



The Negative Criminal Effects of Internal Security Challenges in Northeastern Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This work explored internal security challenges in Northeastern Nigeria with the view of identifying the criminal impasses. Doubtlessly, the Northeast has been ravaged with insecurities since 2009 till the present date. It is therefore, the aim of this work to critically examine the negative criminal effects of internal security challenges in Northeastern, Nigeria. The methodological approach was doctrinal style, using primary and secondary sources of information as tools for data collection. The work found, offences of kidnappings, abductions and suicide bombings have tumbled-down communities in northeast. The work concluded, there are identifiable negative criminal effects in northeastern zone of Nigeria. The work recommended among others that the armed forces should intensified efforts to halt security challenges in the northeast.

Keywords: Negative; Criminal; Effects; Internal Security; Challenges; and Northeast.

1.0 EXPOSITORY BACKGROUND:

Expository foundation of internal security challenges in Nigeria is necessary in this work. This is hinged on the fact that it will provide solid schematic survey and background awareness of internal security problems in Nigeria. It shall further offer an appreciative consciousness to the historical evolution of insurgencies in the country. Historically, the present internal security challenges in Nigeria started in the northeast, particularly in Maiduguri, the capital city of Borno State of Nigeria. Its towering evolution begins as a thuggery gang, with the aim of winning the gubernatorial seat in Borno State during the 2007 general elections. The purpose was achieved as it was intended, but unknowing to anyone, it will grow to the present magnitude. In all amount of sincerity, the elites never anticipate the gang to be a thorn on the flesh. This is because during the phases at the veil of ignorance, the gang was admirably coordinated by those at the helms. Orders and instructions were honoured, respected, and obeyed. Tranquillity and serenity permeate the entire atmospheric ambience. Calmness prevail over hostility at the initial original position. There were delights of philosophical pleasures and eulogies at the initial original position.

Howbeit, towards the building up of 2011 general elections, the smallest rugged group transfigured itself into Boko Haram. translated into English language as meaning: “Western culture or orientation is sinful and forbidden.” By this reason, it should not be embraced in the northeastern Nigeria. The group began attacking and destroying establishments connected to western cultural orientations in the northeast. These include police stations, schools, health facilities, electricity installations, oil and pipeline installations. Other facilities were telecommunication equipment, gas installations, market facilities, radio and television stations, churches, and transportation installations within the northeast geo-political zone. As the destructions were going on, government officials manning these establishments and institutions were massacred. Moreso, it was Boko Haram which accepted responsibility of damaging the rail line from the Federal Capital Territory (*FCT*), Abuja to Kaduna.¹ Knowing quite well, that a train is scheduled for Kaduna from Abuja that morning. This incident happened in March 2022.²

¹ Aljazeera News of March 14, 2022. <https://www.aljazeera.com>. Accessed on April 9, 2026 at about 15.30 hours GMT local time.

² *Ibidem*.



Still on the historical voyage, by the conclusion of the general elections of 2011, the gang transformed into an extremist group. Having the intention to create an independent sovereign state within the shores of Nigeria. In the post 2011 general elections, the extremist group declared three States in the northeast,³ to wit, Adamawa, Borno and Yobe as independent sovereign state. Choosing Maiduguri as would be the capital city of the newest state in West Africa. This circumstance threatened the sovereign existence and territorial integrity of Nigeria. Following the aforementioned event, a state of emergency was pronounced by the then administration of the Federal Government of Nigeria on May 15, 2013.⁴ This militant terrorist group has caused unfathomable agony on the people of the northeast. They have killed hundreds of thousands of people, they have raped, maimed, looted valuables, incinerated many communities, and have taken tens of thousands of people in captivity. These engagements are never palatable to Nigerians. Including all peace-loving peoples in the world who valued the sanctity and dignity of life.

Declaration of a purported independent state within an existing sovereignty is a serious felonious offence. It is treason and secession in legal configuration. Its punishment is death⁵ by either hanging, firing squad, or lethal injection. Even the mere act of conspiring with another to commit the offence of treason is the same maximum capital punishment. Therefore, what Muhammed Yusuf did in May 15, 2013 by declaring the area covering Adamawa, Borno and Yobe as an independent state is treason. It was a dangerous act of secession, since those States are parts of the cadastral map of Nigeria. Going by the history of Nigeria, all secessionists were always arrested, prosecuted and sentenced accordingly. This is knitted upon the fact, when it was done by Issac Jasper Adaka Boro within the early post independent Nigeria. When he declared the littoral zones of the Niger Delta, as Niger Delta Republic, an area within the sovereignty of Nigeria. He was arrested by the Federal Government, prosecuted, convicted and sentenced accordingly. On the same vein, when Colonel. *Chukwuemeka Odumegwu* Ojukwu, the then military governor of Eastern Nigeria, declared the southeastern parts of Nigeria as a sovereign state of Biafra in May 1967. Ojukwu's action led Nigeria into a civil war, which lasted for three (3) years. Several lives were lost and ginormous amount of the nation's financial resources were expended to prosecute the war. Furthermore, Sunday Adeyemo,⁶ when he attempted to declare self-determination within the shores of Nigeria. The Government went for him, out of fear, he ran out of Nigeria. The Government vide diplomatic Interpol connectivity, Mr. Sunday Adeyemo was arrested and deported to the country to stand trial for treason.

