
Child Of Necessity: (AB)Uses Of The Civilian Joint Task Force In Borno State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Non-state armed groups (NSAGs) have become key actors in the provision of security and safety in communities in Africa. One of the NSAGs created to provide safety and security in the war-ravaged North Eastern Nigeria is the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF). This paper critical examines uses and abuses of the NSAG in Borno State. Based on data collected through online and print newspapers, interviews and other secondary sources, the study shows that the formation of the CJTF in Borno State has helped to curtail military attacks on innocent civilians and also assisted in decimating Boko Haram. However, activities of the group since its creation in 2013 have been accompanied with human rights abuses of residents, use of position as members of CJTF to witch-hunt opponents, serving as informants to Boko Haram and subject to elites manipulation especially politicians and military. The study also held that rebuilding Borno State and entire Northeastern Nigeria where Boko Haram insurgency has been on for almost a decade now should incorporate demobilisation and reintegration of members of CJTF into normal life to prevent the possibility of the group developing into new security threat after Boko Haram.

Key Words:

Civilian JTF; Borno State; Boko Haram; North East; Nigeria

Introduction

Non-state armed groups (NSAGs) have become key actors in the provision of security and safety in several communities in Africa where there is limited or non-existence of state security forces. The role of these NSAGs, especially those operating as local defence forces, in tackling criminality and violence is certainly not a new phenomenon. While they have always been useful in Africa in security provisioning where the state is unable to deal with insecurity, criminality and violence towards the civilian population, they have proven in several cases to be susceptible to manipulation and abuses. People Against Gansterism and Drugs (PAGAD) in South Africa (Dixon and Lisa-

Morie, 2001); White farmers in the Orange Free State in South Africa in the 1910s and 1920s (Murray, 1989); Anti-thief and Anti-witch organisations in Bugisu District in Uganda in the 1960s (Heald, 1986); the Arrow Boys in contemporary Uganda (Taylor, 2017); Sungusungu Movement to counter cattle rustling in Tanzania in the 1980s and 1990s (Abraham, 1987); the Kamajors in Sierra Leone (Dalby, 2017) and the Mungiki in Nairobi, Kenya (Anderson, 2002) are some of the few examples of the use of local defence force to curtail crimes and address prevalent security challenges in Africa. These groups began as local defence forces against insecurity, criminality and violence. However, they gradually became perverted to become another security threats. As a result of the many threats they pose to their countries after armed conflict, local defence forces are usually parts of the recovery plan for countries seeking sustainable peace after armed conflict.

In the Nigerian context, Boko Haram insurgency in the north east which have devastated mostly Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states, compelled local people to engage in self-help measures to ensure community protection and security. The self-help measures have come largely in the form of formation and sustenance of several local defence forces such as the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF), Hunters Association, Pulaaku Brigade, and Vigilante Group of Nigeria (VGN), among others (Onuoha and Kwaja 2018).

Since its formation in 2013, the CJTF has been very active in Borno State in complementing the efforts of state security forces providing community safety and security. However, issues of abuse continue to trail the activities of the CJTF in Borno State. Reports of arbitrary arrest and detention, extra-judicial killings, usurpation of the role and power of the police, intimidation of civilians and general abuse of fundamental human rights of the people have always been levied against members of the group. With the expectation of end to Boko Haram insurgency, the next major security threat may be from the CJTF and other various voluntary policing groups in the North East. Although, studies have examined the contributions of this group to counterterrorism efforts against the Boko Haram group (Bamidele 2017), their uses and abuses have not been critically examined. It is against this background that this article examines the uses and abuses of the CJTF in Borno State. The study provides answers to the following questions: How did CJTF originate in Borno State? How useful has the CJTF been in the fight against Boko Haram terrorism in the Borno State? How and in what specific ways has the group been abused? What security threat does the existence of the group holds after insurgency and how should the threat be addressed?

