

SECURITY MANAGEMENT AND PRISON BREAK IN NIGERIA: A REVIEW OF 2015-2023

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Abstract: The paper examined prison break syndrome and security management in Nigeria's Fourth Republic. The paper adopted the historical method of data collection. The study showed that prison break is a product of the general state of insecurity in the country aided by leadership ineptitude, poor security management system in terms of poor attitude of security personnel, poor training, lack of professionalism and patriotism, ethnic sentiment, divisive tendencies, corruption, the militarization of the democratic space, lack of transparency, and the seeming capture of the political space by private interest to the detriment of public interest. Based on the foregoing, the researchers recommended the following: a total overhaul and re-training of security forces in modern technologies for combat readiness, especially the police force which lacks modern crime-fighting equipment, collective security strategies in security management which has a holistic and all-hazards approach in planning and operations to be introduced and effectively implemented, security management strategy based on complex inter-dependence as a balance of power approach to accommodate the various interests of diverse ethnic-geo-political groups that make-up Nigeria. It further recommended that the government should ensure proper funding, ensure the lives of security personnel and equip these security agencies to enhance their performance and combat readiness in the face of rising security challenges in Nigeria. We equally submit that the Nigerian Police Command structure be de-centralized for prompt response to emergencies at state and local levels, as well as the introduction of effective community policing and public-private partnership security management approach for grassroots crime combat.

Keywords: Prison break, Security management, Criminal justice system, Police, Crime

Introduction

The Nigerian criminal justice system is founded on three institutions: the police, the courts and the Nigerian Prison Service which has been renamed Nigerian Correctional Service. The effectiveness of the criminal justice system is measured by its ability to meet the goals of deterrence, incapacitation, retribution, rehabilitation and reintegration. How effective and efficient security or law enforcement agencies are will surely have a bearing on the actualization of set goals. When a person is arrested by the police even before his/her arraignment in court, the person automatically becomes a "suspect". It is only when his suspected crime is brought before a court of law that his/her title changes from being a suspect to that of an "accused". Again the title is likely to change when he/she is found guilty of the crime committed. He now becomes a "convict". A convicted person might be fined, imprisoned for several years, he could be given a capital sentence or even probation. All of these are considered legal means of restricting the criminal activities of a person accused and convicted of a crime. It is at this level

when restrained that he becomes an "inmate" in the facility the judge has decided on. In the view of Dambazau (2016), imprisonment is a widely used method in Nigeria's judicial system.

Prisons are commonly connected to a country's criminal justice system. They are primarily places of correctional oversight aimed at punishing offenders. Inmates are either undergoing trial or serving sentences for different criminal acts committed and convicted. There are cases where the prison system has been heavily politicized and used to repress political opponents. For example, there is the case in Turkey, where certain persons were thrown in jail for terrorist activities under the anti-terror law even where there was little or no evidence to show their involvement, (Yonucu, 2017). Similar situations also occurred in Nigeria. For example, the case instituted by Mazi Nnamdi Kanu by the Nigerian government.

Prison breaks as a phenomenon are not the preserve of one single country. History shows that it is a common feature across the globe, and it has led to deaths in some cases. In southern Venezuela for instance, it led to the death of many persons in 2017 (Ikenga and Agah, 2020). In Nigeria, especially in recent times, it has become a common feature. The causes of prison breaks are numerous. For instance, there is bound to be a feeling of agitation which can snowball into riots if unchecked, when inmates believe that they are unfairly treated or are kept so long in prison without their issue addressed in court. Inmates have also escaped from jail when prison facilities are attacked by external forces. For instance, in Kuje prison, inmates escaped when the dreaded Boko Haram group attacked the prison on July 5th, 2022, and many escaped. There was also the prison break that occurred on April 5th 2021 when the Owerri prison in Imo State was attacked by unknown gunmen. That prison break led to 1,844 inmates being released.

Between 2015 and 2023 when President Muhammadu Buhari was president of Nigeria, a recorded 14 prison breaks occurred. This has further made the security problem in the country even more precarious. It is on this template that this study looks at the implication of prison breaks on security in Nigeria's Fourth Republic, 2015-2023. Nigeria is faced with several security challenges which have in no small ways affected its developmental strategies (Ikenga and Agah 2020).