The criminal and social disruptions in the northeast are important to be studied empirically. The hostility in the northeast, prompted a humanitarian group to conduct a humanitarian survey of the area in 2019.⁷ The survey came up with the following fact findings, about seventy-seven (77)⁸ humanitarian organisations are operating in the northeastern parts of Nigeria. Six (6) are United Nations Organisation (*UNO*) agencies, twenty-eight (28) continental, and regional non-governmental organisations. Others are thirty-three (33) non-

³ Christian Science Monitors Group. <https://www.csmonitors.com>. Accessed on 14th day of April, 2026 at about 14:04 hours GMT local time.

⁴ BBC, News Africa of May 15, 2013. <https://www.bbcnewsafrica.com>. Accessed on April 13, 2026 at about 13:45 hours GMT local time.

⁵ See Section 37 (1) of the Criminal Code Act, Cap.C38, Vol. 4, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria (LFN) 2010, it states thus:

“Any person who levies war against the State, in order to intimidate or overawe the President or the Governor of a State, is guilty of treason, and is liable to the punishment of death.”

(2) Any person conspiring with any person, either within or without Nigeria, to levy war against the State with intent to cause such levying of war as would be treason if committed by a citizen of Nigeria, is guilty of treason and is liable to the punishment of death.

Section 402 of the Administration of Criminal Justice Act, 2015, enacts as follows:

“(1) Punishment of death is inflicted by hanging the convict by the neck till he is dead or by lethal injection.

(2) Sentence of death shall be pronounced by the court in the following form:

“The sentence of the court upon you is that you be hanged by the neck until you are dead or by lethal injection.”

⁶ Popularly known as Sunday Igboho.

⁷ Humanitarian Outcome Group. <https://www.humanitarianoutcome.org>. accessed of the 14th day of April 2026 at about 15:00 hours GMT local time.

⁸ *Ibidem*.



governmental organisations from Nigeria. The survey further shows that, 7.2⁹ million people are in need of humanitarian support. Over 2 million persons have been displaced from their traditional habitats. These group of persons are living in *IDP's* camps on the mercies of others. Another 1.2¹⁰ million people are looking for humanitarian support outside Nigeria.

Structurally, the work will make a brief history of insurgency in Nigeria, glossary of relevant offences going on in northeastern Nigeria. Further, the work will make a concise survey of internal security challenges in the northeast. Thereafter make a thorough synthesis and legal evaluation. Finally, the work shall berth at conclusion and offer some recommendations to the academia, arms of government and the general public.

2.0 GLOSSARY OF APPLICABLE OFFENCES:

The Nigerian criminal jurisprudence recognizes two codes, namely Criminal Code and Penal Code. The former operates in southern states, whereas, the latter operates in northern states. The activities being perpetrated in northeastern Nigeria are felonies with severe criminal consequences. The following are some offences identified as committed in northeastern Nigeria.

Terrorism: Judicially, the Court of Appeal of Nigeria, in *Ayobami vs The State*,¹¹ defined terrorism as follows:

Terrorism is the act of intimidation of persons through the use of force and violence in order to achieve certain goal or end. The Black's Law Dictionary describes terrorism as 'the use of threat or violence to intimate or cause panic.'¹² The threat of violence associated with terrorism is always with the purpose of terrorizing another, causing serious public disorder or inconvenience, and or extortion. A threat to law and order on its own. It communicated intent or violence, to inflict loss or diminish the equilibrium of law and order in the society and amongst individuals who the law is made to protect their co-existence. It is a global common knowledge that kidnapping and extortion are some of the major activities and strategies of terrorists.

Therefore, terrorism is intentional use of force, violence and intimidation by a person or a group of persons in order to cause breakdown of law and order in a lawful society. The prime aim of any terrorist group is to cause panic, apprehension, commotion, and intimidation resulting to a total breach of peace. By this act, terrorism hampers and disrupts social, economic, political, cultural, and religious activities in the society. The coercive force is not always legitimate, but against social order and norms aimed at coaxing government and the people to achieve selfish goals or demands.

Act of Terrorism: The enabling Act,¹³ under section 2,¹⁴ subsection (3), enacts as follows, listing numerous acts which constitute act of terrorism:

"In this Act, "act of terrorism" means an act wilfully performed with the intention of furthering an ideology, whether political, religious, racial, or ethnic, and which—

- (a) may seriously harm or damage a country or an international organization;
- (b) unduly compels a government or international organization to perform or abstain from performing any act;
- (c) seriously intimidates a population;

⁹ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*.

¹¹ [2017] All FWLR (Part. 886) 1964 CA; [1995, paras. A-C], *Onyemenam*, JCA.

¹² Ninth (9th) Edition, p. 1611.

¹³ Terrorism (Prevention and Prohibition) Act, 2022.

¹⁴ Subsection (1), enacts thus: "All acts of terrorism and the financing of terrorism are prohibited."



