

The evolution of boko haram, its attack on chibok girls and the American amnesty intervention: A contextual analysis

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Abstract

This study is a contextual analysis that gives an overview of the evolution of Boko Haram, its attack on chibok girls and the intervention of United States amnesty group. The study made use of secondary method of data collection through books, newspapers etc to analyse and come to a logical conclusion. Finding revealed that Boko Haram is an offshoot of the Maitatsine which have almost the same philosophy to fight the government in all reunification, and the situation of the chibok girls is politically oriented as many top officials-oppositions sides are not willing to see the Nigerian Government progress so they are devising every means to blackmail the then government. Findings also revealed that the American Troops failed due to the division they met in Nigeria, no patriotism, no true democracy, nepotism, egotism and an evil mindset is the order of the day. The study recommends that corruption should be thoroughly fought in Nigeria in order to have an effective campaign against the insurgency of Boko Haram.

KeyWords: The evolution of book, chibok girls

Introduction

Background of the study

There is an ongoing campaign of terror in Nigeria. Since July 2009, Boko Haram, an extremist Islamist group from the northeastern part of Nigeria, began a violent campaign that has resulted in the deaths of 3,500 people, with the death toll rising on an almost daily basis (Agbiboa 2013a) ^[2]. The group has carried out frequent attacks and bombings, in some cases using suicide bombers. Target locations have included police stations, military facilities, churches, schools, beer halls, newspaper offices, and the United Nations building in Abuja (Uzodike 2012: 91) ^[11]. In addition, the group has assassinated Muslim clerics and traditional leaders in the north for allegedly cooperating with state authorities (Agbiboa 2013b; HRW 2012) ^[3]. Since January 2013, Boko Haram has taken control of Marte, Mobbar, Gubio, Guzamala, Abadam, Kukawa, Kala Balge, and GamboruNgala local government areas in northern Borno, chasing out local government officials, taking over government buildings and imposing its will (Premium Times 2013). So critical is the threat posed by Boko Haram that in January 2012 Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan lamented, 'The situation we have in our hands is even worse than the civil war [1967–1970] that we fought' (Agbiboa 2013c: 65) ^[4].

Conceptual Clarification

Boko Haram

We want to reiterate that we are warriors who are carrying out Jihad (religious war) in Nigeria and our struggle is based on the traditions of the holy prophet. We will never accept any system of government apart from the one stipulated by Islam because that is the only way that the Muslims can be liberated. We do not believe in any system of government, be it traditional or orthodox, except the Islamic system which is why we will keep on fighting against democracy, capitalism,

socialism and whatever. We will not allow the Nigerian Constitution to replace the laws that have been enshrined in the Holy Qur'an, we will not allow adulterated conventional education (Boko) to replace Islamic teachings. We will not respect the Nigerian government because it is illegal. We will continue to fight its military and the police because they are not protecting Islam. We do not believe in the Nigerian judicial system and we will fight anyone who assists the government in perpetrating illegalities.-Boko Haram statement (Leadership 2011).

Aims of Boko Haram

The tie that bound Boko Haram together was desire to overthrow the secular government. Its modus operandi during the early years was using simply constructed weapons that required no advanced training against easily accessible targets (Stewart, 2012).

By 2009, increased sectarian fights and clashes with the police culminated in a storming of one of the group's hideouts (Cook, 2011). Nine members were arrested and bomb-making materials and weapons were confiscated (Adesoji, 2011). This set off four days of riots across four states which were finally quelled by the arrest of Yusuf. In what is called an extrajudicial killing, Yusuf, his father-in-law, and several others were killed by the police while in custody and hundreds of followers were jailed (Johnson, 2011) ^[6]. It was thought at this point in 2009 that Boko Haram as a group was devastated. Several hundred people died in the uprising (Office of Coordinator for Counterterrorism, 2011).

