambushed while on patrol duty, were targeted by suspected members of the proscribed Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) and its affiliate, the Eastern Security Network (ESN). The assailants reportedly threw dynamite at the patrol vehicle and engaged the officers in a prolonged gunfight, resulting in the deaths of two officers and injuries to four others.

On 23 March, the Force Headquarters of the Nigeria Police disclosed the identities of **12 officers** who were victims of a tragic ambush while on a rescue operation in Delta State. Six officers were confirmed killed and six others were declared missing. The attack occurred while the officers were investigating the disappearance of three colleagues



in Ohoro Forest. The deceased officers included Inspector Abe Olubunmi and several sergeants, while the missing officers included Inspector Onoja Daniel and others. The police arrested five suspects in connection with the incident.

In response to the incident, the Inspector General of Police, IGP Kayode Egbetokun, ordered expedited payment of entitlements to the families of the slain officers and stated that resources would be deployed to ensure the perpetrators are brought to justice.

Gunmen on 10 May, **killed two policemen** attached to the Enugu State Police Command. The policemen attached to the Ogui Divisional Headquarters were said to be conducting a stop-and-search along Presidential Road, Enugu when they suddenly came under attack by armed men.

On 11 May, gunmen attacked **two operatives** of the Nigeria Police Force and Federal Road Safety Corps in Orba and Eha-Alumona in Udenu and Nsukka Local Government Areas of Enugu State, respectively.

On 11 June, gunmen shot **two police officers** on duty in Akabo, Ikeduru Local Government Area of Imo State. The fleeing gunmen also shot a passer-by at a checkpoint in Ama-John junction, Akabo, along Owerri-Okigwe-Enugu Road.

On 28 June, gunmen reportedly killed **two police operatives** at a check-point in Aba, Abia State. The operatives were conducting routine stop and search operations along Opobo junction in Ogbor Hill axis of Aba, when the gunmen attacked them.

On 18 July, a police officer identified as **Okon**, attached to the All Progressives Congress candidate in the Edo State governorship election, Monday Okpebholo, was killed after gunmen attacked the convoy of his principal and that of reinstated Deputy Governor of the State, Philip Shaibu, in Benin after leaving the Benin Airport.

Suspected Boko Haram terrorists attacked Jakana Police Station in the Konduga Local Government Area of Borno State, on 28 July, killing a police driver and a woman. The terrorists also set ablaze two patrol vehicles which belonged to the Police and members of the Civilian Joint Task Force.

On 29 July, gunmen killed **four police officers** at a stop and search check point along Owerri-Onitsha Road in Imo State. The gunmen were said to have stormed one of the popular hotels where the police checkpoint was mounted at Irete and shot at the four policemen on the stop and search duty, as well as a female Point of Sale (POS) operator.

In the month of July, gunmen killed and abducted Customs officers at Koko base in



Kebbi State. The Kebbi State Command of the Nigeria Customs service, in a statement by the Public Relations Officer, Muhammad Salisu, stated that gunmen trailed the Anti-Amuggling squad to their base at Koko, destroyed facilities, killed one officer, **Dabo Umar** and abducted one **Babagana Kabiru**.

On 9 August, gunmen attacked a police checkpoint at Omata Junction, Nnewi-Oba Road in Idemili South Local Government Area of Anambra State. It was gathered that the hoodlums invaded the area at about 9:20 am and threw explosive devices at the police operatives at the checkpoint. It was further gathered that during the attack, **one policeman** was killed while another was injured.

On 10 August, bandits killed at least **four soldiers** and set two military operational vehicles ablaze in Gudu Local Government Area of Sokoto State. It was learnt that the bandits laid an ambush for the troops in a border town of Sokoto, killing four soldiers in the attack.

On 12 September, at least **eight security personnel** were killed by bandits near Tazame village in the Tsafe Local Government Area of Zamfara State. The security personnel, comprising five policemen and three soldiers, were attached to a road construction company, Setraco Nigeria Limited. The police and military personnel were regularly stationed on the road to provide protection for the construction workers repairing the Gusau-Tsafe-Zaria Road.

On 16 September, gunmen launched a deadly attack on the Umunze Police Station in Orumba South Local Government Area of Anambra State, killing **two policemen** on duty. The attackers used improvised explosives and opened fire, setting a section of the station ablaze. The two slain officers were attempting to resist the attackers when they were gunned down.

