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The Boko Haram Insurgence in Nigeria and the Threat to National Security

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Abstract

Boko Haram, is an insurgent Islamic sect founded by Mohammed Yusuf in 2002; it has its base in Maiduguri the capital of Borno State at the north eastern end of Nigeria. It has carried out series of vicious and pernicious attacks on the people and government of Nigeria and all her institutions with the view of Islamizing the country. In the light of the horrendous and fortuitous attacks they have unleashed on Nigeria and despite efforts made by government to douse the problem, the group kept on springing surprises on targets, while the country's peace and security remained comatosed. This paper made use of exploratory and descriptive research methods, data were assessed from books, journals, newspapers and the internet. It was found out that Boko Haram attacks on the nation are externalizations of the people's

frustration against poverty, unemployment, immoral, unjust, decadent and corrupt leadership with the political power shift to the south in the last decade. It was found out also that the group wants to make the nation ungovernable because they or their cronies are not in power. It is also not unlikely that this might be the strategy and preparation of some northern elements to wrest power back to the north come 2015.

Key words: Boko Haram, Islamic extremist, Mohammed Yusuf, Secular system, Nigeria

Introduction

Boko Haram, founded by Mohammed Yusuf in 2002, is an Islamic movement based in Maiduguri the capital of Borno State at the north-eastern end of Nigeria; the group strongly opposes man made laws. According to Olugbode [2011] the organization seeks to abolish the secular system of government and establish a *Shari'a* system in Nigeria. The movement, whose name in the Hausa language Boko Haram translates as "Western education is sacrilege" or "a sin" is divided into three factions, and in 2011, was responsible for more than 450 awful killings in Nigeria.

The group first came into limelight following the sectarian violence in Nigeria in 2009; it does not have a clear-cut structure or evident chain of command. Moreover, it is up till now very unclear whether Boko Haram has links to terror outfits beyond Nigerian borders but its fighters have employed various tactics that are similar to terrorist groups of the Arabs while they have constantly been at logger head with the Federal Government of Nigeria. The group, has adopted People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad, as it's official name which is the English translation of the Arabic *Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wal-Jihad*. [BBC News, 2011].

In Maiduguri, where the group was formed, the residents dubbed it Boko Haram. The term "Boko Haram" comes from the Hausa word *boko* meaning "western education" and the Arabic word *haram* figuratively means "sin" or literally, "forbidden". The name, loosely translated from Hausa, means "western education is forbidden". The group earned this name due to its strong opposition to anything Western, which it sees as corrupting Muslims. [Farouk, 2012]

Boko Haram is an indigenous Salafist group which only turned itself into a Salafist Jihadist group in 2009. It propagates that not only interaction with the Western World is forbidden, but it is also against the Muslim establishment and the government of Nigeria [Bartolotta, 2011]. The group publicly extols its ideology despite the fact that its founder and former leader Muhammad Yusuf was himself a highly educated man who lived a lavish life and drove a Mercedes Benz [BBC News, 2009]. The members of the group do not interact with the local Muslim population and have carried out assassinations in the past of anyone who criticizes it, including Muslim clerics. [Farouk, 2012]

Boko Haram, has molested the people of Nigeria particularly those living in the northern part of the country, it is highly disheartening to hear them say western education is evil and should be fought or abolished by all and sundry. Meanwhile, all the weapons they depend on for bombing buildings and cars, the technology used in all their attacks, the vehicles they use, the clothes they wear and so on come from the west and through western education. What does this portend for development of the north that is glaringly some miles apart from that of the South in the present age?



Figure 1: Nigeria and the seat of Boko Haram at the North Eastern end of the Country

There are so many reasons adduced for Boko Haram's violence, in the first instance they want to overthrow the government and create an Islamic State. Its followers are said to be influenced by the Koranic phrase: "Anyone who is not governed by what Allah has revealed is among the transgressors". Boko Haram promotes a version of Islam which makes it forbidden or "haram", for Muslims to take part in any political or social activity associated with Western society. This includes voting in elections, wearing shirts and trousers or receiving a secular education. The sect believed that Nigeria is ruled by non-believers, even when the country had a Muslim president.