These challenges reflect a lack of effective and adequate security management techniques. It seems safe to say that the political elites in the country have collectively failed to see the security of life and property as a priority and this has threatened national security in general. This attitudinal disposition of Nigeria's political elites cannot be divorced from the lack of funding (Ejumudo and Ikenga, 2015), lack of personnel training and security equipment. These coupled with the fact that security matters are now largely politicized have made the problem escalate. Such politicization of security issues has largely been driven by primordial sentiments like ethnicity, religious inclination, and partisanship (Ikenga, 2018). The non-inclusion of the citizens in security matters through public orientation has also compounded the problem. This study therefore aims to critically examine the incessant prison break syndrome and the management of security in Nigeria's Fourth Republic.

Literature Review

Security Management in Nigeria

Certain elements are peculiar to the concept of security. As a broad term, it is often used to describe measures that societies, governments, groups and individuals take to ensure that they are protected from harm or any form of threats that endanger their peace and/or comfort. Indeed, the goal of any government is the provision of security for its citizens. This is because, in a society that is devoid of security, it is difficult to pursue other activities like commerce that are essential for the development of society. Security therefore in this context means the protection of lives and properties and ensuring an enabling environment or atmosphere where businesses can thrive (State Security Service – SSS, 2005).

Defined more narrowly, the term itself is often interchangeably used with 'safety'. It refers in this context to one's ability to have something secured or as Eselbor, (2007) is apt to put it "security means that something is not only

secured but has become secured". Generally, however, security is more broadly used to refer to the many ways, e.g. the technologies, activities and institutions, which are put into use to ensure a country's protection, and citizen's properties and lives against external attacks and from danger. It is in this vein that Oduneye (2008) defines "security as the establishment and maintenance of protective measures which are intended to ensure a state as inviolable from hostile acts or influences". It is considered as the aggregates of actions which are aimed towards the protection of lives and properties from not just internal attacks or influences but also from external threats (Ikenga and Agah, 2020; ISECOM, 2005).

Government actions must be based on several factors, and this includes among other factors, the resources needed to effect compliance with state laws, how the public perceives the security personnel or fabric of the state, human factor, the technical capacity of the security forces and their combat readiness, cooperation and interactions between the different security forces, information sharing, among others. It is the constitutional responsibility of the government of Nigeria to harness and coordinate human and financial resources to protect its citizens. It is in this sense too that the concept of security administration is understood. Security administration thus refers to the government's ability to organize the directing, staffing, leading and controlling, effectively funding and motivating security agencies/personnel in providing security for its people using instruments of state power backed up by enabling laws. This involves the ability to strategize, innovate, plan, and initiate solution

In Nigeria, there are several internal and external contending factors and problems that tend to tear the Nigerian nation apart, one of which is the question of security. According to Nnoli (1980), the Nigerian state is made up of different languages and multiple religious beliefs. It has different tribes with diverse traditions and cultures living under a geo-political entity, called Nigeria. Apart from other emerging state crimes that have come to stay in Nigeria and are occurring daily, it is this diversity that tends to tear apart the diverse groups and cultures when it comes to geo-political, ethnic, tribal and economic equations in Nigeria.

Apart from these lapses, Nigeria from its inception, has suffered a myriad of security problems that, the country's stability and its integration are serious. Security challenges in the countries are fast becoming immune to any solution reached to address them. For instance, criminality and violence continue to bedevil the efforts of Nigerian police aiming at ensuring the peaceful coexistence of the different ethnic groupings in the country. There are continued cases of kidnappings and hostage-takings of foreign oil companies' workers by aggrieved and long-neglected youths of the Niger Delta Region (NDR) (Ikenga, 2012, Agah and Ikenga, 2007). Kidnapping is a means of economic survival, political assassinations as well as the abduction of innocent people. For example, the kidnapping of 270 Chibok school girls in Bornu State. Similarly, Eduongo (2008) maintains that "the spate of kidnappings and related crimes are fast gaining ground in Nigeria.

The reoccurring nature of human insecurity is of concern to all. The capacity of the state and its actors to protect lives and property, maintain territorial integrity and other internal forms of security is becoming doubtful as the citizen's lives are in constant fear despite the huge money earmarked for security votes monthly. The country continued to suffer criminal terrorism which according to Imobighe and Equavoen (2006) relates to resorting to terror for private material gains, which translates itself into kidnapping people for ransom. Because of the present security uncertainties, the Nigerian state cannot develop nor guarantee a tranquil atmosphere for individuals to pursue their lawful activities. This notion is supported by Ekpe (2007) who posits that "no economic activity can take place in a chaotic atmosphere, and this explains the urgent need for full application and implementation of essential elements of security to bring about the needed stability and unity in Nigeria".