(Ab)Uses of Local Defence Forces in Nigeria: Evidences from Precedents

The use of local defence forces in Nigeria is not a new phenomenon. Indeed, since the colonial period, the use of local defence force had been popular, authorised and legalised by colonial administration in Nigeria (Fourchard 2008). Rural banditry, armed robbery, recurrent thefts, burglaries, collapse of law and order, and general inadequate security necessitated the emergence of alternative policing approach known as hunter guard system during colonial period in Southwestern Nigeria (Falola and Oguntomisin 1999; Watson 2000; Fourchard 2005; Falola 1995). However, allegation of harassment, intimidation of people and killing of innocent people trailed the activities of the group (Fourchard 2008). By 1950s and 1960s, they had become

increasingly involved in politics as they were increasingly becoming useful tools in the hands of the regional premiers for manipulation of elections (Fourchard 2008). The story was not too different in the Northern Nigeria.

According to Dawha (2012), the emergence of many Mafioso-style gangs such as yandaba in Northern Nigeria can be traced to the commencement of politics and the beginning of the formation of political parties in Northern Nigeria before 1960s. As independence approached and the colonial administration began to give way to the rulership of the local elites, they began to align themselves into political parties. This brought face-off between these political parties. Notable among them were Northern Peoples' Congress (NPC) and Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU). To establish and consolidate their grip on power, NPC party hierarchy covertly used the dogarai (traditional palace police), which were supposed to protect them, to intimidate opponents. This also made NEPU create a special unit of bodyguards to protect their stalwarts against the dogarai of the NPC. The military took-over power in 1966, and this rendered the bodyguards who were living on the largesse of the political leaders useless. These groups transformed into criminal gangs terrorising the public given the hard economic situation that greeted the period. In the Niger Delta region where the Federal government has been fighting insurgency for more than two decades, the origin of the armed groups in the region has been traced to the formation of vigilante groups to fight cultism, fight inter-communal conflicts and other forms of insecurity prevalent in the region. These vigilante groups were armed by the communities in the region to provide security for the people. Much later, the vigilante group metamorphosed into armed groups constituted grave insecurity to the people of the region (See Owonikoko 2016a; 2016b). Furthermore, in some cities of the region such as Ughelli, vigilante groups formed to provide security for the people were severe source of insecurity for the people as they often clash with government security agencies and were frequently used by politicians for private interests (Owonikoko 2019)

The emergence of the Fourth Republic since 1999 has witnessed sporadic evolution of the use of non-state groups for security provisioning in Nigeria. Famous among these groups are Bakassi Boys in the South East and O'odua People's Congress (OPC) in South West. While Bakassi Boys was created to basically fight crimes in Igboland, OPC was initially established to address perceived marginalisation of the Yoruba nation within the Nigerian state. It later started addressing crimes within the Yorubaland (Baker 2002; Smith 2004; Meagher 2007; Abdulazeez 2012). According to Abdulazeez (2012), OPC performed multiple security functions. They acted as vigilante, maintained order in public functions and fuel stations, engaged in controlling traffic jams, settling disputes, reporting crime suspects to the police, and in some cases arresting such, especially suspects considered to be 'sacred cows' (Pp. 241). The setting up of these groups to address crimes in their region actually led to significant reduction in crime. For instance, before the Anambra Vigilante Service (AVS) and Bakassi boys were set up in Anambra State, armed robbery and other criminal activities were almost on daily basis. This made the state one of the highest in the incidents of armed robbery in Nigeria then. However, from the time of its establishment in July 2000 till January 2001, no incident of armed robbery was recorded anywhere in the state, thus becoming one of the lowest around the period (Baker 2002; Newswatch September 18, 2000). Similarly, the bravery that accompanied the operations of OPC in the South West had endeared the group in the mind of categories of people because criminal activities which were prevalent

before the operation of the group had reduced drastically (Abdulazeez 2002). The apparent display of violence only served to displace violent crime in the locality of the group but eventually led to escalation of violent crimes in other places especially where the groups could not be found.

However, much more striking is the fact that activities of these groups proved to be more than containment of crimes and insecurity. Incidents of human rights abuse, extra-judicial killing, trial by ordeal, leadership tussle within the groups, perpetration of inter-ethnic clashes, partisan arrests, political influence and meddling in partisan politics with politicians and political parties greeted the activities of the groups in their respective regions. Gradually, the groups' missions and visions became perverted and they became sources of insecurity to the regions. The implication is that there is a track record of abuse of local defence force in Nigeria. They always start off with good intention but often later become perverted.