(d) seriously destabilizes or destroys the fundamental political, constitutional, economic, or social structures of a country or an international organization;

(e) influences a government or an international organisation by intimidation or coercion;

(f) violates the provisions of any international treaty or resolution to which Nigeria is a party, subject to the provisions of Section 12 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999; and

(g) involves or causes, or results in–

- i. attack on a person's life, in the form of grievous bodily harm or death;
- ii. kidnapping of a person;
- iii. destruction of Government or public facility, a transport system, an infrastructural facility, including national critical information infrastructure, a fixed platform located on the continental shelf, a public place or private property, which may likely endanger human life or result in a major economic loss;
- iv. the seizure of an aircraft, ship or other means of public transport or conveying goods, or the diversion or use of such means of transportation or conveyance for the purposes of subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph;
- v. the manufacture, possession, acquisition, transportation, transfer, supply, or use of weapons, including explosives or biological, chemical, radiation or nuclear, weapons (BCRN) weapons, as well as research into, and development of BCRN weapons without lawful authority, and the receipt, possession, use, transfer, alteration, disposal, or disposal of nuclear or other radioactive material or devices;
- vi. the release of dangerous substance, causing of fire, explosions or floods, the effect of which is to endanger human life;
- vii. interference with or disruption of the supply of water, power, or any other fundamental natural resource, the effect of which is to endanger human life;
- viii. the release into the environment or any part thereof, or distribution or exposure of the public or any part to dangerous, hazardous, nuclear, or other radioactive or harmful substance, or any toxic chemical, microbial or other biological agent or toxin, the effect of which is to endanger human life or to provoke substantial damage to property or to the environment;
- ix. endangering or engaging in acts likely to endanger the safety of an aircraft, ship, train, or any other means of transportation;
- x. the bombing and other acts of violence at airports and other public places; ...,

All the acts listed above are prohibited acts and are punishable under Part V of the enabling Act, to wit, Terrorism (Prevention and Prohibition) Act, 2022.

Kidnapping: Section 271 of the Penal Code, defined kidnapping as:

“Whoever takes or entices any person, under fourteen years of age if a male or under sixteen years of age if a female, or any person of unsound mind out of the keeping of the lawful guardian of such person without the consent of such guardian or conveys any such person beyond the limits of the State without the consent of someone legally authorised the consent to such removal, is said to kidnap such person.”¹⁵

Kidnapping under the Penal Code is punishable in section 273

¹⁵ Kidnapping under the Criminal Code, section 364 (2), provides to the following effect:

“Any person who –

(2) unlawfully imprisons any person within Nigeria in such a manner as to prevent him from applying to a court for his release or from discovering to any other person the place where he is imprisoned, or in such a manner as to prevent any person entitled to have access to him from discovering the place where he is imprisoned.

Is guilty of a felony and is liable to imprisonment for ten years.”



“Whoever kidnaps or abducts any person shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which extend to ten years and shall also be liable to fine.”

By the above excerpts in Nigeria, any unlawful seizure, capture, hostage, or custody of persons for whichever purpose not permitted by law is kidnapping. It is punishable under the two Codes, to wit, Criminal Code and Penal Code which are operating in the country.

Abduction: This offence which is very prevalent in the northeast, is defined under section 272 of the Penal Code as meaning:

“Whoever by force compels or by any deceitful means induces any person to go from any place, is said to abduct that person.”

Abduction, under the Criminal Code is defined in section 361 as follows:

“Any person who, with intent to marry or carnally known a female of any age, or to cause her to be married, or carnally known by any other person, takes her away, or detains her against her will, is guilty of a felony, and is liable to imprisonment for seven years.”

Under the provisions of section 362, of the Act, further defined abduction as follows:

“Any person who unlawfully takes an unmarried girl under the age of sixteen years out of the custody or protection of her father or mother or other person having the lawful care or charge of her, and against the will of such father or mother or other person, is guilty of a misdemeanour, and is liable to imprisonment for two years.”

Under the two Codes abduction is an offence punishable by law. The offence can be committed against both genders. Strict punishment is provided for the offences of kidnapping and abduction under the Penal Code in section 274, stipulates thus:

“Whoever kidnaps or abducts any person in order that such person may be killed, or may be so dispose of as to be put in danger of being killed shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to fourteen years and shall also be liable to fine.”

Murder: By the provisions of section 220 of the Penal Code, culpable homicide is defined as follows:

“Whoever causes death –

- (a) by doing an act with the intention of causing death or such bodily injury as is likely to cause death; or
- (b) by doing an act with the knowledge that he is likely by such act to cause death; or
- (c) by doing rash or negligent act, commits the offence of culpable homicide.”
- (d) Under section 316 of the Criminal Code,¹⁶ murder is defined thus:

“Except as hereinafter set forth, a person who unlawfully kills another under any of the following circumstances, that is to say –

1. if the offender intends to cause the death of the person killed, or that of some other person;
2. if the offender intends to do to the person killed or to some other person some grievous harm;
3. if death is caused by means of an act done in the prosecution of an unlawful purpose, which act is of such a nature as to be likely to endanger human life;
4. if the offender intends to do grievous harm to some person for the purpose of facilitating the commission of an offence which is such that the offender may be arrested without warrant, or for the purpose of facilitating the flight of an offender who has committed or attempted to commit any such offence;

¹⁶ Cap.C38, Vol. 4, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria (LFN) 2010.



5. if death is caused by administering any stupefying or overpowering things for either of the purposes last aforesaid;
6. if death is caused by wilfully stopping the breath of any person for either of such purposes, is guilty of murder.”

The offences of murder and culpable homicide are capital offences in both codes, to wit, Criminal Code and Penal Code. They are very serious offences which are occurring almost diurnally in northeastern Nigeria.