### **State Response to Insecurity**

The Nigerian government's response to human rights violations, particularly in relation to kidnappings and violent attacks, highlights the complex security challenges facing the country. A series of operations conducted by the police, military, and other security forces reflect ongoing efforts to combat criminal elements responsible for kidnappings, assaults on traditional rulers, and attacks on vulnerable groups. These interventions include neutralising armed gangs, intercepting kidnappers, rescuing hostages, and capturing individuals involved in organised criminal activities. The state's commitment to apprehending perpetrators and restoring order underscores its dedication to protecting citizens and upholding the rule of law amidst persistent insecurity.

In various regions, security agencies have intensified operations, sometimes deploying specialised units and advanced equipment to bolster their efforts. Notable incidents include the apprehension of gang members in Ekiti State following the abduction of school children, as well as military interventions in Kaduna to dismantle insurgent camps and eliminate bandit kingpins. These actions have not only disrupted criminal networks but have also provided relief to communities deeply impacted by violence and insecurity. Collaboration between the police and local vigilante groups demonstrates a strategic approach to enhancing security at the community level.

However, the complexity and scale of these security challenges reveal limitations, as evidenced by the continued threat of kidnappings and attacks in certain regions. While the rescue of victims and capture of perpetrators indicate progress, the recurrence of such incidents suggests a need for sustained, comprehensive strategies that address the root causes of these crimes. The Nigerian government's response, though marked by some successful operations, also calls for reinforced support, resources, and coordinated efforts across various levels of government and civil society to ensure a lasting reduction in human rights violations and enhanced protection for all citizens.

## Key Incidents

On 2 January, the police in Anambra State neutralised a gang of gunmen responsible for attacking and killing two police officers at Uga Roundabout in Aguata Local Government Area. Anambra State Commissioner of Police, CP Aderemi Adeoye, confirmed that three members of the gang were killed during a raid on their camp in Ogboji, Orumba South Local Government Area. Also, in the course of the raid, security officers dislodged a gang during an attempted attack on 6 January, rescuing a 51-year-old kidnap victim in the process.

The raid resulted in the recovery of a Lexus SUV, four Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), two pump-action rifles, and 16 live cartridges from the gang members. The slain police officers, originally from Enugu State and on a special mission, were honoured for their sacrifice.

In response to the killings of two traditional rulers in Ekiti State, the Nigeria Police Force deployed a helicopter and armed personnel carriers to the region. President Bola Tinubu directed the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kayode Egbetokun to ensure that the perpetrators are apprehended and face justice. The monarchs, Oba Olatunde Olusola and Oba David Ogunsola, were murdered while returning from a meeting in Irele-Ekiti on Monday, 29 January. Force spokesman, Muyiwa Adejobi confirmed that

strategic police deployments were underway to address the incident and ensure the safety of residents.

IGP Egbetokun emphasised the Force's commitment to bringing the perpetrators to justice. During a visit from Ekiti State Governor Biodun Oyebanji and Senate Majority Leader Opeyemi Bamidele, the IGP announced additional deployments including a police helicopter, armed personnel carriers, and specialised operatives from the Intelligence Response Team, Special Tactical Squad, and Police Mobile Force to bolster the special operations in Ekiti.

On 13 February, the Ogun State Police Command apprehended Christopher Yaro, a suspected kidnapper allegedly involved in the abduction of two Catholic priests in Pankshin, Plateau State, on 1 February. The priests, Rev. Father Kenneth Kanwa and Rev. Father Jude Nwachukwu, were taken from St. Vincent de Paul Fier Parish, with their captors demanding a N25 million ransom. Although it is unclear whether the ransom was paid, the priests were later confirmed to have been released.

On 17 February, the Police Command in Ekiti State announced that it had apprehended eight members of a kidnapping syndicate suspected of abducting five pupils, three teachers, and a driver from Apostolic Faith School. The victims were taken on 29 January, while traveling in their school bus to Emure-Ekiti, and were freed on 4 February after a ransom of N15 million was reportedly paid. The arrests began with Abubakar Aliyu, who was caught spying on a dairy farm in Ikun Ekiti. This led to the capture of other gang members, including vigilante members and the leader of the Miyetti Allah vigilante in Oro-Ago, Kwara State, who admitted to being related to the kidnapping gang's leader, Sumo Karami. One gang member, Ayuba, was killed during a shootout with police.