Problems of Security Management Arising from Neglect of Elements of Security in Nigeria

The main security elements in any country include the defence forces for external security functions, law enforcement agencies, security intelligence and others such as; Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Community Organizations (CBOs), Civil social organisations, Customs, Immigration, Prisons as well as Public, Private and Nongovernmental Actors. However, these agencies are handicapped, hence, poor execution of security responsibilities. This sub-head therefore identifies a problem that militates against the effective performances of these security providers arising from neglect of applying these main security elements in Nigeria.

i. **Ethnic and Tribal Sentiments:** The above picture presents unity in diversity and portends difficulties in agreement on questions of socio-economic and political equations when it comes to the allocation of limited national resources due mainly to the above-mentioned diversities based on ethnic considerations and sentiments. These entrenched ethnic and tribal considerations tend to influence negatively and affect the performance and effectiveness of security strategies and neutralize security forces during national emergencies. The most obvious is the human element as an essential security management imperative in the nation's security policies. The management of security in Nigeria has remained ineffective due to a lack of awareness of security-related issues by the average Nigerian citizen who is apt to see the management of security as purely that of government concerns.

ii. **Lack of Public Security Awareness:** This is even affecting personal security consciousness amongst Nigerians as Nigerians do not display the personal self-control and discipline required for a security-conscious citizenry especially when it comes to official secrecy even in their private lifestyles and conducts in public. Human content, security awareness and consciousness of citizens can galvanize unity and enhance the nation's stability and integration.

iii. **Attitude of Security Personnel to the Public:** The military and security personnel's high-handedness and attitudes toward the citizens have continued to generate a public image of the personnel of these security departments which makes the public reluctant to divulge critical security information that can help better security management and prompt responses towards national emergencies. This in turn will affect public relationship between the public and security agencies which should normally be interactional or interpersonally oriented. Interactional or inter-personal oral communication involves not only coming into each other co-presence but each interacting entity establishing both mental and metaphysical contact, becoming mutually responsive to each other and finally establishing a shared awareness and understanding of a common, even if mutually unbeneficial goal purpose (Umanah, 1996). For communication to take place between human beings in any given context, the interacting entities must begin to share a focus, actively attend to each other's behaviour and public acts, and begin to reciprocate such actions and behaviour. Each party must take others into account by actively attending to their interacting selves. When this happens, according to Umanah (1996), they move towards or become involved in the exchange of meaningful information. This makes communication the process of transmitting mutually understandable and meaningful message information between two or more interacting entities. In our case, the transmission of mutually understandable and meaningful information to law enforcement agencies to aid them in the day-to-day detection of criminals has become a major task. The fear is that information so given will be divulged with attendant dangerous consequences on the part of the public.

Security forces do suffer from poor public perception, and this often affects the willingness of the people to divulge vital and timely security information to them. In a situation where there is distrust of the police, for

instance by the people, the citizens remain reluctant to volunteer valuable security information. The spillover impact of this is that the nation's security woe increases (Phenson, 2014).

iv. **Militarization Policy in a Democratic Dispensation:** The militarization of Nigerian security management terrain even in the current democratic dispensation has reduced the Nigerian police force to a mere on-looker in internal security management of Nigeria. The above assertion is true due to poor government funding and equipping of the Nigerian Police Force by past military regimes in Nigeria. The long military rule and continued use of the military in security management in Nigeria, have contributed to the challenges of containing domestic crises beyond police capabilities. Also, the continued presence of military personnel in the oil-producing Niger-Delta region has been counterproductive, where their presence in the region, forced the ironically un-employed youths from the oil-rich region, to resort to self-defence reprisal attacks in retaliation to the brutal and punitive military operations against the genuine protests for development of the long-neglected, oil-producing region, to the detriment of national peace and security in the region (Phenson, 2014). The problem of militarization of Nigerian security by military personnel in the Fourth Republic tends to develop a culture of brute military force at the expense of public trust and image.

v. **Insensitivity of Nigerian Government Officials and Political Class towards Security Matters in Nigeria:**

