

Politicization of Insecurity and Efficient Management of the Nigerian Correctional Service, 2015-2022

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ABSTRACT: *In recent times, Nigeria has been plagued by escalating insecurity, which has culminated in daily cases of kidnapping, banditry, robbery, and indiscriminate killings in nearly all six geopolitical zones. The recurring decimal of these criminal operations has made possible the further extension of attacks to the Country's correctional centers (Prisons), Thereby, hindering the ability and capacity of the Nigerian correctional service to live up to high public expectations of efficient management of correctional facilities across the country. However, despite the high number of attacks, the government appears powerless to stop this threat due to their inability to convict the perpetrators of these crimes. These terrorists on their own have grown more daring as can be observed with the rising cases of prison breaks across the nation as they aim to free their already captured colleagues without fear of being confronted by the security agencies. This paper therefore examined the effect of politicizing insecurity by political actors and its implication on the proper and efficient management of the Nigerian correctional service within the period under review. Using the instrumental theory of terrorism, the paper investigated critically the underlying issues preventing the Nigerian government from successfully apprehending runaway terrorists. Data for the study was collected through documentary sources and analyzed appropriately using the qualitative-descriptive method of data analysis. The study established that there appears to be a convoluted relationship between certain segments of the government or its security personnel and the terrorists wreaking havoc on the Nigerian state and this has had adverse effects on the efficient management of the Nation's correctional service. As a result, the research urges a thorough investigation of Nigeria's terrorist sponsors and a complete revamp of the nation's security system.*

KEYWORDS: terrorism, insecurity, correctional service, prison breaks, efficiency

INTRODUCTION

Growing concerns about insecurity in Nigeria continue to plague the nation from north to south, transforming it from a single security threat posed by the terrorist organization Boko Haram into a hybridized and multifaceted threat. The nation is currently grappling with a security threat that seems to be out of control from almost every region of the nation and the challenge of insecurity has assumed gargantuan proportions, forcing the nation's political and economic leaders, and indeed the nation as a whole, to mourn the loss of their loved ones, investment and lack of security in most parts of the country (Onifade et al., 2013). The country is on the brink of collapse due to violent crimes such as banditry, kidnappings, farmer-herdsman conflicts, separatist agitation and increased activity by terrorist groups such as Boko Haram and ISWAP. It is unable to protect its population from harm (Rotberg, 2021). Every year, large numbers of Nigerians, including children are captured by bandits and kidnappers especially in the Northeast and Northwest. In addition to the Boko Haram attacks, which have been the de facto biggest security problem in Nigeria, kidnapping and bandit incidents have become worse and more flagrant, ranging from kidnapping and attacking of both police and military personnel and installations, to attacking railways. The northwestern states of Kaduna, Zamfara, Kebbi, Sokoto and Katsina, once havens of tranquility, are currently under a brutal siege by terrorists and an alarming number of kidnappers.

Pastoralist-farmer conflict has also increased because pastoralists now believe they are above the law. With the federal government paying little to no attention to the ongoing conflict and attacks on farmers and their crops, different regions have begun rallying security forces in a manner reminiscent of a revolution. Attacks by herdsmen are causing suffering in the north-central states, as the Niger state governor Sani Bello has acknowledged that terrorists are currently occupying large parts of the state, with Shiroro LGA being the worst hit. Thousands of people continue to be killed and displaced by itinerant herders, despite anti-open-grazing laws in several southern states. Parts of the Northeast are still ruled by Boko Haram and its deadlier offshoot, the Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP). They spread northwest and south, forming alliances with bandits and shepherds. They appear to have developed a presence in the South West, as evidenced by the attack on St Francis' Catholic Church in Owo. Criminals in the Southeast use terrorism to get their way through illegal sit-downs, murder and vandalism of public property. They do this by benefiting from the self-determination movement. Kidnapping and banditry are some crimes that are becoming more common in the area.