On 22 February, it was reported that troops from the 1 Division of the Nigerian Army conducted a successful operation resulting in the elimination of notorious bandit kingpin, Boderi. Also killed was another kingpin named Bodejo, in an ambush along the Bada – Riyawa axis on the Kaduna – Birnin Gwari Road. Maj-Gen. Onyema Nwachukwu, Director of Army Public Relations, confirmed that during the operation, 6 insurgents were neutralised and significant quantities of arms, ammunition, and motorcycles were recovered.

On 8 March, The Anambra State Police Command intercepted a kidnap gang, rescuing four men who had been abducted by the criminals. According to DSP Tochukwu Ikenga, the state police spokesman, the kidnappers were transporting the victims to an unknown destination when they were intercepted along the Amagu-Awgbu Road in Orumba North Local Government Area. The police, in collaboration with local vigilantes, engaged the

kidnappers in a shootout, leading to the demobilization of two out of the three vehicles used by the gang. The remaining kidnappers fled into the bush, some with bullet wounds.

On 24 March, the military announced the rescue of 137 students who were abducted from LEA Primary School and Government Secondary School Kuriga in Chikun Local Government Area of Kaduna State. Although it was initially reported that 287 children were kidnapped when gunmen on motorcycles stormed the school, prompting widespread outrage; according to a statement from Major General Edward Buba, Director of Defence Media Operations, the actual number of rescued students was 137. This consisted of 76 females and 61 males aged between eight and fifteen.

On 27 March, the police in Benue State reported that they had rescued a 50-year-old kidnap victim at Tine Nine, Zaki Biam, in the Ukum LGA of the State. The Commander of Operation Zenda – joint operation in the State – SP Felix Nomiyugh, reported that his team found the man in a coma after his abductors abandoned him. The victim was subsequently taken to General Hospital in Zaki Biam, where he regained consciousness after receiving medical attention.



## **VIOLATIONS AGAINST VULNERABLE GROUPS**

The incidence of violations against vulnerable groups in Nigeria paints a harrowing picture of the pervasive exploitation and abuse of girls, women and children, underscoring the urgent need for coordinated national and international responses. The incidents documented reveal the alarming prevalence of child trafficking, abduction, and forced labor, which continue to deprive countless children of their rights to safety, education, and dignity. Perpetrators exploit socio-economic vulnerabilities, broken trust, and inadequate legal enforcement to carry out these egregious acts, leaving lasting scars on victims and their families. From the trafficking of underage children in Taraba and Nasarawa States to the forced migration of minors to urban centres like Lagos for exploitative labor, the patterns of abuse highlight systemic gaps in safeguarding Nigeria's most vulnerable populations.

This report highlights the multifaceted nature of these violations, emphasising the need for comprehensive reforms to address root causes, enhance victim support systems, and strengthen the capacity of law enforcement to combat trafficking and abduction networks. It underscores the urgency of fostering collaboration between government agencies, civil society organisations, and international partners to create sustainable solutions and protect the rights of Nigeria's vulnerable populations. By exposing these injustices, the report seeks to galvanise stakeholders into action to ensure accountability, safeguard human rights, and uphold the dignity of every individual.

Some cases of rescued trafficked infants and minors, as documented in Lagos and Abuja, indicate the efforts of law enforcement agencies like the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) and the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) in tackling these violations, albeit with limited resources and significant operational challenges.

## Key Incidents

On 18 January, The Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps arrested two suspects, Daniel Madin and Federation Markus, for allegedly trafficking 16 children in Taraba State. The NSCDC Commandant in Taraba, Adamu Salihu, disclosed that the suspects were apprehended at the Jalingo Main Motor Park while transporting the children, aged between 10 and 16, to Benin City in Edo State. The children were reportedly taken from Zing and Bali Local Government Areas. Preliminary investigations suggest that the suspects are part of a larger syndicate that traffics underage children with false promises of a brighter future. Commandant Salihu revealed that the trafficked children are often forced into dehumanising jobs, with the proceeds confiscated by their handlers. The suspects and the children were handed over to the NAPTIP for further investigation and prosecution.