Child of Necessity: The Origin, Evolution and Operations of Cjtf

While the origin of the Boko Haram can be traced to 1995 (Onuoha 2014), it was in 2010 that the group began its terrorist activities after it was heavily crushed in 2009. From 2010 onward, the armed violence of the group against the Nigerian state steadily increased, perfecting its terror tactics from targeted assassination to the use of explosive devices (ibid). As usually done, the Nigerian government responded to the initial terror activities of the group by setting up a Joint Task Force (JTF) team consisting of the various branches of the armed forces, police, state security services, customs, Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps and other various security outfits of the Nigerian state under a single command. This security outfit was codenamed Operation Restore Order. However, due to the nature of the attacks of Boko Haram members on the security forces in Maiduguri, which includes carrying out coordinated attacks on the security forces and melting into the population, JTF members resulted to extra-judicial killings, dragnet arrests, intimidation of residents and killing of innocent people. Members of the security forces perceived and increasingly saw members of the society in Maiduguri as siding with the Boko Haram group and providing shield for the group members from the security forces whenever they attack security personnel.

This situation was compounded by the fact that the Nigerian soldiers and other security personnel deployed under the JTF were national and not local; they were recruited and deployed from other parts of Nigeria, especially from the South. They do not understand the language of the people neither do they share in the ethnic and cultural background of the local population (Solomon 2012). They also lacked adequate understanding of the terrain (Popovski and Maiangwa 2016). All these put serious pressure on the security personnel and led them into crude use of force against the innocent civilians in Maiduguri. As Human right Watch noted:

During raids into communities soldiers have set fire to houses, shops, and cars, randomly arrested men from the neighborhood, and in some cases executed them in front of their shops or houses. These raids have become so common in Maiduguri, especially after Boko Haram attacks on the JTF that parents have advised their sons to flee as soon as they hear of an attack (HRW 2012:59)

Evidently, residents of Maiduguri were caught in between the terrorism of Boko Haram group

and the brutality of the security forces. The frustration resulting from the situation explained above led to the formation of CJTF by the residents of Maiduguri. Kaka Shehu Lawan, the Borno State Commissioner for Justice, during his interview with Alexis Okeowo explained the scenario that led to the formation of the CJTF thus:

[The Civilian JTF was a] reaction to both the activities of the insurgents and the military...[In the past, after a Boko Haram attack], once the Nigerian military comes, they will not spare or investigate any body, they will start shooting and molesting the innocent passersby. The Civilian JTF felt they – and their fathers – were being punished for crimes they had not committed (Okeowo 2015)

The event leading to the formation of the group started in May 2013 when Baba Lawan, a trader from Maiduguri who later became the chairman of the group in Borno State, chased and captured a gun-bearing Boko Haram member with just a stick (Hassan and Pieri 2018). This act motivated other youths to follow the example of Lawan and joined the war against Boko Haram. By June, 2013 the group had had over 500 volunteers armed with basic weapons like machetes, stick, daggers, among others and started organising against Boko Haram through daily street patrols and house-to-house searches (Agbigboa 2017). The CJTF played a critical role in wading off attempt by the insurgents to overran Maiduguri. It was reported that the CJTF as at June 2014 assisted in the arrest of over 30 suspected members of Boko Haram, which were handed over to security agencies (Thurston 2017). However, as the group expanded, it started to become more sophisticated in weapon usage. They started using traditional weapons¹ especially bows and arrows, spears, locally fabricated guns and other seized guns from Boko Haram members or those given to them by the security agents to confront Boko Haram in war front.

The group overtime has developed a complete administrative structure, including sectors and units covering local government administrations and wards (Ibrahim and Bala 2018). The CJTF has evolved into a complex organisation consisting of many volunteers with base in each of the local government areas in each state of the North East having its own commander. While it is very difficult to ascertain the actual number of volunteers of CJTF in the North East because the biometrics data of members of the group which is very important for tracking members of the group is yet to be commenced, the youth force is estimated to number about twenty-six thousand volunteers in Borno State alone (Ibrahim and Bala). However, from then till now, many volunteers have joined the rank and file of the group. Hassan and Pieri estimated that the size of the volunteer force of the group might have grown to about 30,000 individuals (P.73). There are basically two types of CJTF in Borno State. One group is well trained and kitted and effectively mainstreamed by the Borno State Government into the Borno State Youth Empowerment Scheme (BOYES). They are paid a monthly stipend of N15,000 (about 40 USD). The second type is the less formal youths not mainstream into BOYES (Monguno 2018).