In addition, these terrorist organizations have expanded their violent campaign into the Nigerian Correctional Centers, increasing prison breakouts across the country and releasing their imprisoned members. The most notable of these attacks was that at the Kuje Correctional Center, which resulted in the release of over 800 inmates who were ISWAP, Boko Haram and Ansaru terrorists without any effort from the security services to stop the attackers, allowing arrested dangerous criminals to escape and possibly could carry out their attack on the Nigerian state. While the government always responds to these jailbreaks with shock, condemnation, and the usual assurances that those responsible will be brought to justice, none of the perpetrators of these attacks

have been convicted. As the Nigerian government fails to arrest fugitive terrorists, this article takes a critical look at the fundamental Security problems bedeviling the Nigerian state and its impact on the effective management and administration of the county's correctional centers.

Conceptual Clarification

Politicization

Simply put, politicization in the context of this paper means to politicize. To politicize is to make something or an event political. When something is political, it becomes interest driven and is usually beclouded by various sentiments in order to meet the interest of certain actors in the system. This is because politics is interest based. The politicization of insecurity therefore has to do with either promoting insecurity to meet the interest of certain actors in a political system or giving a sentimental political tone and character to the manner which security challenges are tackled.

Insecurity

Insecurity refers both to the subjective feeling of fear and to the concrete lack of protection. This definition from the Collins Concise Dictionary Plus illustrates the dual meaning of the word uncertain, from which the term uncertainty is derived: (1) anxious, not confident or certain; (2) not adequately protected. The definition used in this article combines these two aspects of insecurity: the state of fear or anxiety resulting from a concrete or perceived lack of protection (Beland, 2007). It can also be described as a feeling of fear that one is exposed to danger. It can be described as a state of internal instability resulting from external volatility.

Therefore, politicizing insecurity here means capitalizing on uncertainty and government response, and the use of Insecurity by the state and non state actors to advance their political interests. Therefore, this study therefore tries to unearth the different ways in which insecurity is politicized. The analysis shall be drawn from the following incidents that have continued to shape the insecurity in Nigeria and the government response.

METHODOLOGY

In connection with the study, data was collected from documentary sources such as books, official documents, journals, newspaper articles, conference proceedings and others. The qualitative method is the most desirable since this work is essentially based on non-statistically sound and numerically immeasurable data that can nonetheless be examined empirically. In other words, the goal of this methodology is not to establish a numerical or statistical relationship between variables. Because although qualitative data can cover some case numbers, the aim is to establish a reference and a validity within the social or concrete reality. Qualitative-descriptive method of data analysis was adopted. The research utility of this technique cannot be overstated. The technique is typically applied to obtain detailed information, clarify concepts/variables to facilitate instrument designs, and when conducting pilot studies (Biereenu-Nnabugwu 2006).

Theoretical Framework of Analysis

Theoretically, the Instrumental theory of terrorism was used. The instrumental theory of terrorism assumes that the act of terrorism is a conscious decision by a political actor (Crenshaw 1988). According to Crenshaw (1995), this approach assumes that violence is intended for a terrorist organization. Therefore, violence is not the goal, as some other approaches like the psychological theories suggest. Terrorists are not maniacs who hurt for the sake of hurting. Rather, terrorism is a tool for these actors to achieve political goals. For example, governments and other actors are perceived as rivals whose actions are strategic, and a terrorist organization aims to change the decisions, actions, and policies of other actors through the use of force. According to the general definition, terrorism is a deliberate act aimed at changing government policy; it is not typical warfare in which parties attempt to annihilate each other militarily.

The Instrumental Theory of Terrorism is therefore appropriate for this study as it explains the destructive nature of kidnapping, banditry and jail attacks and the motives of the perpetrators. It also explains why bandits attack farmers, villages, kidnap travelers and other socio-economic nerves of government such as schools or the tourism industry, and why politicians and interest groups use them to advance their interests. The instrumental nature of attacks assumes that if terrorists can cause economic harm to the government or citizens, this is a surefire way to force the government to change policies toward the organization's goals.