The attitudes of Nigerian leadership and political class towards security matters in Nigeria have been that of paying lip services to security departments and adopting a retroactive, fire-brigade approach instead of proactive and offensive security intelligence and timely security responses to national security issues. It is this observed human element amongst the Nigerian political class and the general apathy of average Nigerian lack of security consciousness, that has thrown Nigeria into a situation where ethnic militias hold sway as the Oodua People's Congress (OPC) operating in the Western region, the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) and Niger Delta militants in the South and Eastern regions and Boko Haram terrorists detecting security management pattern in the country to the detriment of national security and cohesion. However, the principle of political direction should be applied in the security administration. This states that public administration being an agency of the state is subordinate to the political executive. This according to Ekwealor (2007:51), ensures that administration is kept separate from politics.

vi. **Inadequate Manpower in Security Departments:** There is an observed shortage and inadequacy of manpower amongst the Nigerian security departments and these personnel lack proper funding and motivations which negatively affect their performances and invariably impugn the national security management capabilities.

vii. **Lack of Discipline amongst Nigerian Security Forces:** Security personnel are engaged in corrupt practices and extort money from citizens at the expense of national security especially, the police personnel and border controls security officials who allow influx of smuggled goods, importation of dangerous and illegal fire-arms and above all, influx of terrorists and aliens into Nigeria to the detriment of national security.

viii. **Level of Technological Advancement:** The level of technological advancement both for military and security intelligence services helps in capacity building that goes a long way to enhance stability in a nation. For example, the USA with its advanced technologies has helped her global capabilities to procure intelligence and maintain her security at home and abroad.

The Nigerian Prison and Prisoners

As a member of the United Nations (UN), Nigeria is a signatory to the *UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners* (SMRTP), which defines imprisonment thus: "A sentence or a similar measure deprivation of liberty is ultimately to protect society against crime". The end can only be achieved if the period of imprisonment is used to ensure so far as possible that upon the inmate's return to society, the offender is not able to lead a law-abiding and self-supporting life (Peterson,2016).

Empirical observation suggests that the Nigerian prison service has not been able to meet these objectives. Most of the facilities that were built several years ago are now overcrowded. Prison workers are poorly uniformed, and

poorly paid, while prisons lack the resources needed to promote the welfare of inmates (Erinosho, 2019). Such conditions influence Alemika's (2012) conclusion that Nigerian prisons are human warehouses.

Since inmates spend extensive time together under the circumscribed environment of regimentation and confinement, they are drawn together based on similar perceptions and interests. This bond results in the formation of inmate subculture. The rewards of such inmate subculture include protection from the actions of the prison officials and other inmates. The groups exert influence over their members as well as restraining non-members. The leaders' knowledge of prison life is used to manipulate official policies and custodial personnel so that they can be used for the benefit of the group. "The 'old con' instructs the new inmates" (Clemmer, 2018). In several prisons in Nigeria, inmates tend to be afraid of the informal subculture of the prison which can threaten their lives if they violate any formal administrative punishments and rules (Adler, 2015). Put differently, inmates are more likely to accept the prison subculture that exists among the prisoners than any rules from the prison authority.

The fact is, the development of a prison subculture does not only indict prison officials but also explains to a large extent the level of mistrust that exists between prisoners and prison officials. It also explains the incessant prison breaks in the country and the character of inmates that come out from the prison after serving their term as well as the increased rate of recidivism. "For them, prisons have become trade schools, and they come out worse" (Awake, 2021:5), only to be recycled back to prison by the police and the judiciary.

Reflecting on his experiences and the lack of recreational facilities at the Kano prison, Effiong (2001:17) argued thus:

I engaged in morning and evening jogging in a small space in front of our cell immediately after being open out in the morning and before being locked up in the evening. Sometimes a few prison officials would frown at my exercise, suspecting that I was rehearsing a jailbreak.

Sleep is the cheapest commodity in prison. In the absence of sleep, "we found time to chat about ourselves, our families, our fears and sometimes our plans, new inmates, prison conditions and administration". Ex-convicts keep on returning to prison with fresh convictions for "the joy and embrace of those they left behind" (Yishau, 2005). Despite the promises of the rehabilitative model, periodic evaluations by scholars have consistently revealed performance failure (Alemika & chukwuma, 2001). Recent government consideration for the execution of all convicts on death row to decongest prisons in the country confirms the failure of the rehabilitative model. There is a need for the Nigerian Prison Service to examine the alternative incarceration model.