Impudence of Boko Haram in Nigeria

As a result of their belief, the charismatic Muslim Cleric, Mohammed Yusuf, built a religious complex which included a mosque and an Islamic school. Many poor Muslim families from across Nigeria, as well as neighboring countries enrolled their children at the school. But the sect is not only interested in education; its Islamic goal is to create an Islamic state, and the school became a recruiting ground for jihadists who were to fight the state. In 2009, Boko Haram carried out a spate of attacks on police stations and other government buildings in Maiduguri. This led to shoot-outs on Maiduguri's streets. Hundreds of the sect's supporters were killed and thousands of residents flee the city.

Nigerian security forces eventually seized the group's headquarters, capturing fighters and killing Mr. Yusuf. His dead body was shown on state television and the security forces thought Boko Haram had been dealt with. Shortly after, the fighters of the sect regrouped under a new leader and in 2010, they attacked a prison in Maiduguri, freeing hundreds of the group's supporters. Boko Haram's trade mark has been the use of gunmen on motorbikes, sporadically killing the security agents particularly the police, the politicians and anyone who criticizes it, including clerics from other Muslim tradition and Christians. The group has also staged several more audacious attacks in different parts of the northern Nigeria, fuelling tension and insecurity between Muslims and Christians.

The sect started its fortuitous attacks in 2009 where hundreds were killed in Maiduguri when the police stations were stormed; the leader of the sect Mohammed Yusuf was later captured and killed in custody. In December, 2010 there was a bomb blast in Jos, killing 80 people; the sect was also blamed for New Year's Eve attack on Abuja barracks. Between June-August,

2011 there was bomb attacks on Abuja police HQ and UN building and in December, 2011 there were multiple bomb attacks on Christmas Day where dozens lost their lives. In the month of January, 2012 there were waves of violence across north-east Nigeria. These are some of the vicious attack launched against Nigeria by the group. Bishop Kukah [2012] describes the situation in the north as pathetic for which everyone should work towards bringing a lasting solution to. He said:

I am ashamed about what happened in Zaria and Kaduna recently. We need to be brutally sincere to ourselves; running and looking for water is not the solution. Without finding the cause of the problem, we cannot quench the fire. We have to ask ourselves: how did we get here? What is happening now does not reflect who we are, whether as Christians or Moslems,” he said. “If we have a country where Christians are talking to themselves while Moslems are talking to themselves, it won’t work. I look forward to a time when Christians will talk on behalf of Moslems and Moslems will talk on behalf of Christians. I make bold to say, about 90 per cent of Nigerians are not happy because members of the political class has not been able to deliver on promises they made (Kuka, 2012)

Table 1 : A CHRONOLOGICAL SKETCH OF BOKO HARAM
ATTACKS IN NIGERIA

7 September, 2010	Bauchi prison break
31 December, 2010	December 2010 Abuja attack
22 April, 2011	Boko Haram frees 14 prisoners during a jailbreak in Yola, Adamawa State
29 May, 2011	May 2011 northern Nigeria bombings
16 June, 2011	The group claims responsibility for the 2011 Abuja police headquarters bombing
26 June, 2011	Bombing attack on a beer garden in Maiduguri
10 July 2011	Bombing at the All Christian Fellowship Church in

11 July, 2011	Suleja, Niger State The University of Maiduguri temporary closes down its campus citing security concern
12 August, 2011	Prominent Muslim Cleric Liman Bana is shot dead by Boko Haram
26 August, 2011	2011 Abuja bombing
4 November, 2011	2011 Damaturu attacks
25 December, 2011	December 2011 Nigeria bombings
5–6 January, 2012	January 2012 Nigeria attacks
20 January, 2012	January 2012 Kano bombings
28 January, 2012	Nigerian army says it killed 11 Boko Haram insurgents
8 February, 2012	Boko Haram claims responsibility for a suicide bombing at the army headquarters in Kaduna.
16 February, 2012	Another prison break staged in central Nigeria; 119 prisoners are released, one warder killed.
8 March, 2012	During a British hostage rescue attempt to free Italian engineer Franco Lamolinara and Briton Christopher McManus, abducted in 2011 by a splinter group Boko Haram, both hostages were killed.
31 May, 2012	During a Joint Task Force raid on a Boko Haram den, it was reported that 5 sect members and a German hostage were killed.
3 June, 2012	15 church-goers were killed and several injured in a church bombing in Bauchi state. Boko Haram claimed responsibility through spokesperson Abu Qaqa.