Nigerian State and the problem of Insecurity

The greatest challenge facing the Nigerian state is insecurity, as threats from insurgency, terrorism, secessionist, banditry, farmer – herder conflict and kidnapping has taken a heightened and complicated dimension thereby deteriorating the already precarious security situation in Nigeria. Violent conflicts have emerged, requiring urgent and holistic state responses. These conflicts which include insurgency, secessionists, kidnapping, banditry has made rural communities in Nigeria to be at the mercy of gunmen and in addition to that, the propensity of violence in urban areas has spiked with peace and safety increasingly transitory. The reoccurring incidents of violence have taken a complicated nature involving an intersection of interests and motives and differing demographics have had a fair share of the violence trajectory.

Although the Nigerian government recently declared that Boko Haram had been destroyed, the group is still active in the North East (Azad et al, 2018). The group declared its allegiance to ISIS in March 2015, and as a result, it was included into a transnational terrorist group known as ISIS-West Africa Province (ISWAP). As a result, because Boko Haram could not be defeated in the North-East, conflicts between farmers and Fulani militias in the North West and North Central have evolved into more complex conflicts because these bandit-like Fulani militias operate primarily through kidnapping, attacks on villages, destruction of farmland, and the abduction of women. Surprisingly, this fighting has killed more civilians than the conflict in the northeast. Rich from illicit activity like kidnapping for ransom, well-armed bandits are frightening towns, wearing down overworked security forces, and taking de facto control over large areas of the region. The majority of the militants, who are mostly Fulani herders, state that they are engaged in this conflict

to protest the government's treatment of pastoralist communities (McGregor, 2017). But in a crime-terror nexus, this has evolved and overlapped with jihadists.

Between 2015 and March 2022, there were 17,285 civilian deaths as a result of insecurity, according to the Nigerian Security Tracker. Boko Haram was responsible for 8,230 fatalities during this time. Children, women, and young people are among the most at-risk groups and frequent targets of kidnapping. The Boko Haram insurgents and their affiliated splinter groups frequently turn to livestock rustling, small-scale raids, and kidnapping to raise money for their activities (Olaniyan, 2017). In this aspect kidnapping for ransom has been the most daring and effective method. Bandit gangs from northwest Nigeria have collaborated with or been hired by militants to commit a number of individual, collective, or mass kidnappings around the country.

Kidnapping in Nigeria between 2015 - 2021

Geopolitical Zone	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
North - Central	25	42	46	51	228	613	942
North-East	515	38	172	313	180	392	211
North-West	6	68	40	383	597	1449	1405
South-East	16	8	9	17	25	86	77
South-South	68	134	149	161	271	201	140
South-West	27	57	68	61	85	119	169
Total	658	347	484	987	1386	2860	2944

Sources: Adebajo (2021) <https://humanglemedia.com/data-more-nigerians-kidnapped-in-first-6-months-of-2021-than-all-of-2020/>

The nation devotes a significant amount of money to the fight against insecurity, but the issue doesn't seem to be getting any better. The inability of the Nigerian security forces to effectively respond to all attacks shows that they lack the ability to adequately defend the nation because their responses have tended to be reactive rather than proactive. The government's attempts to address these security issues have also been utterly ineffective. The much-hyped replacement of Nigeria's top military leaders has failed to take the initiative back and alter the military's efficacy. Despite all of these obstacles, the administration appears to be focusing elsewhere. The proliferation of weapons, the lingering effects of previous conflicts, and growing material deprivation are just a few of the causes of insecurity. However, instead of addressing these issues head-on, the government is dodging its responsibility by urging its people to rise to the occasion and defend themselves.

Too frequently, security personnel and political figures have downplayed the severity of the violence that the nation is currently experiencing, sometimes by disseminating manifestly incorrect information to the populace or by downplaying their own security responsibilities. The government's almost paternalistic promises that it is doing what is best to secure the country are undermined by this as well as glaring security gaps within Nigeria's strong security agencies. However, recent security failings also include a motorcade attempt on President Muhammadu

Buhari the same day as the jailbreak on July 5th at the Kuje Correctional centre Abuja, a church slaughter that claimed 50 lives and a gunmen attack on a train from Abuja to Kaduna in March that killed at least seven passengers are. As a result, the different techniques used to address the problem have been ineffectual due to the inadequate security infrastructure and equipment. Security personnel's apparent incapacity to control the situation has given more militants, bandits, and kidnapper's motivation to go about attacking and releasing their members detained in Nigerian detention facilities across the nation.