(Ab)Use of Cjtf in Borno State

¹ The use of traditional weapons by the group was believed to have been warranted by the expansion of the group into rural areas. For this view, see Hyden, S (2016) Nigeria's Self-Styled Warriors: Meet the Vigilante Army Taking on the World's Deadliest Terror Group. Voice News, April, 28.

CJTF has proven to be very useful in enhancing the restoration of security to Borno State and beyond. They have been useful in the area of intelligence gathering, searching operation, reconnaissance, manning of checkpoints and infrastructure security especially worshipping centres, crowd control, man guard posts, among others. The fact that they work closely with the Nigerian Army personnel has made it very easy to quickly and easily identify Boko Haram members from the midst of the people through house to house search and manning of checkpoints. The inability of the security personnel to be able to spot Boko Haram members from among the people was the major reason the security personnel clampdown on the innocent people prior to the formation of CJTF.

The formation of the group and its good working relationship with the security personnel, especially the military, therefore has made it relatively easy for Boko Haram members to be quickly identified and arrested in most local communities. Increasingly, members of the CJTF man checkpoints in Borno State and other parts of the Northeastern Nigeria mostly in partnership with Nigerian security personnel in the bid to identify Boko Haram members or enhance community safety and security. In this way, they have been able to identify and arrest suspected members of the Boko Haram given their robust knowledge and familiarity of the terrain and people. As Kaka Shehu Lawan, the Borno State Commissioner for Justice explained "... These miscreants (referring to Boko Haram members) are living among us. The youths know them" (Okeowo 2015). This obviously has made the work of the Nigerian security personnel easy and has aided their capacity to be able to decimate Boko Haram. Members of communities in Borno State acknowledged the efforts of CJTF members in the provision of security to their communities. A respondent recognised the efforts of the CJTF members thus:

These boys (referring to the CJTF members) are gallant and very fearsome to Boko Haram members. Where government security personnel have run away for their life, the CJTF members stood their ground and chased away the insurgents. Boko Haram members fear them much more than government security agents. Because of their deadliness in dealing with Boko Haram members, some of the members of the terrorist group believed that it is better to be killed by soldiers than to be killed by CJTF members because if they are killed by soldiers, they will go to *Aljanna* (paradise) but if they are killed by members of the CJTF, they will go to *jahannama* (hell). If not for their efforts, we would not have come back to our communities. Now, we are living in our communities even though we fear that Boko Haram members may still come and attack us (Indigene of Borno State interviewed in Yola, October 28th, 2018).

The success of the group in Borno State has encouraged the formation of community-based armed groups (CBAGs) in other North East states in Nigeria² and even in Nigeria's Lake Chad neighbours— Niger, Chad and Cameroon— taking cues from the CJTF. During experience sharing conference on popular defence in Chad Basin held by University of Maroua, Cameroon in February 2017, one of the leaders of the Comites de Vigilance interviewed explained how the activities of CJTF spurred them into action at the frontier areas in Cameroon thus:

² For instance, In Yola, Adamawa State, Hunters have performed the same role that the CJTF perform in Borno State. In Cameroon, a neighbouring country to Nigeria which also suffers Boko Haram attack in recent time, similar group has also been created by the people. This is called Comites de vigilance. All other Lake Chad Basin Countries have taken clues from the CJTF to form similar group to address Boko Haram insurgency in their locality.

The activity of our group against Boko Haram was necessary. Firstly, Cameroon government response to Boko Haram was belated because Boko Haram was not seen to be attacking Cameroon but we are the border communities were already experiencing the attack of the group but not covered in the media. We therefore need to defend ourselves before Boko Haram kill all of us. Secondly, we saw that a group like our own was already established in Maiduguri, Borno State and was doing well to provide security for the people from Boko Haram attacks. This gave us the boldness (Interviewed on February 17, 2017 at Maroua, Extreme North Region, Cameroon).