Maitatsine to Boko Haram

Some scholars maintain that Boko Haram was an outgrowth of the Maitatsine movement and riots of the 1980s during which the first major uprisings of fundamentalist Islam in Nigeria appear. Maitatsine stated goal was the purification of Islam

(Adesoji, 2010) ^[1]. Boko Haram's founder, Mohammed Yusuf, described as a charismatic young leader and a product of madrasa education, preached the doctrine of withdrawal. He believed that Western education should be moderated through Islamic scholarship and thus began by setting up an Islamic complex with a mosque and school (Campbell, 2011; Johnson, 2011) ^[6]. As is characteristic of most Islamic fundamentalist groups, Boko Haram rejected all Western culture and influence as well as science and it sought the imposition of Shari'a law across the whole of Nigeria. Its membership drew not only from the educated and employed, but also from poorest: criminals, drug addicts, and drifters (Adesoji, 2010) ^[1].

Boko Haram and Outside Connections (Other Bodies Involved)

Until the latest outbreak of violence in 2011, some analysts believed that Boko Haram only received inspiration from the global jihadist movement, and even eschewed closer patronage to al Qaeda because of its historical Sufi tradition (Szrom and Harnisch, 2011) ^[9]. Yet, without confirmation, evidence points to Boko Haram gaining outside assistance to exact retribution and achieve its goals. Many of the tactics used are al Qaeda signature formulas that began to occur after Boko Haram's reported destruction or dispersion to neighboring countries: suicide bombings, coordinated multi-location bombings, and release of martyrdom videos made by suicide bombers. The only insurgent groups in Africa that have used suicide attacks are al Qaeda in the Lands of the Mahgreb and Somalia's al Shebaab (Cook, 2011). Moreover, several facts are quite startling: the sophistication of its capabilities which now include vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (VBIEDs), its success rate, and its operations tempo, have shown marked improvement in just over a year's time (Stewart, 2012). Further, with its attack on a military installation, albeit unsuccessful, in February, it seemed to be trying to make a shift from soft targets to heavily fortified targets (Francis, 2011).

As previously stated, AQIM and al Shebaab are the most likely sources. In the case of AQIM, counterterrorism efforts have forced it from its traditional home in Algeria into the Sahara-Sahel region of Mali, Mauritania, and Niger and it shifted its focus to transnational jihad in conjunction with al Qaeda in order to sustain itself. The upheaval in Libya with its store houses of weapons, and ties with Boko Haram may provide AQIM with expansion opportunities. To date, ties between the two groups seem to be limited to training and possibly resources (Thornberry and Levy, 2011) ^[10].

Situation of the Chibok Girls

- *How did over 250 students disappear from the school into thin air?*
- *Why did the Borno state commissioner for education, principal, vice principle and chief security officer, ignored the valid advice of WAEC on the security implication of writing exams in the school and the need to have a center where the children's life will be secured?*
- *How did Boko haram carried over 200 students and there foot stolen by these criminals from the school?*
- *Where were the security personnel when the abduction was taking place?*

- *Where were the daughters of the principal, vice principal and chief security officer when the abduction took place?*



Fig 1: Some of the Nigerian Citizens reaction towards the kidnap of the Chibok girls.



Fig 2: The First Lady of the United States- this situation has drawn a lot of outside reactions

What then are the main details, how then did everything happen? Let's find out International human rights advocacy group Amnesty International accused the Nigerian government of knowing hours beforehand of the threat to hundreds of Nigerian schoolgirls still missing but not taking action to protect them ahead of their abduction. "Amnesty International has confirmed through various sources that Nigeria's military headquarters in Maiduguri [130 km from the kidnapping] was aware of the impending attack soon after 7:00 p.m. on April 14, close to four hours before Boko Haram began their assault on the town," the group said in a release. But the military was unable to muster enough troops to take on the militants with the Boko Haram terrorist group who were closing in on the Government Girls Secondary School in the town of Chibok. "The small contingent of security forces based in the town – 17 army personnel as well as local police – attempted to repel the Boko Haram assault but were overpowered and forced to retreat," Amnesty says, adding that one soldier was reportedly killed in the fight. Amnesty came to this conclusion through multiple interviews with sources on the ground in Nigeria, including military