The Federal Capital Territory Police Command's Rapid Response Squad 74 arrested Pastor Simon Kado, his relative Jesse Simon-Kado, and their driver, Muhammad Isah for child trafficking on 10 February. They were intercepted while transporting 12 underage children, including eight girls and four boys aged between five and 16 years, from Nasarawa State to Ogun State. The arrest occurred at around 12:55 am when the suspects were found in a Toyota Hiace bus. The FCT Police Public Relations Officer, SP Josephine Adeg, confirmed the arrest in a statement, highlighting that the children were from Akwanga LGA of Nasarawa State.

The Lagos Police Command apprehended a suspected leader of a child trafficking and labour syndicate, identified as Alimot Haruna on 25 January.<sup>12</sup> According to Benjamin Hundeyin, the Command's spokesperson, the arrest followed three months of intelligence gathering. Haruna, a 45-year-old woman, was detained by detectives from the Ijora Badia police division. During the operation, three underage children, whose names could not be determined, were rescued. The syndicate is accused of bringing children from northern States to Lagos for labour and other illegal activities.

Haruna confessed to illegally transporting 42 children to Lagos without parental consent. She had been previously declared wanted by the Kwara State Police Command in connection with numerous missing underage children linked to her syndicate. The Kwara State Police Command confirmed the recovery of some children, with 11 still missing. During further interrogation, Haruna disclosed the locations of the remaining children, and their current custodians acknowledged holding them.

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.thecable.ng/police-arrest-suspected-kingpin-of-child-trafficking-syndicate-in-lagos/>.

On 22 April, The Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps in the Federal Capital Territory intercepted 10 individuals suspected of being victims of human trafficking and allegedly being prepared for migration.

In the month of April, two female children aged four months and 11 years old, suspected to have been trafficked by their relatives, were rescued by the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) in Abuja and Lagos, respectively.

In July, detectives from the Oko-oba Division of the Lagos State Police Command busted a child trafficking ring and rescued a two-month-old baby and arrested five individuals involved in the crime. The distressed mother of the abducted infant reported that one Gloria Sunday absconded with her son on 11 July 2024.

## Gender-Based Violence

Gender-based violence (GBV) remains a pervasive challenge in Nigeria, undermining the dignity, rights, and safety of countless women and girls across the nation. The year 2024 witnessed numerous incidents that highlight the urgent need for systemic interventions to address these violations. From the corridors of domestic violence to public spaces, women and girls continued to endure harassment, assault, and exploitation. The cases documented in this report shed light on the multifaceted nature of gender-based violence, which ranges from domestic abuse and rape to targeted killings, affecting victims across all socio-economic and cultural divides. These violations not only perpetuate cycles of trauma and insecurity but also reflect deeply entrenched societal and systemic inequalities that demand immediate attention.

The abuse of women within domestic settings underscores the grave dangers many face in their homes. The tragic deaths of some women at the hands of their husbands illustrate the fatal consequences of unchecked domestic violence and the failure of protective systems. These cases highlight the lack of accessible reporting mechanisms and support structures that could empower victims to escape abusive environments. Moreover, the intersection of gender-based violence with societal stigma and cultural norms often silences victims, enabling perpetrators to act with impunity. This therefore demonstrates the importance of rigorous enforcement of laws and the need for community-level sensitisation to challenge harmful norms.

Sexual violence remains one of the most egregious forms of gender-based violence. The assault of a 20-year-old graduate by a police officer in Ogun State is particularly troubling, given that law enforcement officers are expected to uphold, not violate, the rights of citizens. Such incidents erode public trust and highlight the systemic inadequacies in



holding officers accountable for abuses of power. Meanwhile, the arrest of perpetrators in Gombe and Kwara States for sexually assaulting minors emphasises the vulnerability of children to predatory behavior, often by individuals within their community or household. These cases underscore the urgent need for specialised legal protections, child-centered justice systems, and rehabilitative care for victims.

The phenomenon of trafficking and exploitation also featured prominently in 2024, with raids uncovering baby factories and trafficking syndicates across the country. The rescue of 16 pregnant women and eight children in Abia State from a baby factory reflects ongoing efforts to combat organised exploitation. However, such operations are only one aspect of a broader challenge that includes addressing the demand for trafficked individuals, improving intelligence-sharing, and ensuring survivors receive long-term support to rebuild their lives.