INCIDENCES OF KIDNAPPING IN NIGERIA

	Date	Incident
2022	28 th March	Gunmen attacked a Kaduna bound passenger train, killing eight people and injuring several others. 62 passengers were abducted
2021	30 th May	School kidnapping in Tgina. Abducted were 136 students from Tgina, Niger State's Salihu Tanko Islamic School.
	17 th April	Abduction at Greenfield University 20 students from Kaduna's Greenfield University were abducted, and 5 of them were killed.
	11 th March	Kidnapping at the Kaduna Forestry School 29 students from Kaduna's Federal College of Forestry Mechanization were abducted.
	26 th February	January raid In the town of Jangebe in northwest Zamfara, an armed gang abducts 317 girls from the Government Girls Science Secondary School.
	18 th February	Seizing of a bus In Kundu village in Niger state, gunmen detain 53 people, including 20 women and 9 children, on a state-owned bus.
	17 th February	Kagara abductions One student was killed and numerous others were taken hostage during an armed gunmen of the Government Science College in Kagara, a district in the north central Niger region. Among those taken hostage were 24 schoolboys, three teachers, and eight families of school employees.
	15 th February	Bus raid in Niger state At least 21 passengers are kidnapped after bandits stopped a bus in north-central Niger. At least ten individuals are freed in February.
	23 th January	Pirates attack a cargo ship off the coast of Nigeria, killing one Azerbaijani and taking 15 Turkish sailors hostage.
	25 th January	"Kogi raid" 14 persons are taken hostage when gunmen attack Kogi state in central Nigeria. In Abuja city, armed gunmen abduct 11 persons, eight of whom are orphans.
	27 th January	kidnapping of wedding guests In northeastern Taraba state, armed gunmen abduct 25 persons returning from a wedding.
	28 th January	Attack on a farming village by bandits in the Shiroro region of north-central Niger state results in the abduction of at least 50 persons.
2020	19 th December	Kidnappings in Katsina, more than 80 Islamic school students are kidnapped by gunmen in northwest Katsina state.
	11 th December	Katsina school shooting 344 students are taken hostage when more than 100 motorcycle-riding gunmen raid the all-boys Government Science Secondary School in Kankara, Katsina state. Armed criminals are initially held responsible for the attack before Boko Haram, which is based hundreds of kilometers away, takes ownership.

2018	19 th February	kidnapping of schoolgirls in Dapchi On February 19, 2018, 111 girls from a boarding school in the Dapchi town in the northern Yobe state are abducted by the Islamic State West Africa Province, a Boko Haram affiliate. After talks with the authorities on March 21, militants released more than 100 females. Five of the captive died in captivity
2014	14 th April	Girls taken from Chibok On April 14, gunmen from Boko Haram abduct 276 girls from the Government Girls Secondary School in the outlying town of Chibok in Borno state's northeast. The girls range in age from 12 to 17. The females are dragged out of their dorms and loaded into trucks before being taken into the bush. About 57 students pull out a daring escape.

Source; Okoli (2021) updated by authors

The Politics of Insecurity and Management of Correctional facilities in Nigeria

The security strategy of the President Buhari government is contradictory. As the government slacked off in the fight against Boko Haram, which was technically declared defeated. But on the one hand, the nation grapples with a multifaceted security issue that highlights emerging security threats. As a result, the government's achievements have been overshadowed by persistently high crime rates, particularly crimes that threaten the nation's physical security, such as kidnappings, separatists, riots, banditry, etc. The explanation for this is fairly simple: while the rest of the world sees the deteriorating security situation in Nigeria, the Nigerian government has focused all of its political will and energy on blaming the previous government for the country's shortcomings. The rest of the security forces, however, have changed little beyond the advances made with the larger budgets of the military and other security agencies. The fight against banditry, terrorism and insurgency is another example where things haven't changed. Because of this, insecurity is still an important issue for Nigeria and has repercussions as Nigeria's political landscape is often fraught with uncertainty due to the country's high rate of crimes. The conscious creation and use of insecurity for political ends and the conscious exploitation of instability for political ends are current manifestations of the politics of insecurity. In Nigeria, this has taken the form of conscious efforts by both incumbents and opposition politicians to rewrite the history of security incidents in their favour. The APC government and the main opposition, the PDP, have been back and forth in the game of blame as the opposition PDP has decided to take a moral high ground and get lyrical about how negligent the government is while forgetting that they did the same thing before the 2015 general election (Thisday live, July 7th 2022).