Rape: This offence is defined under section 282 of the Penal Code as:

“(1) A man is said to commits rape who, save in the case referred to in subsection (2), has sexual intercourse with a woman in any of the following circumstances –

- (a) against her will;
- (b) without her consent;
- (c) with her consent, when her consent has been obtained by putting her in fear of death or of hurt;
- (d) with her consent, when the man knows that he is not her husband and that her consent is given because she believes that he is another man to whom she is or believes herself to be lawfully married;
- (e) with or without her consent, when she is under fourteen years of age or of unsound mind.”

Rape is defined under the Criminal Code in section 357 as follows:

“Any person who has unlawful carnal knowledge of a woman or girl, without her consent, or with her consent, if the consent is obtained by force or by means of threats or intimidation of any kind, or by fear of harm, or by means of false and fraudulent representation as to the nature of the act, or, in the case of a married woman, by personating her husband, is guilty of an offence which is called rape.”

The offence of rape is defined and punished under the two Codes. It is an offence where sexual intercourse is had against the will or consent of a woman or a girl.

Possession of Firearms: Illegal possession of firearm, is defined under section 3 of the Robbery and Firearms (Special Provisions) Act, “possession of firearms” means:

“Any person having a firearm in his possession or under his control in contravention of the Firearms Act or any order made there-under shall be guilty of an offence under this Act and shall upon conviction under this Act be sentenced to a fine of twenty thousand Naira or to imprisonment for a period of not less than ten years, or to both.”

It is the act of being in possession and control of firearm and ammunition without licence from the appropriate authority.

Arson: is defined as the intentional setting of fire on any building whether completed or not. See the provisions of section 443 of the Criminal Code.¹⁷

3.0 SURVEY OF INTERNAL SECURITY CHALLENGES IN NORTHEASTERN NIGERIA

The Northeastern parts of Nigeria, is the very hub of Boko Haram terrorist Islamic group. It has deserted and rendered most of the communities, especially those in Borno State inhabitable. The North Eastern zone, has become a theatre of war, infested with violence, mass killing, and several other acts of criminal atrocities. People have been constantly killed, both civilian and military alike. Kidnapping, raping of women and girls, setting houses and communities ablaze is a common feature in the northeast. By this recent day, Friday the 10th

¹⁷ Cap. C38, Vol. 4, Laws of the Federal of Nigeria (LFN) 2010.



of April, 2026, Four Hundred and Sixteen (416)¹⁸ abductees were crying to the Federal Government for their release. The kidnapping which includes women and girls took place at *Ngoshe* community, within the *Gwoza* Local Government Area of Borno State of Nigeria.¹⁹ Still in *Gwoza* Local Government Area of Borno State, on the same date, 10th of April 2026, a suicide bomber detonated his *IED* at *Pulka* community and killed Twenty-Three (23)²⁰ vulnerable Nigerians. On Friday the 24th day of April 2026, the Islamic militant group murdered Twenty (20) persons in border communities between Adamawa and Borno States, all within the northeast. In the year 2014, Boko Haram was considered as the most-deadliest terrorists' group in the entire world.²¹ For voluntarily slaughtering quite over Six Thousand (6,000)²² people in that year alone. Boko Haram, an Islamic terrorist group has built a stronger, and or almost a permanent niche in the northeast. This is making people to be cadaverously malnourished as skinny as in acute gaunt due to deficiency of food for nourishment.

By the murdering escapades of Boko Haram, on January 20, 2012 a coordinated attack of bombs, grenades and guns were launched in Kano City. A very strategic and populous urban settlement in Northern Nigeria. Whereat, the aftermath effect recorded the massive killings of more than One Hundred and Eighty-Five (185)²³ persons in the single attack. The fatal attack was targeted at Police facilities and other government infrastructures within the city of Kano. On the very recent periods of April 14, 2026, a Boko Haram suicide bomber in the midst of military officers at the 242 Battalion Brigade at *Monguno*.²⁴ A very distressful incident which took place at the headquarters of *Monguno* Local Government Area of Borno State where the Battalion outpost is situated. Irrespective of the heavy presence of military hierarchies, a disguised suicide bomber in their midst detonated his *IED* killing the Battalion commander, Colonel. I. A. Mohammed and Six (6)²⁵ other high-ranking officers of the Battalion. This is a glaring indication of the porosity and sponginess of the military formation in Nigeria, for the inability to detect an infiltrator in their midst until the detonation. By this contemporary period, the 16th day of March, 2026, twin suicidal bombs erupted at Maiduguri city, the capital of Borno State.²⁶ The suicide bombers targeted two strategic sites, one at a local crowded market and another at the entrance gate of University of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital.²⁷ The bombs were detonated simultaneously slaughtering more than Twenty-Six (26)²⁸ persons. The dual bombings also injured quite over a hundred (100)²⁹ persons in the city. On July 6, 2013 Boko Haram's armed men attacked the Government Science Secondary School at *Mamudo*, in Yobe State of Nigeria, and killed Forty-Two (42)³⁰ persons. By September 29, 2013, the Islamic extremists' group, Boko Haram launched an attack at the Boy's Hostel of Government College of Agriculture at *Gujba* in Yobe State of the State of Nigeria and killed Forty-Four (44)³¹ people including members of staff. On February, 2014 One Hundred (100)³² children were killed, mostly

¹⁸ BarristerNG, Law and Politics News, April 4, 2026. <https://www.barristernglawandpolitics.com>. Accessed on April 4, 2026 at about 22:26 hours GMT, local time.