The incidents documented in this report serve as a stark reminder of the structural gaps that perpetuate gender-based violence in Nigeria. They also highlight the resilience and courage of survivors, many of whom come forward to report these violations despite cultural and systemic barriers. The preamble sets the tone for a comprehensive analysis of gender-based violence in Nigeria, providing a foundation for stakeholders, policymakers, and civil society actors to collaborate on sustainable solutions. Ending GBV requires not only legal and institutional reforms but also widespread societal change to ensure that every woman and girl can live free from violence and discrimination.

## Key Incidents

On 26 January, a Magistrate Court in Abeokuta sentenced 19-year-old Adeola Saheed to six months' imprisonment for attempting to rape a 35-year-old woman. Saheed, who resides in the Brewery area of Abeokuta, faced a three-count charge of conspiracy, indecent assault, and attempted rape. Magistrate O.O. Odumosu ruled that the prosecution had proven its case beyond reasonable doubt, sentencing Saheed to six months for each count, to run concurrently, with an option to pay a N300,000 fine.

Prosecutor ASP Olakunle Shonibare reported that the incident occurred on 12 October, 2023, at Olomore Housing Estate. Saheed, along with an accomplice still at large, entered the complainant's compound under the pretence of chasing a thief. When the complainant denied seeing any thief, Saheed attacked her with a plank and screwdriver, attempting to rape her. The attack was thwarted by the timely arrival of the complainant's husband.

Sesan Adelabu, a prominent socialite and businessman in Ondo State, allegedly committed suicide after killing his wife, Bolu, in Akure, the State capital. The event took place on 9 February. Reports suggest Adelabu caught his wife in bed with one of his security guards. In a fit of rage, he killed her with a machete and then took his own life by drinking insecticide. The tragic incident took place at their Alagbaka GRA residence. The police spokesperson in the State, Funmi Odunlami, confirmed the incident.

A policeman attached to Abobi Police Station in Ago-Iwoye, Ogun State, was caught on video sexually harassing a 20-year-old female graduate, Precious Owolabi, inside a police van. The incident occurred on Monday, 5 February, when Owolabi was forced into the van for wearing camouflage shorts. In an interview, Owolabi recounted that the officer propositioned her for sex and slapped her when she refused. She managed to record the harassment on her phone. The Ogun State Police Public Relations Officer, SP Omolola Odutola, confirmed that the command was investigating the incident.

On 7 February, the Nigeria Police in Gombe State arrested two men, Yayaji Muhammad (24) and Muhammad Barau (20), for allegedly raping a 13-year-old girl on a farm in Bajoga, Funakaye Local Government Area. The arrests were made following a complaint by the victim's father, Malam Jauro, who reported that the suspects, along with an accomplice, conspired to attack and threaten his daughter before forcefully assaulting her.

On 21 February, the Kwara State Command of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) announced that it had apprehended a 51-year-old man, Idowu Mahmud, on allegations of raping a 14-year-old girl. This incident reportedly occurred at Gbaagba Airport Road in Ilorin West Local Government Area. The arrest followed a formal complaint lodged against Mahmud by an anonymous source. A statement released by the Public Relations Officer of the NSCDC, Ayoola Micheal Shola, confirmed the arrest. He noted that the victim, who is a cousin of the suspect's wife, had been residing with the couple since the age of 11 years. The suspect was said to have threatened the victim if she ever disclosed the illicit relationship to anyone.

The Rivers State Police Command apprehended Michael Chidozie for allegedly assaulting and fatally strangling his wife, Ufuoma Eriera Chidozie, at their residence in Mile 4 near Port Harcourt. Mrs. Chidozie, a mother of three boys aged 10, 7, and 5, reportedly succumbed to injuries sustained during the assault in the early hours of Tuesday, 5 March. The suspect, after making a distress call to his late wife's brother, fled the scene before the arrival of family members. Upon discovery of Mrs. Chidozie's lifeless body by her brother, a search for her husband ensued, leading to his subsequent arrest by the police on 6 March.

On 8 March, the Abia State Police Command announced that it had conducted a successful raid on a baby factory in Aba, rescuing 16 pregnant women and eight children from captivity. Acting on credible local intelligence, operatives from the Rapid Response Squad raided a four-story building with 10 flats and an adjacent structure, apprehending several suspects involved in the operation. Among those arrested were facilitators, Onyinyechi and Ekpene, with the former being pregnant at the time of the arrest.