17 June, 2012	Suicide bombers struck three churches in Kaduna State. At least 50 people were killed.
17 June, 2012	130 bodies were found in Plateau State. It was presumed they were killed by Boko Haram members.
3 October 2012	Around 46 students were massacred in the town of <i>Mubi in Nigeria</i> during a night-time raid.

Table 1 shows a chronological sketch of the violent attacks of the sect on Nigeria and her citizens.

As shown in the table, the first explosion on Sunday 25 December, 2011 struck St. Theresa Catholic Church in Madalla, a town in Niger state close to the capital. Rescue workers who swung into action recovered at least 25 bodies from the church and officials continued to tally those wounded in various hospitals, said Slaku Luguard, a coordinator with Nigeria's National Emergency Management Agency. The local police commissioner in Damaturu capital of Yobe State said two explosions struck Damaturu, including a suicide car bombing. The officer said that the blast happened around noon, targeting the headquarters of Nigeria's secret police in the area.



Figure 2: A church compound was one of the targets in Damaturu in Yobe state

The leader of the group Abubakar Shekau in a 15-minute video posted on YouTube defended the actions of his group against Christians saying it was a revenge for previous attacks on Muslims. He also said his group would not be covered or defeated by the security forces. The attacks unleashed on Nigeria by this group have raised global concerns, with a US Congressional report – released in November 2011 – warning that Boko Haram was an “emerging threat” to the US and its interests. The report said Boko Haram may be forging ties with al-Qaeda-linked groups in Africa, but the group denied this. Some Nigerians also believe that the level of sophistication involved in the activities of the perpetrators of the bombings, showed it is easily that some oblique forces are behind the violence in the North and not Boko Haram alone as widely believed.

Analysts say northern Nigeria has a history of spawning groups similar to Boko Haram. It is however believed that the threat and perfidy of this group will continue as long as the state has no solution to Nigeria’s chronic and excruciating poverty, and the educational system that gains the support of local Muslims.



Figure 3: Some believe opening the door to talks is the only way to stop the attacks BOKO

Nigeria's President Goodluck Jonathan challenged the Islamist militant group Boko Haram to come forward and state their demands as a basis for dialogue. His remarks came nearly a week after the group attacked police stations in the northern city of Kano, killing 185 people. Thousands of people have lost their lives over a path that was taken by the group and then the strategy that was adopted by the government that has up till now not yielded positive result. In the case of the Niger Delta militancy where armed groups in the south were fighting for a greater share of the regions oil wealth, dialogue was used and the problem was addressed. But Boko Haram has no clear cut focus and none has been made known or communicated to Nigerians by the group, even though some still believe that this is not true.

The group according to Sheu Sanni of Nigeria's Civil Rights Congress was not a violent organization before 2009; it was just a sect like any other sects in northern Nigeria dreaming of a country that is under the Sharia law and also under the rule of Islam. Its philosophy, ideas and views are rooted in the beliefs of Sheikh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah from Turkey who died in 1328. His views and ideas are about an Islamic society, about Sunni viewpoint the Hanbali School of Islamic, jurisprudence. There is nothing wrong if you campaign or preach peacefully as long as you don't go beyond to the point taking up arms and killing innocent people and also bomb targets. Sanni said, Boko Haram took up arms when violence was used against them in 2009 and their leaders killed by security agents.

It was seen as a turning point by the members of this group, and they picked up arms when the government of former President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua thought that the group could be crushed with the use of violence. The government under the leadership of Goodluck Jonathan equally used the same tactic of his predecessor that failed to put the group under control.

While initially targeting enemies via hit-and-run assassinations from the back of motorbikes after the 2009 riot, violence by Boko Haram now has a new sophistication and apparent planning that includes high-profile attacks with greater casualties. Boko Haram has splintered into three factions, with one wing increasingly willing to kill as it maintains contact with terror groups in North Africa and Somalia, diplomats and security sources say. Sect members are scattered throughout northern Nigeria and nearby Cameroon, Chad and Niger.