Key figures in charge of certain national security apparatuses have remained in office despite the ongoing dynamics of insecurity in Nigeria and the apparent failure of state structures to deal with high-profile attacks such as those involved in prison breaks and kidnappings. Many contend that the presidential selection for the Security and Defense department's positions is an obvious example of political expediency and not an attempt to select competent officials who could get the job done. As a result, despite calls for the expulsion of high-ranking figures from the ministries concerned, some prominent figures have retained their jobs. Faced with the government's inadequate responses to address insecurity, some Nigerians attribute the ongoing insecurity to conspiracy theories such as the government-sponsored Islamisation plan and the Fulanisation of Nigeria pushed by Benue State Governor Samuel Ortom in light of the federal governments'

inadequate responses to the problem in his state. This skepticism is fueled by their perception of the government's response to atrocities committed by bandits and herdsmen, as well as allegations of collusion with the army. Because bandits seem to have the leverage of choosing which community to attack, when to attack, how to attack, and who to attack, the President's reluctance to address the issues surrounding this conflict has been attributed to the fact that he has compassion for these bandits as they are his tribesmen (Akinteriwa, 2022). The government's efforts to minimize insecurity were also tainted with suspicion and politicization because the majority of critics thought that President Buhari and his Fulani and Muslim cronies in the north were responsible for the Ruga and cattle colony program. Critics and majorly politicians have alleged that the Ruga plot is an attempt by the government to confiscate ancestral lands of Middle Belt and Southern peoples to settle and acclimatize their long-distance Fulani nomads and kin in Nigeria (Oluka , 2019). Support for the idea by the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria increased suspicions of a Ruga Settlement (MACBAN) as the organization often justifies or explains why the herders kill people by saying that their members cannot comply with the grazing ban imposed on them by the governors of the north, central and southern Nigeria and the group in these justifications is neither arrested nor censored by the government (Omeire, 2018). After Fulani herdsmen killed 73 people and set fire to scores of homes in Benue state in January 2018, MACBAN responded by claiming that the Benue state government's anti-grazing law was responsible for the massacre. The association called for the law to be repealed in north-central and the southern states of Nigeria, and the president publicly accused disaffected politicians of being at the root of the unrest in the country after allegedly suffering political setbacks. However, the President has been slow to identify and prosecute those who support terrorism.

The politicization of insecurity is also evident in security personnel's lax response to some reported cases of herder killings, as the police and military appear to have taken no proactive action to bring the killings to an end, lending credence to claims that the military support the herders. The military seem helpless, apathetic, or overwhelmed when the killers carry out their heinous deeds and flee. The armed herders are able to destroy property and kill people for several hours without resistance or reaction from the state security apparatus, even though a state security presence was present at the locations attacked. The inaction of the security agencies became a major political issue of discussions and controversy over the tenure of the service chiefs, with the opposition clamoring for the service chiefs to be fired in 2021. In addition, the President's directive to security agencies to control the violence appears to have been watered down, with nothing being done about it.

The resurgence of informal methods of protecting life and property has been idly promoted by State governments. States and regions such as the Southeast and Southwest have in one way or another turned to the state security apparatus as a measure of self-defense. These organizations go by a variety of names, including Ebube Agu, formed in response to the creation of the Eastern Security Network by a non-state actor (IPOB), Amotekun in the South West, and more recently Community Volunteer Guards in Benue State. It therefore appears that the proliferation of security forces in the Federation is not unrelated to the politicization of insecurity, reinforcing the argument of marginalization in Nigeria as one of the manifestations of the dominance of certain interest

groups and individuals over the country's political and economic affairs. These organizations have been successful in putting their interests above those of the vast majority of citizens.