¹⁹ BarristerNG, Law and Politics News, April 4, 2026. <https://www.barristernglawandpolitics.com>. Accessed on April 4, 2026 at about 22:26 hours GMT, local time.

²⁰ <https://thenigerislawyer.com/2026/12/10>, Accessed on April 11, 2026 at about 14:51 hours GMT local time.

²¹ AP's African News Coverage; <https://www.apsnews.com/hub/africa>. Accessed on November 8, 2025; at about 15:00 hours GMT.

²² *Ibidem*.

²³ AP's African News Coverage; <https://www.apsnews.com/hub/africa>. Accessed on November 8, 2025; at about 15:00 hours GMT.

²⁴ Nigerianlawer News of April 14, 2026. <https://www.nigeriawernews.com>. Accessed on April 15, 2026 at about 16:00 hours GMT local time.

²⁵ *Ibidem*.

²⁶ BarristerNG, Law and Politics News, March 17, 2026. <https://www.barristernglawandpolitics.com>. Accessed on March 17, 2026 at about 13:03 hours GMT, local time.

²⁷ *Ibidem*.

²⁸ *Ibidem*.

²⁹ AP's Africa News Coverage; <https://www.apsnews.com/hub/africa>. Accessed on November 8, 2025; at about 15:00 hours GMT, local time.

³⁰ The Guardian Reuters, February 26, 2014; <https://www.theguardiannews.com>. Accessed at 14:25 GMT on November 10, 2025.

³¹ <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news.September.29.2014>

³² <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news.September.29.2014>.



Christians in the villages of Doron Baga and *Izeghe* in Yobe³³. The same month of February, 2014 Fifty-Nine (59) students were murdered at the Federal Government College³⁴.

From 2009 to 2025, Boko Haram Islamic extremists' group has killed more than Thirty-Five Thousand (35,000)³⁵ people in the State of Nigeria. Their direct activities of insurgency have rendered over Two Million (2,000,000)³⁶ people in the North East desolate and in dare need of humanitarian aids, forcing them to live in IDP's³⁷ camps. The suicide bombers are specialized outfit of the Boko Haram insurgency.³⁸ Whose specialization is to go about in different populous cities in the North to detonate their bombs and grenades. Especially, targeting large social gathering of people such as mosques, churches, schools, markets, weddings, funerals, convocations, large meetings,³⁹ and etcetera. Suicide Bombers are mostly young Muslim women who hide their dangerous *IED*⁴⁰ in their hijab. The first ever suicide bombers' mission in the State of Nigeria took place in *Madalla* in Niger State of the State of Nigeria on December 25, 2011.⁴¹ At which time, the large Catholic Mass of Saint Theresa's Catholic Church, *Madalla* has come to a close.⁴² As congregants were trouting home in their numbers, a suicide car bomb was detonated on worshipers killing Forty-Three (43)⁴³ church members instantly and injured several dozens of people. Boko Haram, the Islamic militant group claimed responsibility of the incident⁴⁴. Since the first incidence in December 2011, numerous of suicide bombers have been recorded in Nigerian State. In 2017 alone, One Hundred and Twenty-Seven (127)⁴⁵ suicide bombers were recorded killing quite over Tens of hundreds.⁴⁶ Thirty-Two (32) people were killed by suicide bombers in *Gwoza* town,⁴⁷ the headquarters of *Gwoza* Local Government Area of Borno State. By the early night hours of June 21, 2025, a female suicide bomber detonated her *IED* in a crowded fish market at *Konduga* town, the headquarters of *Konduga* Local Government Area of Borno State, of Nigeria. Just about a distance of twenty-Five (25 Km) Kilometres from Maiduguri municipality, murdering Twelve (12)⁴⁸ persons. On a Christmas day, December 25, 2025; suicide bomber targeted a mosque in *Gamboru* market, in Maiduguri metropolis, and massacred Five (5)⁴⁹ people and injured Thirty-Five (35)⁵⁰ persons.

The State's capital, the (Federal Capital Territory) *FCT*, Abuja, a well secured city was not left out for Boko Haram's suicide bombers. All the security apparatus, the Armed Forces, the Nigeria Police Force, and all others paramilitary forces which bear arms are all domiciled in the (Federal Capital Territory) *FCT*, Abuja. The headquarters of these outfits which are heavily populated with personnel and arms, more than any other establishments in the State are all situated in the (Federal Capital Territory) *FCT*, Abuja. All these combative establishments and all specialized agencies and bodies bearing intelligence are strategically situated in the (Federal Capital Territory) *FCT*, Abuja. yet could not detect their presence until the damage is done. In the *FCT*, on June 16, 2011; Hoko Haram's suicide bombers attacked right inside the Nigeria Police Force Headquarters and detonated their explosives and killed Six (6)⁵¹ people, two injured, and many of the Inspector General of Police' sophisticated vehicle in the convoy were destroyed. On August 25, 2011, a fortified

³³ *Ibidem*.

³⁴ The Guardian Reuters, February 26, 2014; <https://www.theguardiannaws.com>. Accessed at 14:25 GMT on November 10, 2025.

³⁵ AP's African News Coverage; <https://www.apsnews.com/hub/africa>. Accessed on November 8, 2025; at about 15:00 hours GMT.

³⁶ *Ibidem*.

³⁷ Internally Displaced People.

³⁸ BBC News, <https://www.bbc.com>, 08.05.2017: Accessed at about 14:45 hours GMT, 2025.

³⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁰ Improvised Explosive Device.

⁴¹ AP's African News Coverage; <https://www.apsnews.com/hub/africa>. Accessed on November 8, 2025; at about 15:00 hours GMT.

⁴² *Ibidem*.

⁴³ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁶ AP's African News Coverage; <https://www.apsnews.com/hub/africa>. Accessed on November 8, 2025; at about 15:00 hours GMT.

⁴⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁹ <https://thenigerislawyer.com/2025/12/25>, Accessed on December 25, 2025 at about 11:51 hours GMT local time.

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*.

⁵¹ The Nations News, June 16, 2011; <https://www.nationnews.com>. Accessed on November 7, 2025. At about 16:45 hours GMT.



complex as the United Nations Organization (UNO)'s Buildings⁵² at the (Federal Capital Territory) FCT, Abuja was attacked and destroyed by Hoko Haram's suicide bombers. By April 26, 2012, This Day News Paper official was attacked by the same Islamic extremists' groups.⁵³ On February, 2014 the Islamic extremists' group, Boko Haram launched a coordinated attack of bombs and guns on the outskirts of the (Federal Capital Territory) FCT, Abuja, and murdered Eighty-Eight (88)⁵⁴ people. In recent, October 7, 2023 in the (Federal Capital Territory) FCT, Abuja, Twelve (12)⁵⁵ persons were killed. One Hundred and Thirty-Nine (139)⁵⁶ people abducted, and Twenty-Two (22)⁵⁷ suburb communities were burnt down in a single attack.

In Nigeria's recent time of modernization of skirmishes, this group, Boko Haram seems to be the oldest and most dangerous of all the insurrections. It is this group that kidnapped an entire Model Science Girls Secondary School and her teaching staff at Chibok in Borno State of the State of Nigeria. The abducted girls' population were over Two Hundred and Seventy-Six, (276) students⁵⁸. They led, the entire school's population undisturbed and un-intercepted as if a shepherd is leading its herds of cattle to a greener pasture. They were taken to their own desired destination at Sambisa Forest, where they were hibernated. Coercing the girls into forceful marriages⁵⁹ and indoctrinating them into the tenets of suicide bombing by carrying their dangerous IED in their hijabs for suicidal missions. Since the time of abduction in the night of 14-15, April 2014, the girls have not been rescued from the dangerous fangs of Boko Haram.⁶⁰ The ages of the girls spanning from 16 to 18 years, and some were subjected into physical and emotional torture.⁶¹ Between the periods of 2014 and 2015, an estimated 2,000 women and girls have been abducted and raped by Boko Haram.⁶² The extremists gang attacked a boarding school and out-rightly murdered Forty-Two (42)⁶³ students, and abducted Thirty (30)⁶⁴ students at a glance. The Boko Haram Islamic extremists have abducted another 88 School Girls from Borno State of Nigerian State.⁶⁵ Recently, on February 3, 2026; Islamic militia group at Maiduguri city, Borno State killed Seventeen (17)⁶⁶ persons. They also injured and kidnapped scores of people to an unknown destination.⁶⁷

More than Fifteen (15) years since the occurrence of Chibok incident, the Nigerian Government seems not to adequately protect children in institutions of learning. In recent time, quite over, Three Hundred and Forty-Four (344) School's Boys have been kidnapped in the North Eastern parts of the State of Nigeria.⁶⁸ Just of recent, about Three Hundred (300)⁶⁹ School's Girls were kidnapped in a boarding School by the extremists' groups in the Northeast.⁷⁰ Quite recently, on October 11, 2025, the Boko Haram Islamic extremists gang

⁵² AP's African News Coverage; <https://www.apsnews.com/hub/africa>. Accessed on November 8, 2025; at about 15:00 hours GMT.

⁵³ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁴ The Guardian Reuters, February 26, 2014; <https://www.theguardiannews.com>. Accessed at 14:25 GMT on November 10, 2025.

⁵⁵ Daily Trust News, October 7, 2023; <https://www.dailytrustnews.com>. Accessed on November 7, 2025 at about 12:00 hours GMT.

⁵⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁸ BBC News Africa, <https://www.bbc.com>, may 8, 2017. Accessed at about 15:00 hours GMT on 03.11.2025.

⁵⁹ Given their leader ₦ 2,000.00 as bride price.

⁶⁰ BBC News Africa, <https://www.bbc.com>, may 8, 2017, accessed at about 15:00 hours GMT on 03.11.2025.

⁶¹ O. Akali, "Chibok Kidnappings in the North Eastern Nigeria: A Military Analysis of Before and After." [11.04.17] 14 [4] *Small Wars Journals*, 18-26.

⁶² Amnesty International, Nigeria. <https://www.amnesty.org>, 08-05-2017; accessed at about 18:00 hours GMT on 27.10.2025.

⁶³ Daily Telegraphs, 09.07.2013.

⁶⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁶⁵ The Guardians Associated Press, 19.04.2014.

⁶⁶ Amnesty International, Nigeria, February 3, 2026; <https://www.amnestyinternational.org>. Accessed at about 18:00 hours GMT on 03.11.2025.

⁶⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁶⁸ Amnesty International, Nigeria, 14.04.2021; <https://www.amnestyinternational.org>. Accessed at about 18:00 hours GMT on 03.11.2025.