Many lives have been lost as this group wants to make the entire Nigeria ungovernable by launching a total 'jihad' on the Nigerian state. June 17, 2011 was a terrible date in Nigeria history as she witnessed the first suicide bombing attack at Louis Edet House – Nigeria Police Headquarters at Abuja, probably targeting Hafiz Ringim – the Inspector General of Police. Boko Haram had vowed not to stop until the whole Nigeria is Islamized, what a tall order! Perhaps this would have been possible if the country were not a monolithic, multi-religious and secular.

The sect's blossoming was groomed and nurtured by the prevailing economic dislocation in the Nigerian society, the advent of party politics, the associated desperation of politicians for political power indeed created jobs for the readymade jobless youths who are without any reasonable source of livelihood and income willing and ready to be manipulated with a token for political and economic gains of their principals [Adesoji, 2010; Iduh, 2011].

Insecurity in Nigeria: An Overview

While this paper acknowledges the different programs initiated by past governments to revamp the image of the police and other security operatives in Nigeria, the security system is still largely problematic. The security crisis in Nigeria presently does not give a good image to the international community. Nigeria wants foreign investors but lacks strong and strategic security in place for human protection. Nigeria is at present sinking into a state of terror and fear, where everyone is afraid of its own shadow, the lapses in security calls for concern [Iduh, 2011].

Nigeria is losing more lives and prominent citizens even when the nation is not confronted with external aggression. Over the years, Nigeria has witnessed series of assassinations. On the 23rd of December, 2001, the former Attorney General of the Federation Chief Bola Ige was assassinated in his residence; the killers are still at large, yet to face justice. On March 5, 2003, Marshall Harry - the national Vice Chairman for the South-South Zone one of the opposition party; All Nigeria Peoples Party [ANPP] was murdered at home [Human Rights Watch, 2003], his house was a walking distance from the police headquarters, when the police were alerted at a nearby checkpoint that night, they said they had no fuel in their vehicle, so they could do nothing. Barnabas Igwe, the Chairman of the Nigerian Bar Association Onitsha Branch and his wife were assassinated on September 1, 2002, Prophet Eddie Okeke was murdered in November 2000, Chief

Ezeodumegwu G. Okonkwo a chairman of a local government was killed in February 2001, in 2006 Engr. Funsho Williams and Dr. Ayodeji Daramola suffered similar fate [Patrick, 2006]. The two men were on the platform of the ruling People's Democratic Party [PDP] and governorship aspirants of Lagos and Ekiti State, respectively.

Others who had met their untimely death in the past were Kudirat Abiola, the wife of late Chief MKO Abiola, the presumed winner of the annulled June 12, 1993 Presidential Election, Chief Alfred Rewane, Mr. Godwin Agbroko the Chairman, Editorial Board of the THISDAY Newspapers among others. It is disheartening and painful, if security of lives and properties cannot be guaranteed in a democratic state. If gunmen could kill a meaningful Nigerian like the Minister of Justice and one time state Executive Governor [1979 – 1983] under the police protection and escorts, Nigerians may not be safe. So far, the puzzles behind these murders are yet to be solved, whether they are politically motivated or otherwise are left to the state to answer, but it is certain that Nigeria like many other African states see political office as the biggest business; therefore violence becomes an ideological apparatus and struggle to achieve political power. History they say repeats itself, resolving high profile assassinations by the Nigerian Police is quite unimpressive because the Police lacks the will and competence to investigate crime, apprehend culprits, and ensure justice which eventually erodes the public confidence for safety.

Nigeria Unity under Threat

Thousands of Nigerians flee to their home regions following the spate of northern Islamist killings of southerners. It was just a replica of what happened in the 60s before the civil war experienced by the country which shook Nigeria unity to its root. Many decided to move because of the dastard killings of southerners particularly in Yola where masked gunmen shot dead 11 people in an attack on a church. As if this was not enough on the same day unknown gunmen killed 12 people, mostly southerners, in Mubi town also in Adamawa state. In Gombe town some unidentified men opened fire on a group of Christian's worshipers during an outside retreat killing so many of them who were mostly southerners. The southerners had no other option than to think of movement back to their various home states in the south. The threat became very loud from the warning from the Boko Haram Islamist sect which says it carried those attacks out for southerners to leave the north.