Theoretical Framework

The capture theory was used in this paper. Though earlier versions of the capture theory of regulation existed in the 1950s and 60s and were mainly used to explain regulatory agencies and their life cycle which was a departure from the public interest theory, It was developed by the economist and Nobel Laureate, George Stigler (Onuoha, 2008). The crux of the capture theory is that regulatory agencies may come to be dominated by the interests they regulate and not by the public interest. The result is that the agency instead acts in ways that benefit the interests it is supposed to be regulating. In politics, the capture theory is majorly used to explain regulatory corruption where private interests are pursued in ways that influence state powers and decision-making. Therefore, the Capture Theory of Politics is best suitable to explain the corruption in the Nigerian Prison service and the inability of the security agencies to rise to the insecurity challenges in Nigeria including incessant prison breaks.

Capture theory is a set of interrelated assumptions employed to explain and understand how regulatory agencies are captured by regulated concerns or interests, thereby distorting the original intention of the government to

create the agencies. When a special interest seizes regulatory agencies to further their interest against the public interests for which they are created, capturing is said to have occurred (Onuoha, 2008).

Thus, a regulatory agency that has deviated from its goals of public interest and now serves a particular interest can be said to be a captured agency (Kenton, 2019). Such capture takes place because certain groups or individuals can influence the government or the outcome of a policy to reflect their interest using the resources in their power (Lee, 2006). To do this or achieve their objectives, those aiming to capture the policy direction of a state often focus their energies on influencing the agency's staff or members.

The choice of this theory arises from the need to search for a theory to explain the ineffective prison administration and incessant prison breaks in Nigeria, because, suitable theories have not been employed to analyze the problem at hand. This theory sees prison break as a form of government failure. It happens when a government agency operates in favour of individual interest rather than public interest. This often happens when a citizen's interest is not captured in government policies and decision-making processes. The theory also holds that when the government pay leap services to the security, safety and welfare of the majority of the citizens leading to the ineffective and oppressiveness of government agencies, capture is said to have occurred.

Jombo (2016), in alluding to the capture theory of the state posits that to lackadaisical attitude of the government in providing adequate security and housing for facilities for prisoners including rehabilitation facilities has resulted in prison congestion that has been fingered as a factor leading to prison break. Anisukwu et al. (2015), argued that it is because of poor quality and quantity of prison food, overcrowding, lack of medical facilities and personnel, poor sanitation and incessant death among inmates. While these are relevant views, our position is that two powerful groups have captured the Nigerian Prison Service and they are, the wealthy prisoners and a cabal within the Nigerian Prison Service itself.

Causality and the Security Threats of Prison Break

Globally, all prison facilities house both male and female convicts and offenders awaiting trial for different categories of crimes, namely murder, robbery, theft, kidnapping, assault, money laundering, fraud and conspiracy, arson, unlawful possession of property, electoral violence, and rape, among others. Indeed, there is a causal relationship between overpopulated prisons and the incidence of prison breaks because inmates have the advantage of numbers over the warders who are supposed to be on guard to fend off any threat to the prisons, especially to prevent any external attempt to free prisoners.

Among the many agencies mandated to provide correctional service within the Nigeria judicial criminal system, The Nigeria Correctional Service is the most visible. Tsuwa and Okoh (2016) aver that prisons serve as deterrence to potential deviants while giving justice to victims of criminal acts perpetrated by deviants, to maintain law and order in the state. The foregoing is because when people are not punished for their acts of violence or deviant behaviour against others, they can become a security risk to the entire society when it becomes too recurrent. Normally, the prison is a sort of rehabilitation centre as its goals are to teach the prisoners good morals that will help them to function as law-abiding citizens in the country. It is in this sense that it can be called a socializing system. The prison during the period, it plays host to the convicted becomes their homes and thus inmates become one big family teaching them how to be productive and self-reliant. According to Oluwadare and Agboola (2019), many Nigerian prisons are well-secured especially in their physical infrastructures. For instance, it is a common sight in Nigerian prisons to see high fences and even inmates are often locked behind doors that are concrete or burglarproof which prevents them from escaping.