⁶⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁷⁰ BBC, News, 26.09.2021; <https://www.bbc.com>. Accessed at about 14:25 hours GMT on 01.11.2025.



launched a drone attack on an Army Troop in the State of Borno and killed Four (4)⁷¹ soldiers. Still very recently, on November 18, 2025, Two (2) soldiers and Two (2)⁷² civilians Joint Task Force (JTF) were murdered by an ambushed Boko Haram in *Wajiroko* in *Azir Multe* district of *Damboa*⁷³ Local Government Area of Borno State. Further, in the State of Borno, on November 24, 2025 in the town of *Askira-Uba*, within the *Askira-Uba* Local Government Area of Borno State. The Islamic extremists' militia group, Boko Harm launched an attack on farmers and kidnapped Thirteen (13),⁷⁴ farmers to an unknown destination.

4.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OF INCESSANT CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES IN THE NORTHEAST

By the strict preserve of criminal jurisprudence in Nigeria, the prevalent acts of killing vide incendiarism, destruction of telecommunications' lines, electricity installations, oil and gas pipelines are grievous offences. The aforementioned acts are prosecutable and are liable for punishment under the webs of criminal law. For example, the acts of vandalizing, removing, destroying, damaging, and obstructing telecommunication. Others criminal activities such as destroying electricity transmitting lines, transportation routes, oil, pipeline and gas installations and many more facilities, are wrongful acts punishable by law. The offenders when prosecuted and found guilty are liable to a gaol sentence of ten (10) years. For the purposes of cross reference, it is appropriate to have excerpts of the Act criminalizing those activities which are very prevalent in the northeast. For wilful destruction of telecommunication installations, section 1, of the Criminal Justice (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act,⁷⁵ stipulates thus:

1. Any person who wilfully and unlawfully -

- (a) Destroys, damages, or removes any telecommunication works [installations]; or
- (b) Otherwise prevents or obstructs the sending or delivering of a communication by means of telecommunication, shall be guilty of an offence under this Act.

2. Any person found guilty of an offence under subsection (1) of this section shall, on conviction be liable-

- (a) In the case of an offence under subsection (1) (a), to a fine of two times the value of any such telecommunication works as might have been destroyed, damaged, or removed by him or ₦ 2,000.00, whichever is higher, or to imprisonment for ten [10] years, or both such fine and imprisonment; or
- (b) In the case of an offence under subsection (1) (b), to a fine of ₦ 500.00 or to imprisonment for three [3] years or to both such fine and imprisonment.⁷⁶

For the destruction of electricity installations or lines, section (2)⁷⁷ of the Act⁷⁸ enacts as follows:

(1) Any person who wilfully and unlawfully-

- (a) Destroys, damages, or removes any electricity line [installations]; or
- (b) Destroys or damages any main transmission line or removes anything connected therewith, or
- (c) Otherwise prevents or obstructs the transmission of electricity through any electricity or main transmission line, shall be guilty of an offence under this Act.

⁷¹ <https://barristerng.pol.com>. October 11, 2025. Accessed on October 12, 2025 at about 21:15 hours GMT local time..

⁷² <https://thenigerislawyer.com/2025/11/19>, Accessed on November 18, 2025 at about 9:30 hours GMT local time.

⁷³ *Ibidem*.

⁷⁴ <https://nigerialawyer.com>, 2025/11/24. Accessed on November 24, 2026 at about 18:25 hours GMT local time.

⁷⁵ Cap. C39, Vol. 4, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria (LFN) 2010.

⁷⁶ Telecommunication works means, any wire or wires for the purpose of telegraph or telephone communications, ..., including any apparatus for transmitting electrical messages, televisions, radios, masts, and inclusive of cables on the surface, underground or under the waters, ... See section 9 of the same Act.

⁷⁷ Criminal Justice (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act Cap. C39, Vol. 4 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria (LFN) 2010.

⁷⁸ *Ibidem*.



(2) Any person found guilty of an offence under subsection (1) of this section shall, on conviction be liable-

- (a) In the case of an offence under subsection (1) (a) and (b), to a fine of two times the value of any such electricity line or any main line or part thereof as might have been destroyed, damaged, or removed by him or ₦ 2,000.00, whichever is higher, or to imprisonment for ten [10] years, or both such fine and imprisonment; or
- (b) In the case of an offence under paragraph (c), of subsection (1), to a fine of ₦ 500.00 or to imprisonment for three [3] years or to both such fine and imprisonment.

For the destruction of oil pipeline or gas line installations, section (3) of the Act⁷⁹ entrenches thus:

(1) Any person who wilfully and unlawfully-

- (a) Destroys, damages, or removes any oil pipeline or installation connected therewith; or
- (b) Otherwise prevents or obstructs the flow of oil along any such oil pipeline or interfaces with any installation connected therewith, shall be guilty of an offence under this Act.

(2) Any person found guilty of an offence under subsection (1) of this section shall, on conviction be liable-

- (a) In the case of an offence under subsection (1) (a), to a fine of two times the value of any such oil pipeline or any installation as might have been destroyed, damaged, or removed, or any oil that might have escaped as a result of such destruction, damage or removal ₦ 2,000.00, whichever is higher, or to imprisonment for ten [10] years, or both such fine and imprisonment; or
- (b) In the case of an offence under subsection (1) (b), to a fine of ₦ 500.00 or to imprisonment for three [3] years or to both such fine and imprisonment.