Despite this threat there has not been a mass exodus from the north as some people were portrayed to be by the Nigeria media. But people are restless and circumspect of their stay up north the threat of Boko Haram is one of those terrible issues that constantly shake the confidence of people in the state called Nigeria.

Nigeria state is roughly equally divided between a mainly Muslim north and a largely Christian and animist south where there has been a long history of tension between the two regions, as well as the country's many ethnic groups. A scholar from the north believed that the current situation represents a very dangerous trend and has a similarity with the opening phase of 1967 civil war. However he says, the key difference is that Boko Haram is a fringe group fighting both the government and mainstream Muslims in northern Nigeria.

The major problem is that there is a huge deficit in the understanding of the situation, particularly by the government, leading to its inability to address the problem. To some the situation for an average northerner is a double jeopardy. He is targeted in the north by the Boko Haram that does not believe in his version of Islam, and in the south by the people who felt that the attack by the Boko Haram is an attack by the Muslims north.

Boko Haram's Intransigence

In spite of the assurance by the former defense Minister Bello Halliru Mohammed that his men were once again on top of security situation in the north which had seen a spate of attacks by the militant Islamists group Boko Haram and that people had nothing to fear, people were not reassured of their security as there were bomb and gun attacks in the north - eastern Yobe and Borno states and the earlier explosions in the capital, Abuja, have shown, Boko Haram – once a small religious sect - is now a flexible dynamic organization capable of changing tactics and targets. Despite efforts to pacify them, members of the group have remained intransigent, ultimately due to the fallout of frustration with corruption and the attendant social malaise of poverty and unemployment ravaging the whole nation and particularly the northern half of the country.

The Federal Government declared policy of carrot and stick is supposed to reach out to the militants, while improving security. Without doubt the policy has not actually met its target instead it has further muddied the water, to the

extent that many now believe that heavy military presence in Borno state and the neighbouring states is the biggest single factor hindering any chance of a peaceful resolution of the impasse. A political scientist from University of Abuja believes Nigeria is still feeling the consequences of the government's attempt to destroy the group in 2009.

The destruction of Boko Haram headquarters and the killing of its founder in Borno State capital and the death of hundreds of members of the group resulted in to attacking the government institutions and targets in retaliation. The guerrilla tactics employed by the group has made it difficult for the government who has not changed its tactics to control. This intransigence of Boko Haram in Nigeria may have a lot to do with lack of foresight and insensitivity of the government. For the Nigerian security apparatus, Boko Haram's guerilla tactics have represented a new challenge which they are yet to tackle.

Initially, Boko Haram's capabilities were limited to improvised explosives, but the last few months have changed that into something highly technical and sophisticated. Suicide bomb blasts on the police headquarters in June 2011 and UN headquarters in Abuja and now the coordinated wave of attacks in Borno, Yobe, Kano and Kaduna where hundreds of people lost their lives have given further credence to those who believe they are now sharing expertise with other militant groups.

Opposition parties and in particular those in the north, such as the Congress for Progressive Change [CPC], was of the view that the government has underestimated the amount of support Boko Haram has among the population. The national secretary to CPC said many people in the north felt marginalized from wealth and opportunity. He was of the view that if people feel they are being denied and shortchanged or an injustice is being meted out to them then there is likelihood that they will take the law into their own hands and help themselves [Ajayi, 2007].

A northerner who is from near Damaturu, where an attack by Boko Haram took place, raised the case of the former militants from the oil-rich Niger Delta who were given generous financial packages from the government to keep them out of trouble. He said, "Why didn't the president crush the Niger Deltans? That's a question a lot of people in this part of the country are asking," he said. "Instead they are being rewarded for the economic

destruction they brought Nigeria. Why can't the same be true for Boko Haram?"