In spite of the usefulness of the group in decimating Boko Haram, the emerging concerns are that the group is prone to various forms of abuses and could constitute a major security threat after the effacement of Boko Haram. Allegations of human rights abuses, leadership tussle within the group, factionalisation, drugs and substance abuse, friction in their relationship with the military, problem of discipline, and use of child soldiers, among others, are rife. There is equally allegation that some segment of the CJTF were being manipulated by some government officials for their selfish political interests in the buildup of the just concluded 2019 general elections in Nigeria. The various abuses of the CJTF are discussed below:

Involvement in Human Rights Abuse of Residents: One of the major concerns on the activities of the CJTF in Borno State is that they are involved in human rights abuses. They are being fingered to be involved in extra-judicial killing of surrendered Boko Haram members and innocent community members. In 2014, Amnesty International released video-recorded documents indicting CJTF members of participating in military-led extra-judicial killing of Boko Haram members. The video footage showed how members of the Nigerian Military and CJTF used knives to slit the throats of several Boko Haram detainees before dumping their bodies in a mass grave (Amnesty International, 2014). This is expected on the part of CJTF members because most of the volunteers of the group joined as a result of the killing of their loved ones by Boko Haram members. Joining the CJTF therefore gives them the opportunity to revenge the death of their loved ones. Apart from their involvement in extrajudicial killings of Boko Haram members, the group is also involved in violation and harassment of women and girls. There are various reports that CJTF men are systematically coercing females in IDPs camps into sex in exchange for food or protection (International Amnesty 2018). A victim interviewed in the report narrated her ordeal thus:

They [the soldiers and Civilian JTF] will give you food but in the night they will come back around 5pm or 6pm and they will tell you to come with them... one [Civilian JTF] man came and brought food to me, he came back in the evening, but I hid myself. The next day he said I should take water from his place [and I went]. He then closed the tent door behind me and raped me. He said I gave you these things, if you want them we have to be husband and wife (Amnesty International 2018)

The frequent occurrence of this in Borno State is already generating series of protests, cries for justice and advocacy for accountability. The advocacy of a pressure group called Knifar Movement in Maiduguri, Borno State, demanding accountability from CJTF and other groups is another case in point. The Knifar Movement which basically consists of displaced women and victims of insurgency in North East, in a YouTube video released on May 24, 2017 accused CJTF and the

military of raping women and girls in Bama Hospital and internally displaced persons (IDPs) camps in Maiduguri and demanding justice from appropriate quarters³. Although leaders of the CJTF are wont to refute such allegations of human rights violations by their members, a female member of the group did solemnly acknowledge that some of their members have engaged in acts of human rights violations (Interviewed on December 3, 2018 at Maiduguri, Borno State).

Abuse of Position to Witch-hunt Opponents: Another major abuse of the CJTF in Borno State that is raising serious concern is the use of their position to witch-hunt members of the community who are opponents of any member of the CJTF. Therefore, any members of the community who have scores to settle with any members of the CJTF are easily taken for Boko Haram members and detained or summarily executed. They seem to easily get away with this because the military believe so much in the CJTF to have adequate understanding of the terrain and the people. Being a member of CJTF is an enviable status in Borno State, especially in Maiduguri. Any member of the CJTF can use his membership to enjoy certain benefits in the community including snatching another man's wife after sending such man to detention or summary execution for being tagged a Boko Haram member. Interview granted to a resident of Maiduguri lend significant credence to this fact.

The fear of CJTF members in Maiduguri and the entire Borno is the beginning of wisdom. If a member of CJTF likes your wife or girlfriend and sees you as the obstacle to getting her, he will tag you as Boko Haram so that you will be picked and detained or probably killed. Then, he can take over your wife or girlfriend. That is how bad it is! (Phone interview on 17th October, 2018)

Several people have been picked as Boko Haram members simply to witch-hunt opponents or to settle personal score. Currently, there are several cases in different courts against men of CJTF brought by relatives of victims of CJTF against CJTF for several atrocities including deliberate wrongful accusation that their family members is a member of Boko Haram (Hassan and Pieri 2018:18)