On 12 March, it was reported that Kudirat Bolarinwa, a 45-year-old housewife and farmer, was brutally raped and murdered by an ex-convict in Ondo State. The incident occurred at Lakere, Ayeyemi area, where her decomposing body was discovered in a forest by a police search team. According to reports, Mrs. Bolarinwa had accompanied the suspect to purchase plantains on a farm, only to be assaulted, raped, and subsequently killed. Her husband, Abolarinwa, raised the alarm after she failed to return home, leading to a police investigation that uncovered disturbing evidence, including a bag with belongings linked to the assailant.

Also in April, a mother of three, Lovelyn Onyekachi, and her suspected lover, Uchenna Ekjwenye were arrested and detained in police custody over an allegation of serial sexual attacks and defilement of her three children aged 5, 7 and 9 years old, respectively.

On 16 April, Justice Ahman Oshodi of the Ikeja Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Court convicted and sentenced a 26-year-old carpenter, Tayo Akinboyewa to life imprisonment for having unlawful sexual intercourse with his neighbour's 12-year-old daughter.

On 23 April, Justice Rahman Oshodi of an Ikeja Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence court convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment, a 32-year-old software engineer, Chukwudi Anyanwu, who had unlawful sexual intercourse with his neighbour's 13-year-old daughter on Children's Day, 2021.

On 24 April, it was reported that operatives of the Enugu State Police Command arrested a lecturer of the University of Nigeria, Mfonbong Udoudom, who was caught in a video harassing a female student in his office and subsequently suspended by the University.

In the month of May, operatives of the Adamawa State Police Command arrested a man identified as Idi Adamu for allegedly defiling his one-year-old step-daughter. The Police noted that Adamu, a barber, committed the crime on 30 April at his residence in Wuro-Ardo, Mubi North LGA, Adamawa State.

On 1 May, a 75-year-old barber identified as Nwankwo Nweke was arrested by security operatives in Anambra State for allegedly defiling an eight-year-old girl. The incident was

reported to have occurred in Awka, the State capital.

In May, the Ogun State Police Command arrested a 30-year-old film actor on allegations of abduction and defilement of a 14-year-old girl. The arrest came following a report from the grandparents of the teenager that their granddaughter went missing on the 27<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

In the month of May, a 40-year-old farmer, Abraham Achibong, was reported to have been arrested for alleged incest with his 14-year-old daughter in Akure, Ondo State. It was discovered that this had been going on for 6 years until the girl summoned courage to confide in her teacher when the Ondo State Primary Health Care officers visited her school on sensitisation programme on the Human Papilloma Virus vaccine.

A Family Magistrate Court sitting in Akure, Ondo State ordered the remand of a man, Mufutau Taiwo, for allegedly defiling his eight-year-old daughter. The 35-year-old defendant who was arrested by policemen was apprehended on 18 June 2024

On 20 July, the Akwa Ibom State Police Command arrested 44-year old Paul Edu, at Ukana Iba village, Essien Udim Local Government Area of the State, for allegedly raping a member of the National Youth Service Corps after ordering her to his house.

At least two first-year female students of Tai Solarin University of Education in Ijagun, Ijebu-Ode, Ogun State, were alleged to have been raped on 22 July by suspected armed robbers who invaded the students' apartments, forcibly taking the their personal belongings.

On 22 August, a 13-year-old girl was reportedly raped to death by local miners at the Tipper Garage area in Gwagwalada Area Council of the Federal Capital Territory. The girl, who went to hawk milk was declared missing, and on 23 August, her corpse was found at the Tipper Garage area, with evidence of sexual violence. She was taken to the hospital where doctors confirmed that she was raped.

On 1 September, a 20-year-old man, identified as Honest, was taken into custody by the Egi Divisional Police headquarters in Obite, Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area of Rivers State. He was accused of conspiring with his brother, Okwukwe, to abduct and sexually assault a 14-year-old girl in Erimma community in the LGA.

On 26 September, the Delta State Police Command arrested a 50-year-old man for allegedly defiling a four-year-old girl in Ubulu-Uku, Aniocha South Local Government Area of the State. The incident occurred when the minor went to her grandmother's house in Ubulu-Uku on the instruction of her mother.