officials, local officials in Borno state in Nigeria's northeast where the kidnapping took place, and others. "The fact that Nigerian security forces knew about Boko Haram's impending raid, but failed to take the immediate action needed to stop it, will only amplify the national and international outcry at this horrific crime," Netsanet Belay, Amnesty International's Africa Director, Research and Advocacy, said in a statement. "At around 10:00 p.m. on April 14, I called [several] security officers to inform them about earlier information I had received from the vigilantes in Gagilam village [which neighbors Chibok]," a local official told Amnesty. "They had told us that strange people had arrived in their village that evening on motorbikes and they said they were heading to Chibok. I made several other calls, including to Maiduguri. I was promised by the security people that reinforcement were on their way." Those reinforcements never arrived. The estimated 200 armed gunmen were able to leave Chibok with more than 200 schoolgirls in tow. The military didn't redeem themselves in the hours and days after the kidnapping. As previously reported, once they realized that the students were missing, family members went searching in the Sambisa Forest, one of the hideouts of Boko Haram. When told that they were near where the abductors had set up camp, the searchers returned to Chibok, according to the Associated Press, and appealed to the soldiers present to join them into the forest. The soldiers present refused. The next day, Nigerian media reported that the military had managed to free the majority of the girls taken. Nigeria's defense ministry was forced to withdraw that claim only a day later. The report of the Nigerian military being unable — or at times unwilling — to confront Boko Haram tracks with outside analysis of the state of the armed services, which have been referred to as ill-equipped, under resourced, and demoralized. "There's a lot of frustration, exhaustion and fatigue among officers and [troops] based in the hotspots...many soldiers are afraid to go to the battle fronts," one senior officer told Amnesty. Likewise the Associated Press recently reported similar feelings among the Nigerian rank and file: "Many soldiers have told the AP they are demoralized, because Boko Haram is more heavily armed and better equipped, while they get little more than a meal a day." Nigerian president Goodluck Jonathan's government has been under increased scrutiny in the weeks after the kidnapping, both in terms of the current crisis and his previously handling of the grievances in the North of the country that Boko Haram has exploited. Most of the resources that have allowed Nigeria to grow into a regional power are in the South, which is majority Christian, leaving the mostly Muslim north under-resourced, spawning the rise of other terror organisations such as the MEND. Boko Haram originally spun out of these same concerns, but has become increasingly radical as the years have gone on, to the point that even fellow jihadis haven't been supportive of their latest kidnapping. "I believe that the kidnap of these girls will be the beginning of the end of terror in Nigeria," Jonathan said on Thursday, pledging to bring Boko Haram to an end. But corruption still remains endemic within Nigeria, to the point that one Nigerian commenter on a locally run news article lamented, "Everyone is corrupt in Kenya, even grandmothers." And in recent months, his government has been accused of violating human rights in its pursuit of Boko Haram, including allegedly killing 600 detainees without trial following a Boko Haram assault on a Nigerian army barracks.

These concerns haven't prevented the international community from finally stepping up, however, to aid in the search for the schoolgirls. CNN reported that six US military advisers from U.S. Africa Command has arrived at the U.S. Embassy in Nigeria, part of a team of experts set to provide expertise on intelligence gathering, hostage negotiation, and counterterrorism tactics. A British team of diplomats, aid workers, and defence officials likewise landed in Nigeria on Friday.

Meanwhile, the location of where the girls have been taken still remains unknown. The U.S. now believes that the girls have been split up, tracking with earlier reports that some had been taken across the border into neighboring Chad and Cameroon. "We do think they have been broken up into smaller groups," U.S. Navy Rear Adm. John Kirby, the Pentagon press secretary, said.

The American military troop could not succeed in the on the search of the Chibok girls because corruption has eaten up the country and top officials are against the move of the American troops so they devise means in alerting the Boko Haram of any development carried out by the Military troops. Due to this division in Nigeria, lack of oneness, nepotism, favoritism, wickedness, oppositions mounting, the search for the Chibok girls has proven abortive.

Conclusion

It can be said that the Boko Haram is an offshoot of the Maitatsine which have almost the same philosophy to fight the government in all reunification, and the situation of the chibok girls is politically oriented as many top officials-oppositions sides are not willing to see the Nigerian Government progress so they are devising every means to blackmails the government. The American Troops have failed due to the division they met in Nigeria, no patriotism, no true democracy, nepotism, egotism and an evil mindset is the order of the day. How can a country succeed in this kind of situation?

Recommendations

Corruption should be thoroughly fought in Nigeria in order to have an effective campaign against the insurgency of Boko Haram.

Top government officials should be investigated and if found guilty be prosecuted for supporting Boko Haram financially.

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