However, the inaction to address this problem has spread to Nigeria's Correctional Centre, where persistent jailbreaks have led to increasing numbers of criminals illegally re-entering society, worsening Nigeria's already precarious security situation. Although nationwide, the Nigerian Correctional Center has been plagued by poor infrastructure, cell overcrowding, lengthy trail of suspects, understaffing, inadequate staff pay and equipment, bribery and corruption, and other institutional problems in the correctional facilities. These follow massive annual budgets for the agency in billions of naira, but despite significant government funding, many correctional facilities in Nigeria still have deteriorating infrastructure.

According to Akpede (2019), the Nigerian federal government has allocated over 613.5 billion naira to the Nigerian Correctional Service, formerly known as the Nigerian Prison Service. Since 2016, capital committed to building and deploying prisons has increased with strong spikes. The 2016 budget included N2.64 billion for prison provision and construction and N3.27 billion for rehabilitation and maintenance, a capital change of 2150.9% from 2015 and the largest amount ever provided for the construction of prisons. While in 2017 a total of N7.07 billion was allocated for prison development, N153.79 million was approved for prison renovation and maintenance, a change of 3.3%. In addition, the budget for prison construction and deployment grew by almost N100 million in 2018 to a total of N8.07 billion, with N3.42 billion earmarked for prison renovation and maintenance (over 51.9 percent change in capital allocation). 2019 was no exception, with N45,038,559 for the provision and construction of prisons and N224,254,971 for capital improvements and repairs to prisons (Akpede, 2019). However, there are not enough prison vans to bring prisoners to court for trial, and Nigerian prison cells are notorious for being overcrowded.

Despite these huge budget allocations, Nigerian Correctional Facilities face many challenges for the Nigerian Correctional Service. About 7,000 prisoners have escaped from the Nigerian correctional facility since 2010. According to Egbujule (2021), prison breakouts in Nigeria have continued to occur and have intensified with more than 5,000 prisoners escaping the facility in 2021 alone. The majority of these prison breaks have been linked to armed organizations operating across the country attacking prisons to free their gang members, who were either awaiting trial or serving separate sentences in the affected prisons, the terrorist group Boko Haram and other criminal gangs successfully carried out at least 15 organized attacks on key prison facilities in various geopolitical zones of the country (Ise-Oluwa, 2022). The fact that these armed groups operate without being confronted by security services suggests that terrorist sympathizers appear to have been given access to all aspects of Nigeria's security system, including its movements and information.

The inaction Correctional centre authorities also make matters worse as the prisons' huge budget allocations would have been used to effectively improve security in the prisons, yet the prison

authorities failed to improve the security apparatus in these facilities, thereby, leaving correctional centres at the mercy of armed gangs. This notion was also emphasized by House Minority Leader Mr. Ndudi Elumelu when he called for an investigation into Nigeria's Correctional Centre. In his argument on the floor of the house was that;

Despite the Act and increase in budgetary allocations to the Nigerian Correctional service, the tempo and quality of service had remained the same. He added that the working condition of the staff and inmates welfare had deteriorated notwithstanding the over 165 billion naira budget allocations to the service. The arms squad unit of the service still parades obsolete and substandard weapons despite over 1 billion naira budget provision for prison biometrics, arms and ammunitions in the 2020 to 2021 capital budget (Premium Times, February 16, 2022)

His position highlights the fact that incidents of corrupt practices in correctional facilities across the country are a major problem affecting not only correctional facilities but also the general public and their safety. The government doesn't seem to want to get to the root of the problem, however, as none of the prison officers have ever been fired as a result of these prison breakouts by terrorist groups. These problems in the correctional facilities along with the deficiencies in the Nigerian judicial system waters down the Nigerian state readiness in ending its insecurity problems. Data from the Nigerian Correctional Centre website shows that 52,755 out of 74,922 inmates held in the country's 240 prisons are awaiting trial. Although hundreds of escaped prisoners have reportedly been re-arrested, senior terrorist commanders are among those whose whereabouts remain unknown, according to prison officials. This increases the possibility that these fighters could lead an increase in attacks.