## CONCLUSION

The 2024 Human Rights Report on Nigeria provides a sobering yet necessary account of the widespread human rights challenges plaguing the country. It highlights systemic issues such as police brutality, arbitrary arrests and detention of journalists, deteriorating living conditions, rising wave of kidnappings and killings, gender-based violence, human trafficking, child exploitation, all of which continue to undermine the rights, dignity, and security of Nigerians. These violations are exacerbated by entrenched socio-economic inequalities, weak institutional frameworks, and a lack of accountability mechanisms that allow perpetrators to operate with impunity. Despite the gravity of these challenges, the report also acknowledges efforts by law enforcement agencies and the government to address these issues, even though much remains to be done.

Central to addressing Nigeria's human rights crisis is the need for a holistic, multi-pronged approach. Strengthening the rule of law, ensuring the independence and efficiency of the judiciary, and reforming law enforcement agencies are essential steps toward restoring public confidence and ensuring justice for victims. Furthermore, the government must prioritise the protection of vulnerable groups, including women, children, and internally displaced persons, by implementing robust social safety nets and supporting survivors of abuse and exploitation. Collaboration with civil society organisations and international partners will also be critical in building awareness, improving institutional responses, and providing comprehensive support systems for victims.

While notable successes—such as the rescue of trafficked children and the dismantling of trafficking syndicates—demonstrate the potential for progress, these efforts must be sustained and scaled up to create lasting change. Addressing the root causes of human rights violations, such as systemic corruption, poverty, and unemployment is equally important in creating an environment where such abuses are less likely to thrive. As Nigeria continues its journey toward a more just and equitable society, it must embrace accountability, transparency, and a commitment to upholding the fundamental rights of all its citizens.

In conclusion, the Nigeria Annual Human Rights Report 2024 is a call to action for all stakeholders—government institutions, civil society, law enforcement agencies, and the international community. It underscores the urgent need for a unified and sustained effort to confront these challenges and protect the rights of every Nigerian. By taking bold and decisive action, Nigeria can chart a path toward a future where human rights are not only protected but celebrated, ensuring that the country fulfils its obligations to its people and to the international human rights community.



# RECOMMENDATIONS

## 1. Strengthen Legal and Institutional Frameworks:

The Nigerian government must prioritise the review and enforcement of laws that protect vulnerable groups, such as children, women, and internally displaced persons. This includes full domestication and implementation of the Child Rights Act and Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act across all States. Additionally, specialised courts for handling cases of gender-based violence and human trafficking should be established to ensure swift delivery of justice.

## 2. Enhance Accountability and Oversight Mechanisms:

To address impunity, law enforcement agencies must establish independent oversight bodies to investigate and prosecute cases of police brutality, sexual harassment, and other human rights abuses by state actors. Training programmes on human rights and ethical conduct should be institutionalised for law enforcement and judicial personnel to reduce misconduct and corruption.

## 3. Scale Up Anti-Trafficking and Rehabilitation Efforts:

Increased funding and resources should be allocated to the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) to strengthen its capacity for rescue, investigation, and prosecution. Victim-centered approaches must be prioritised, including the provision of psychosocial support, education, and vocational training for rescued victims of human trafficking and child labor.

## 4. Enhance Community and Grassroots Engagement:

Community leaders, traditional rulers, and civil society organisations should be actively engaged in awareness campaigns to combat cultural and social norms that perpetuate violence and exploitation. Public education programmes should focus on the risks of trafficking, the importance of reporting crimes, and promoting gender equality to address the root causes of violence and exploitation.



## **5. Improve Economic Opportunities and Social Safety Nets:**

Addressing the socio-economic drivers of human rights abuses requires targeted investment in poverty alleviation, job creation, and education programmes. Special focus should be placed on empowering women and youth through skill acquisition programmes and access to financial resources. Additionally, social safety nets for vulnerable groups, including widows, orphans, and internally displaced persons, must be strengthened to reduce their susceptibility to exploitation.

## **6. Foster National and International Collaboration:**

Nigeria must deepen its collaboration with international organisations, donor agencies, and neighboring countries to tackle cross-border human trafficking and organised crime. Joint task forces, intelligence sharing, and capacity-building initiatives can significantly bolster national efforts to combat trafficking, gender-based violence, and other human rights abuses. Furthermore, the government should engage with regional bodies such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to harmonise strategies for addressing systemic issues and protecting human rights across West Africa.

These recommendations aim to create a comprehensive and sustainable framework for addressing the human rights challenges highlighted in the report, ensuring a safer and just society for all Nigerians.





## **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.

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