Informant for Boko Haram Members: Nigerian military personnel and men of the CJTF usually treat themselves with high level of distrust in spite of the working relationship between the two. While men of CJTF have raised serious concerns about the military alleging that they sell weapons to Boko Haram to get extra cash, military personnel also believed that CJTF ranks have been infiltrated by Boko Haram members, criminals and miscreants. This has actually affected the smooth relationship between the Nigerian Army and CJTF. Both Nigerian Army and CJTF began to experience break in their relationship in 2015, and it reached its climax in 2017 with the arrest of the founder of the CJTF- Baba Lawan Jafar over his alleged link with Boko Haram (Hassan 2017). In July 2018, 22 senior commanders of Boko Haram were arrested by the operatives of the Inspector General of Police Special Intelligence Response Team (IGP-IRT). One of the shocking revelations of the arrest was that three commanders of the CJTF were among those arrested by the team for giving out operational information of the military to the sect (Okolie 2018). The suspected link between CJTF members and Boko Haram was corroborated by a police officer in Maiduguri when he asserted that:

3 See YouTube video of the advocacy of the pressure group at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CjqQssL9bxE>

The leader of CJTF in Bama was a member of the Boko Haram. He was arrested in mid-2018 by the IGP intelligence team headed by Kyari using a sophisticated intelligence and communication tracking device. His arrest coincided with the reduction in suicide bombing in Maiduguri (Interview on 5 December, 2018)

Elite Manipulation: The use of vigilante group by elites, especially political elites is rife in Nigeria. This is so because of the character of politics in Nigeria where winner takes all and the loser gets nothing. Given huge financial investment in this kind of politics, politicians usually do not prepare to lose. This, therefore, leads them into misusing and abusing political and state institutions as well as non-state institutions that lie within their sphere of influence. Elite manipulation of vigilante or community-based security group is a longstanding problem in Nigeria because of the weakness of the state. The example of how Bakassi Boys in South-East and Oodua People's Congress in South West Nigeria have been used by elites especially politicians cannot be easily forgotten. Even Borno State itself had had the experience of using disgruntled youths posing as members of vigilante groups for political course. Ex-Borno State Governor, Senator Ali Modu Sheriff, used the vigilante group in Maiduguri metropolis called ECOMOG (named after the ECOWAS Peacekeeping Force) during his 2003 campaign (Danjibo and Albert 2004). Some scholars have argued that some members of this group later joined Boko Haram after they were left unattended to by their pay master. There are already facts to buttress that CJTF is used by elites. In 2013, shortly after the group was formed, CJTF members burned down the home of the Borno State Chairman of the defunct All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP), Mala Othman, on the allegation that he was one of the sponsors of Boko Haram in the state. Kashim Shettima who is currently ruling as the Governor of the state for second time (2011-2019) and has also won the ticket under the All Progressives Congress (APC) to contest for one of the three senatorial seats in the state was a member of the political party then⁴. Clampdown on the defunct ANPP Chairman's home by the CJTF was later interpreted to have a lot to do with internal political wrangling within the party then (See International Crisis Group 2012:19). During the 2015 election campaign, many CJTF men were seen at the rallies of the APC (International Crisis Group 2019). It was also said that the current Attorney-General and Commission for Justice of the state, - Barr. Kaka Shehu Lawan, whose office is given the mandate to control the group in the state had once instructed CJTF members and leadership to desist from carrying out crowd control operation in the state airport because it involves a political opponent⁵. There is also credible suspicion that Governor Kashim Shettima of Borno State is using the Borno Youths Empowerment Scheme (BOYES) which is the organisation coordinating the CJTF in the state as political clientele to turn the CJTF into a political network using the counterinsurgency funding (International Crisis Group 2012). There is already a widespread agitation by the main opposition party in Borno State- People's Democratic Party (PDP) that the Government of the State is using CJTF as the instrument to witch-hunt and undermine their chance of electoral victory in 2019. Mr Mohammed Abba-Aji, a member of PDP who is presently contesting for the seat of Borno Central Senatorial, accused the Borno State Government led by APC of using the CJTF to deliberately destroy campaign symbols of oppositions to weaken their electoral success in 2019 (Mukaila 2018).

⁴ ANPP merged with other parties such as Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) to form the APC.