As plausible as the reasoning might sound one is bound to ask again and again what is the grouse of the Boko Haram? Are they as clear cut as that of the Niger Delta Militants? If they are, must they follow Niger Delta Militants pattern before their feelings are met? How is one sure that the insurgence of the Boko Haram is not as a result of the Northern sudden loss of power at the centre to which they have clung unto so tenaciously at the expense of other Nigerians. If others kept silent for the length of time they were in power, while are they so exasperated and disturbed at the presence of a southern leader? Is Nigeria one? Why is it that some people have easy access to the State House and others are fought and thought of as not capable of ruling? Are some group actually born to rule while others become ruled and mere onlookers? Without doubt there are more to the issues of Boko Haram insurgence than can be understood by ordinary person on the street. From independence there have been internal strives among the constituents major ethnic groups on one hand and the south – north dichotomy on the other. Until the issue of ethnicity and religious bigotry is given solution in Nigeria we may find it difficult to unite and co-exist as a nation most especially now that people are more aware of their freedom and liberty.

Governor Isa Yuguda of Bauchi State in Lagos on the 18th of February, 2012 painted the gloomy picture that awaits the country should the Islamic sect, Boko Haram succeeds with its ongoing insurgency. He said,

a free-for-all internecine conflict in Nigeria will take on the character of several different battles - an inter-regional, intra-regional religious war between Muslims and Christians; an ethnic war fuelled by pent-up tribal grievances within a single state or across the boundaries of neighbouring states; an indigene-settler, farmer-nomad war of attrition and an all-out war between the haves and the have-nots across the length and breadth of the country. It will be a war without a warfront, because the whole country will be the theatre of battle and every inhabitant a reluctant warrior. It will be a general war with an unprecedented number of casualties that, in addition, will cause large-scale suffering in which several millions of

internally-displaced persons will be rendered homeless and many more refugees will be forced across Nigeria's borders into neighbouring countries.

On Boko Haram, the governor said:

As far as I am concerned, the activities of the group give its members away as animals, and our society must find a way of dealing with it. Anyone who takes up arms against the people and the state is nothing but a criminal, whether as Boko Haram, Niger Delta militants or any other group that might be fomenting violence. The Boko Haram insurgency is a product of poverty. We Muslims know that the greatest sin anyone can commit is to take another person's life. The sect's members must have been wrongly indoctrinated to kill in the name of religion [Yuguda, 2012].

Some have said that the group demands are: a strict form of Islamic law adopted in the whole of Nigeria, not just the dozen northern states already using it. The question one is bound to ask is, are this people unaware of the secular state of Nigerian nation? Must they force their religion on others? If they want a change in the secular state of the nation aren't there constitutional ways of doing this? They also want their captured members released and for Christians to leave Nigeria's mainly Muslim north. But it is not clear who they actually are, which makes them difficult to trace, quite unlike the Niger Delta, The Oodua People's Congress [OPC] or the Movement for the survival of Ogoni people [MOSOP].

A northerner who has fostered a link between the government and the sect at one time was of the view that there should be an intercession by a third country perhaps like Turkey or Qatar or Saudi Arabia to mediate between the government and Boko Haram. If that option is not taken then the next option according to him is that certain individuals in the north who have the respect of the Boko Haram should be brought in. The late leader of Boko Haram was said to be a member of the Spring Council of Sharia in Nigeria and since all this violence has started no-one from the side of the federal government has approached that body and asked them, could you mediate between us and the

Boko Haram group? Their interests have been on, the intervention of the Sultan of Sokoto, Nigeria's main Muslim cleric to intervene and meanwhile the Boko Haram has no respect for the Sultan. [Shehu Sani was speaking to the BBC's Network Africa programme].

Current Appraisal of Boko Haram Sect in Nigeria

The US House of Representatives Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence has urged the Obama Administration and U.S. intelligence community in November 2011 to focus on Boko Haram as a potential threat to United States territory. In October 2012 Human Rights Watch announced that Boko Haram may have committed crimes against humanity - an offence that can lead to prosecution by the International Criminal Court - since they began documenting these actions in 2009. [HRW, 2012]

Nigeria's former National Security Adviser, General Owoye Andrew Azazi, has been working with other African governments, European and Middle Eastern governments, and the U.S. government to build cooperation against Boko Haram. He met in 2010 with then-CIA Director Leon Panetta, and in 2011 with AFRICOM Commander General Ham, and other U.S. officials, and was in the United States when the congressional panel was preparing its report on Boko Haram. He participated in a CIA conference at about the same time. After the Christmas 2011 bombings carried out by Boko Haram, President Barack Obama's office issued a statement that confirmed that the U.S. and Nigeria were cooperating at a senior level against the terrorist group.