Despite the over 12 ft high fence walls and the confinement of the inmates to rooms with burglar-proof doors, and warders on duty, some prisoners still find their way out. One wonders how prison breaks are planned and executed successfully without the knowledge of the warders. They are usually taken unawares by the inmates, who rarely have firearms. The prison houses two sets of people. Some have been convicted and there are those awaiting trials for their alleged crime. Concerning granting pardon, which could in a way help decongest the prisons, two approaches are obtainable:

- Jail delivery: a situation where judges and lawyers visit the prison to review all the cases pending in courts to find inmates that have stayed beyond the normal period without trial. Inmates whose files are missing could be granted pardon by the chief judge and those who have stayed beyond their stipulated time or who have spent years awaiting trials.
- Governors' pardon: the governor of a state can pardons prisoners through the prerogative of mercy on the recommendation of prison officials based on the conviction that the prisoners have repented and are found worthy of being considered for pardon.

On congestion in prisons, the superintendent lamented: "Our hands are tied. The prisons are congested because there are crimes. We do not go looking for awaiting trial members (ATMs) or convicts, but Judges or courts bring them. Prisons as a body, we do not have to release. When their time expires, we release them to go

It is noteworthy that there are two types of prison breaks in Nigeria namely, externally motivated and internally planned/coordinated prison breaks. Externally motivated prison breaks occur when it is planned outside the prison itself specifically by armed groups. An externally motivated prison break is often laced with extreme violence and the use of explosives and other high-impact devices. The Boko Haram sect has utilized this strategy several times to facilitate the escape of its members arrested for terrorism-related offences.

Internally planned prison break which is the second type is planned by inmates themselves. However, it should be noted that the internally motivated prison break is less fatal and less risky when compared with the externally planned prison break that often leads to the death of even prison officials.

Some of the factors that raise the desire to escape in inmates cannot be downplayed. One of the reasons for explaining internally motivated prison breaks is the condition of prison life of inmates which is often a gory sight. The environment is usually not conducive to human habitation. Another notable driver of prison breaks is the high number of death row inmates. According to Ajayi (2018), a situation where "some of the death row inmates in Ibara Prison, Abeokuta, Ogun State were convicted by the former military tribunals, and cannot appeal against their judgment," it is worrisome that not all prison officers are enlightened on how to respect the inalienable rights of inmates. The foregoing is worsened when the problem of lack of funds delays the prosecution of awaiting trial cases for those remanded in prison custody on allegations of different crimes. The long period of waiting for trial can easily motivate some inmates to think of ways of utilising any little means of escape to avoid prosecution, jail term or death penalty.

Awaiting trial prisoners have contributed to the phenomenon of prison breaks due to the high population which makes prisons crowded like markets. According to Tsuwa and Okoh (2016), "the population of awaiting trial persons is a major challenge to the realisation of the goals of correction due to the punishment of the wrong people for a long time". From observation and various reports on prison congestion across Africa, awaiting trial has become the attribute of criminal justice in developing nations like Nigeria and others in Africa. Nigeria's scenario has been noted as having human rights implications for prison officers and the prisoners themselves. Bateman

(2003 in Emeka et al, 2019) avers that accused persons in developing countries suffer the snag of legal service accessibility. This problem does not mean that there is a scarcity of lawyers in the countries concerned but simply a question of affordability; and society needs to be hastier in prosecuting cases involving political officeholders and other privileged citizens. Emeka et al (2019) posit that "the criminal justice system has reneged in this constitutional provision which mandates the ministry of justice to provide for indigent accused persons with defence counsel in trial". This is evident in the number of inmates awaiting trial in prisons.

The delayed trial or prosecution of the accused inmates is not only caused by their inability to access legal officials whose exorbitant charges hinder the trial of people facing different counts of charges. It makes the inmates have a feeling of hopelessness for years. This is an area that demands the attention of non-governmental organizations to correct the wrongs in the criminal justice system, especially by sponsoring the engagement of the services of lawyers for inmates who have spent some years in prison custody.