⁵ This was shared by a prominent indigene of the state during a programme in Abuja on October 2nd, 2018.

Apart from the politicians, CJTF men have also been subjected to manipulation of the military elites especially to perpetrate abuse of women and girls in IDP camps. Soldiers deliberately beat up men and lock them up to have access to their wives. A woman shares her experience with a particular soldier in a YouTube video shared by Knifar Movement, demanding justice and accountability. According to the woman:

How it happened...One soldier beat my husband, injured him, detained in prison. After two or three days, he (the soldier) came with some provisions in his car, asking for my hand in marriage... When I said I am married and you know my husband is in prison, he said your husband is no more...Your husband cannot come out...So he kept coming and pestering me until we left Bama⁶.

In some extreme cases, rape and sexual assaults are usually carried out on these women with the help of men of CJTF. In a much organised system, men of CJTF usually choose the most beautiful of the women and girls to take to the soldiers outside for sexual assault (Abdulah 2018).

Conclusion

The formation of the CJTF as Civilian Counterterrorism outfit in Borno State and the entire North Eastern Nigeria where Boko Haram has been perpetrating terrorism for over a decade now is a child of necessity. The establishment of the outfit arose from the double-edge tragic experience of residents of Maiduguri and its environs who found themselves caught in between the terrorism of Boko Haram group and the counterterrorism of the Nigerian security agents. Since its creation, they have contributed significantly to the counterterrorism campaign of the Nigerian security agencies. However, the outfit has also been opened to severe abuses and manipulations. Particularly worrisome is that the activities of the groups in Borno State and other parts of the Northeastern Nigeria constitute a serious obstacle to effective rebuilding of the region after insurgency. There are many reasons to exhibit this fear.

Firstly, as shown in the previous section of the article, the history of the use of these groups shows that they are usually abruptly concocted to address a particular security challenge but once the challenge is overcome, they become the new security challenge to the people; more brutal than the security challenges that necessitated their existence. There is palpable fear that the CJTF will constitute a new security threat in the post-insurgency era in Borno State if adequate measures are not taken to prevent the politicization of the group. Even the Governor of the State, Governor Kashim Shettima expressed this fear when he said "...unless deliberate efforts are made... the Civilian JTF will be the Frankenstein monster that might end up consuming us" (cited in Okeowo 2015). Secondly, members of the outfit have also expressed agitation as to what the post-insurgency period holds for them. They held that they have contributed immensely to "winning" the war against Boko Haram by fighting along with government forces to decimate Boko Haram members and liberate territories that were previously seized by the insurgents. And this has come at great cost to them. The legal adviser to the CJTF claimed that between 2014 to June 2017, Boko Haram had killed not less than 680 members of CJTF in North East Nigeria. Many have also sustained several kinds and degrees of injuries during their engagement with Boko Haram groups (Onuoha and Kwaja 2018). The agitation has become more intense since

⁶ Watch in the YouTube link>>><https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QjqQssL9bxE>.

the beginning of reintegration programme for ex-members of Boko Haram called Operation Safe Corridor (OSC). Thirdly, members of the group are in possession of huge cache of small arms and light weapons. Some of these weapons were handed over to them by the military, although the military and Department of State Services operatives maintain that there is a robust mechanism for retrieving such arms from them after every operation. Yet, some of them are also acquired from disarming Boko Haram members and looting of their amouries during operations. All these weapons were not surrendered to the authorities.

Since the emergence of the current APC-led federal government of Nigeria in 2015, efforts have been put into rebuilding the Borno State and the entire Northeastern Nigeria bedeviled by Boko Haram insurgency. The government has established Presidential Committee for the North East (PCNI) to oversee the rebuilding process in Borno State and North East. As a result of this, several post-insurgency reconstruction programmes have been commenced. One of those is the Operation Safe Corridor (OSC). OSC is a deradicalisation programme for repentant Boko Haram members anchored by the Nigerian military. So far, hundreds of repentant Boko Haram members have been deradicalised, trained and reintegrated into their various communities. However, it is also important that current rebuilding process should take care of the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of the CJTF members. Until this is done, the rebuilding of Borno State and North East is inconclusive and not sustainable.

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