According to [Wikipedia] it was reported that in March 2012, Boko Haram took a strategy to simulate convoys of high-profile Nigerians to access target buildings that are secured with fortifications. Boko Haram has also reportedly attacked Christian worship centers to "trigger reprisal in all parts of the country," distracting authorities so they can unleash attacks elsewhere.

It was gathered that the group uses internet to propagate its activities and enhance its radicalization and circulation of extremist ideologies. Boko Haram is reportedly planning to greatly increase its following in many states. Talk of Naija reported that Boko Haram has been involved in a recruitment drive, and they are allegedly targeting Muslims between ages of 17 and 30, and have also been recruiting freed prisoners through prison breaks [BBC, 2009]. In February 2012, recently arrested officials revealed that "while the

organization initially relied on donations from members, its links with Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, AQIM, opened it up to more funding from groups in Saudi Arabia and the UK." They went on to say that other sources of funding included the Al Muntada Trust Fund and the Islamic World Society (AllAfrica, 2012). In the past, Nigerian officials have been criticized for being unable to trace much of the funding that Boko Haram has received. A spokesman of Boko Haram also claimed that Kano state governor Ibrahim Shekarau and Bauchi state governor Isa Yuguda had paid them monthly [Ogundipe, 2012]

Government Concession and Boko Haram Acrimony

The group has raised an issue that they wanted all their members in detention to be freed, before what happened in Kano of recent, the leader of the group issued two threats to the Federal Government: If you don't release our men who are in detention we are certainly going to act. There are two ways a responsive and responsible government would have reacted to this threat, either concede to the demands of those who issued the threats or declined and protect the people against the attacks of the violent group. Unfortunately the government went to slumber with fire at the roof top and did none of the two suggested ways. The result was the serial bombings experienced in Kano where so many people lost their lives and properties. It should be noted that the violence wasn't without warning.

There is no society devoid of some kind of violence and no country is immune to violence by a group that is determined to carry it out and sitting down to reflect on this with groups that have taken up arms is not a sign of weakness. It has happened in Britain, where the government sat down with the IRA and today the problem is solved. In Nigeria the government sat with the Niger Delta militants and the problem was solved.

Boko Haram members are also Nigerians and sitting down to talk with them is not an admission of failure by government or success by Boko Haram. It should not be thought that there would be a smooth ride to round table talk between the government and the group on their invitation. After some times of mistrust and suspicion and violence, there must be an intercessor that will guarantee both sides that whatever is agreed upon would be executed.

Sheikh Imam Abubakar Shekau is the present spiritual leader of the sect and a parliament they called the Shura, they also have cells spread across Nigeria,

Niger and beyond. Members of the group do not take action without being instructed to do so. The command structure is respected; instructions come from the council and the spiritual head. These instructions are carried out diligently and religiously. It therefore means that such a group can be dialogued with, once there is a seize fire an agreement with the leadership it might therefore be upheld and never jettisoned because of the organizational structure.

Conclusion

The Federal Government must come up with policies to deal with insurgent ethnic or sectional violent groups in the country without which the unity of the country will be in jeopardy. The coming up of Boko Haram might not be unconnected with the political power that shifted to the south in the last decade. Their vicious attacks on government institutions and installations leave one to wonder if the plan of these northern elements is not to make the nation ungovernable because they or their kin's are not leading the nation. It is also not unlikely that this might be the strategy and preparation of the north to wrest power back to the north in 2015.

Nigeria government should reinforce and reorganize the security agencies where necessary especially in the area of intelligence gathering with required trainings both home and abroad. It is bizarre that intelligence gathering in Nigeria is still problematic, while militants and criminals have freedom to operate with little or no resistance. It is very appalling and illogical to realize that, the recent happenings have proved that the Boko Haram has more intelligence than the government security agencies as they operate and strike at will wherever they choose with relative ease.

The government also needs to frontally address the systemic problems that inhibit progress in Nigeria, which include ending corruption, creating a more inclusive government, alleviating poverty and disease, extending access to education, and creating a transportation and communication infrastructures that would lead to economic growth.

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