The deplorable state of Nigerian prisons was confirmed by Nigeria's president, who observed that most of the prisons are congested. He portrayed the situation as a national scandal which demanded a new approach to prison decongestion for the welfare of inmates (Premium Times, 6 October 2017). In a situation where congestion is a problem, prisoners can easily take advantage of it to plan their escape. Consequently, prison congestion indirectly encourages inmates to become partners in another crime whether victimless or organized in prison. This is the case with the Nsukka prison which was built to accommodate 180 persons but now houses over 500 persons. The same is true with the Enugu prison, built to accommodate 638 prisoners but now accommodates 1800 inmates. These two prison facilities have experienced prison breaks in recent times. The Koton Karfe prison, known for incessant cases of prison breaks, was originally designed for 180 inmates; however, it now houses almost double this number. Also, the Okaka prison in Yenogoa, Bayelsa State, with a capacity of 300 inmates presently holds 600 inmates, and twice in the last three years, suspects awaiting trial have escaped from prison vans conveying them to court (Folaranmi, 2017). This has prompted security beef-up at the prisons, including the deployment of soldiers and an armoured personnel carrier to prevent any prison break. A security report by Eze (2019) indicated that the Abakaliki prison was built in 1946 to house 387 people, but now houses 920, with about 811 awaiting trial. The problem with the awaiting trial inmates is that the majority have been incarcerated for more than five years. Some have even been in custody for decades without trial or conclusion of their cases. This is a threat to security because there is the probability that most of them will not be re-arrested, meaning a miscarriage of justice either in clearing allegations against them or bringing them to justice if they committed the crimes that led to their arrest.

In 2016, there was a massive protest in the Abakaliki prison by its inmates which, mistaken to be prison breaks led to shootings that killed some of the inmates (Eze, 2019). Poor sanitary conditions have also contributed to prison breaks across Nigeria, mainly because inmates are shown little or no attention by prison officials who are always inclined to treat prisoners as non-humans. This explains why some inmates wonder whether being remanded in prison even when they are awaiting trial, is condemnation or conviction to die through starvation and inhuman treatment and would rather risk prison break.

Implications of Prison Breaks to Security Management in Nigeria

In terms of human rights implications, prison break poses a nonconventional security threat with the capacity to create a channel for human rights abuses against the prison breakers, security operatives, residents around prisons, and passersby within a town where such an incident occurs. Similarly, prison breaks have given prison officials the excuse needed to treat prisoners as non-humans and to violate their rights. Such justification is hinged on the crime control model of national security and to forestall the breakdown of law and order. Consequently, in the process of ensuring that the prisoners are restricted to the confines of the affected prison, for justice reasons, some

of them end up losing their lives through lethal violence occasioned by stray bullets from the firearms of warders. Most times, this happens because the warders are taken unawares and sometimes attacked by the fugitive inmates. In such situations, security operatives are faced with a dilemma, whether to fire gunshots at the escaping prisoners or to leave them to escape and later embark on a manhunt for them. The implications of both options cannot be downplayed. The first option would expose both the inmates and fugitive prisoners to the risk of losing their lives or sustaining gunshot wounds, while the latter would create an opportunity for prisoners to jump bail, escape justice and entrench anarchy in the state through criminal acts. Therefore, addressing the human rights problem of prison breaks requires institutional restructuring and efforts to end the problem of prison breaks.

Inmates' Denial of Food and Healthcare

Knowing that they might die in sickness without adequate medical care is enough to propel prisoners to attempt to force their way out by any possible means. This is because many prisons have little or no provision for the welfare of inmates. An incident that occurred in Ogwashi Uku prison is just one of the many cases of the absurd in Nigerian prisons. A prisoner was reportedly abandoned and left to die after attempts by other inmates to contribute money to fuel a vehicle needed to convey him to the hospital by prison officers failed. He died after some days.

The nature of the offence or crime committed, and the penalty or punishment as laid down by law, when considered, can also push affected inmates to take the risk of attempting an escape, the consequences notwithstanding. In this regard, an inmate who is facing trial for alleged involvement in armed robbery, kidnapping, terrorism, or treason is more likely to initiate a prison break than one incarcerated for goat theft or bag snatching, considering the consequences of the crimes. Serious crimes could earn the inmate life imprisonment or death sentence by hanging or firing squad. This shows that prison break has push and pull factors. Prison reports in recent times have shown that suspects and those convicted of serious crimes and who have expertise in using arms have dominated the number of those involved in prison breaks than others convicted of minor crimes. But pull factors are more externally driven than internally.