LIST OF PRISON BREAKS IN NIGERIA

Year	Incident	Escaped inmates	Recaptured inmates	Number at large
July, 2022	Terrorist group attacked the medium-security Kuje prison with weapons and high-level explosives.	879	443	443
May 13 th , 2022	Heavy rain at Agbor prison in Delta state caused the north perimeter wall of the prison to collapse, three inmates fled and escaped from the prison.	3	-	-
January 2, 2022	Jail break at Mandala Custodial Centre, Ilorin, Kwara state	3	-	-
November 28, 2021	Jos Correctional Center was attacked by armed men	262	9	252
October 22, 2021	Gunmen attacked the Abolongo medium-security prison center in Oyo state with sophisticated weapons and attacked the Abolongo prison center in Oyo state.	837	262	575
September 13, 2021	Two security guards were killed in an attack by unknown gunmen on Kabba Correctional Center in Kogi State.	240	114	-
July 8, 2021	Awaiting trial for the kidnapping and armed robbery suspects escaped Jos Correctional Center.	4	-	-
April 5, 2021	Nigerian Correctional Service in Owerri Imo was attacked by gunmen.	1,844	-	-

October 22, 2020	During ENDSARS, gangsters at Okitipupa Correctional Center in Ondo State tore down the facility's fence and released prisoners.	58	-	-
October 19, 2020	Gangsters attacked prisons during EndSARS protests in Benin prisons in Edo state and Oko prisons in Enugu state	1,993		-
October 28, 2019	Prisoners at Koton Karfe Correctional Facility managed to escape after floods inundated part of the facility following a downpour in the city.	122	25	-
June 3, 2018	Gunmen attacked the medium-security prison in Minna, Niger state, killing an officer and a commercial motorcyclist.	210	-	-
December 27, 2017	Inmates at Ikot Ekpene prison in Akwa Ibom state attacked the kitchen staff on duty and broke loose. The incident resulted in the deaths of four other inmates.	36	-	-
October 7, 2017	Two Enugu Correctional Center inmates, Lucky Sama and Balogun Idiom Joseph, escaped from Enugu Maximum Security Prison through the ceiling of a Catholic church in the center.	2	-	-
June 24, 2016	Two inmates awaiting trial escaped at Kuje Medium Correctional Centre, Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.	2	-	-
July 29, 2016	Prison break at Koton/Karfe Correctional Center in Kogi State	13	-	-
July 29, 2016	Inmates at Nsukka Correctional Center in Enugu State broke out of their cells and fled.	15	-	-

Compiled by Authors

CONCLUSION

Nigeria is currently struggling with various forms of insecurity caused by terrorism, insurgency, banditry and the nature of politics in the country. The activities of bandits and terrorists have increased the general population's perception of threats in a way that is detrimental to the country's socio-economic development. However, despite these attacks, little or no achievement has been recorded on the part of the government to bring the perpetrators of these crimes to book as their efforts towards tackling the issue of insecurity in the country are beclouded with gross unprofessionalism and sentiments.

The wanton politicization of insecurity has therefore greatly affected the management of Nigeria's correctional facilities due to the incessant prison breaks currently being experienced in the country. If the threat posed by this group continues to increase at its current rate, it will, in a very short time and in an unprecedented manner, surpass all threats to the country, challenging the authority of the state and its coercive apparatus. Thus, in the absence of political will and strong state authority, insurgent actions against the nation's correctional facilities will almost exclusively result in severe consequences for the Nigerian state, as the return of hardened terrorists to society will contribute to more unprecedented insecurity if not recaptured. Likewise, it should be noted that corruption exists in these correctional facilities as the allegation of collusion with criminals who continue these attacks has been substantiated.

Recommendations

In light of the foregoing, the paper therefore suggests the following:

1. The presidency should demonstrate greater dedication to the fight against banditry and insurgency by pursuing their collaborators and sponsors.
2. The Nigeria's security system should be more effective and efficient, and a complete overhaul is also necessary.
3. The Nigerian correctional centers should be overhauled and reposition for greater effectiveness as they are an important and integral part of the criminal justice system.
4. There should be power devolution to allow states to effectively manage their security.

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