The nature of cells, the height of the fence with double security wires (paced in triangular form on both sides of the fence) that surround the prisons, spaces in the prison environment, and the number of prison warders policing the surroundings can all facilitate or reduce the occurrence of prison break. Prisons with officers who sleep deeply are at risk of prison break because arms and door keys can be seized by inmates to effect prison break. Of course, the fact that most prison breaks occur at night when everywhere is dark or officers are relaxing makes it crucial that more staff are on duty than in the daytime. Prison break will make it difficult for runaway prisoners to re-enter society and thus, cannot undergo proper correctional reintegration. The government and comptroller general of prisons need to investigate the conspiracy associated with prison breaks; whether prisoners or their relatives offer monetary gifts to prison officers to facilitate their escape.

Conclusion

This paper has examined the incremental wave of prison breaks in the country as well as the security implications. When prisoners do not have confidence in the criminal justice system which they believe cannot dispense justice as required, they may consider prison break as a way out. In Nigeria, it is apparent that provisions are rarely made for those arrested and kept in prison custody for minor offences so much so that some of them are left and forgotten for years without conclusion of their cases in courts of law. This is simply a violation of their socio-economic rights and rights to freedom of movement and association. The phenomenon of prison break is usually aided by

the inmate population and sometimes their ability to take advantage of the lapses in the prisons and officers' lack of commitment to duty. Instead of merely sacking prison officers in affected prisons, the government needs to investigate the factors causing the incidents, especially by embarking on decongestion of prisons and facilitating speedy trials of inmates awaiting trial. The death of some inmates after an attempted prison break in Abakaliki indicates the risks associated with such an act. The dilemma of prison break is that it encourages illegal freedom when convicted or awaiting trial inmates escape from the premises. It makes the escapees avoid being sentenced as a punitive measure for the crimes they may have committed. For this reason, some inmates who have spent many years without prosecution ought to be considered for pardon by justices, governors or other leaders who have the constitutional authority for such action.

The issue of prison break raises a lot of issues as far as Nigeria's criminal justice system is concerned. It points to the fact that if the country desires to contain prison breaks and prevent the security threat, there is a need to examine and improve the criminal justice system, as well as the condition of prisons to make life worth living for the inmates. The comment by Nigeria's President, Muhammadu Buhari on the bad condition of prisons calls for action by the authorities. Although prisoners, whether convicted or awaiting trial, are a security threat when they attempt to escape or succeed in escaping, killing them in the process is also a miscarriage of justice, which must be avoided. If the government and security agencies are not prepared to prosecute the accused inmates, they should consider the option of granting them the prerogative of mercy, especially for inmates who have been held for a decade or more. Additionally, prioritizing the food and health rights of prisoners is an unparalleled strategy for curbing prison breaks. The government and comptroller general of correctional Service need to investigate the conspiracy associated with prison breaks; whether prisoners or their relatives offer monetary gifts to prison officers to facilitate their escape.

Recommendations

1. A total overhaul and re-training of security forces in modern technologies for combat readiness, especially the police force which lacks modern crime-fighting equipment and is poorly paid making them suffer from low morale which negatively affects their performance towards national security safeguards and objectives.
2. It is suggested that collective security strategies in security management which has a holistic and all-hazards approach in planning and operations be introduced and effectively implemented. In a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic country like Nigeria, with divergent security challenges which often pull these tribes apart, this paper suggests a security management strategy that is based on complex inter-dependence as a balance of power approach to accommodate the various interests of diverse ethno-geo-political groups that make-up Nigeria.
3. The government should ensure proper funding, ensure the lives of security personnel equip these security agencies and pay them well to enhance their performance and combat readiness in the face of rising security challenges in Nigeria.
4. This paper recommends that the Nigerian government adequately fund her military and security forces, but pay them well, provide office and residential accommodation, issue free official uniforms, especially to the police personnel, and adequately motivate and fund their operations, to improve their performance and enhance their combat readiness in the face of heightened insecurity in Nigeria.
5. We equally submit that the Nigerian Police Command structure be de-centralized for prompt response to emergencies at state and local levels, as well as the introduction of effective community policing and public-private partnership security management approach for grassroots crime combat

6. The government should use conscious, rational and deliberate efforts to co-ordinate, and mobilize security group activities, combining and harmonizing efforts to achieve both internal and external security objectives. There should be the application of prudent behaviour based on rational principles to direct, co-ordinate, control, motivate and channel the collective efforts of citizens, (human, material technical resources and spiritual) for the accomplishment of the objectives of national security.

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