Specifically, the endless criminal activities which are more prevalent in the northeast cadastral zone, are abductions, kidnappings, rapes, arsons, murder through incendiary bombs. All these activities are serious felonies when viewed on the scale of criminal justice system. Some have the penal sanction of capital punishment and others life imprisonment. For instance, where people have been killed vide improvised explosive devices (IED), through suicide bombings. The offence is murder punishable by death under the Nigerian criminal law and practice. Section 319 (1) of the Criminal Code Act,⁸⁰ provides as follows:

“Subject to the provisions of this section of this Code, any person who commits the offence of murder shall be sentenced to death.”

The offences of rape and arson attract life imprisonment. Section 358 of the Criminal Code,⁸¹ enacts to the following effect:

“Any person who commits the offence of rape is liable to imprisonment for life, with or without canning.”

The offence of arson (pyromania or incendiarism) is also life imprisonment. Section 443 of the Criminal Code provides thus:

“Any person who wilfully sets fire to any of the following: (a) any building or structure whatever, whether completed or not; ...,

is guilty of a felony and is liable to imprisonment for life.”

The offences of abductions, kidnappings and taking of hostages which are most prominent in the northeast under the Criminal Code⁸² bequeaths the offender seven (7)⁸³ and ten (10)⁸⁴ years jail terms respectively. The

⁷⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁸⁰ Cap.C38, Vol. 4, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria (LFN) 2010.

⁸¹ *Ibidem*.

⁸² *Ibidem*.



aforesaid criminal acts under the Terrorism (Prevention and Prohibition) Act, 2022 bestows on the offender death sentence or imprisonment for life. The mandatory provisions of section 24,⁸⁵ stipulates as follows:

“(1) A person, who knowingly or intentionally –

- (a) seizes, detains, or attempts to seize or detain a person, property, or facility in order to compel a third party to do or abstain from doing a lawful act,
- (b) threatens to kill, injure or continue to detain a person in order to compel a third party to do or abstain from doing a lawful act, or
- (c) gives an explicit or implicit for the release of the person held hostage, or the property or facility detained, commits an offence.

(2) A person who commits an offence under subsection (1), is liable on conviction –

(a) where death does not result from the act, to life imprisonment; or

(b) where death results from the act, to a death sentence.⁸⁶”

All the numerated criminal activities have impacted the cadastral zone of northeastern Nigeria negatively. As a result of these activities, people have deserted their ancestral homes. Communities and churches have been destroyed by fire, economic and cultural enterprises disrupted and institutions of socialization are closed down. All the aforesaid criminal brigandage and disruption of normal life activities ensued from acute internal security challenges prevailing in the cadastral zone.

5.0 JURISPRUDENTIAL SYNTHESIS AND LEGAL EVALUATION

Going by the above indices, the northeastern part of Nigeria has been negatively impacted by internal security challenges. It was demonstrated that the people are in dare need of humanitarian aids from well-meaning individual, continental, regional, and global organisations for survival. So many communities have been

⁸³ Abduction, section 361 of the Criminal Code provides:

“Any person who, with intent to marry or carnally known a female of any age, or to cause her to be married, or carnally known by any other person, takes her away, or detains her against her will, is guilty of a felony, and is liable to imprisonment for seven years.”

Under the provisions of section 362, of the Act, it states thus:

“Any person who unlawfully takes an unmarried girl under the age of sixteen years out of the custody or protection of her father or mother or other person having the lawful care or charge of her, and against the will of such father or mother or other person, is guilty of a misdemeanour, and is liable to imprisonment for two years.”

⁸⁴ For kidnapping, section 364 (2) of the Criminal Code Act, provides to the following effect:

“Any person who –

(2) unlawfully imprisons any person within Nigeria in such a manner as to prevent him from applying to a court for his release or from discovering to any other person the place where he is imprisoned, or in such a manner as to prevent any person entitled to have access to him from discovering the place where he is imprisoned.

Is guilty of a felony and is liable to imprisonment for ten years.”

⁸⁵ Terrorism (Prevention and Prohibition) Act, 2022.

⁸⁶ Subsection (3) of section 24 of the Terrorism (Prevention and Prohibition) Act, 2022 defines the following phrases: (3) In this section –

(a) a “third party” means a State, an International Governmental Organization, a natural or legal person or a group of persons; and
(b) the word “knowingly or intentionally” referred to in subsection (1) may be inferred from the objective factual circumstances of the case.



condemned by infernos leaving them in perpetual ruin and desolate. Quite over two million people have been displaced from their natural habitations. Social, economic, and cultural activities have been absolutely disrupted in the northeast. Military personnel and civilians have been slaughtered as cattle in abattoirs ready for markets. Abductions, kidnappings, hostage taken, carnages, and general brigandage are regular occurrences in the northeast. The Goons and marauders have taken over the centre stage of the social environment in northeastern zone. Institutions of socialization have been closed down due to the phobia of attack by terrorists' groups.

The above negative impacts are caused by the criminal activities of arsons, rapes, murder, abductions, and kidnappings. From all the identified indices as shown herein-above, are demonstrations of serious criminal concern attracting severe punishment in law. It is therefore safe hereto to categorically avowed that the negative criminal impacts and effects in the northeast are undoubtedly ginormous. The people have been unenthusiastically affected negatively by internal security challenges in Nigeria. Plagues which are perpetually occurring diurnally. As found by the survey, kidnapping, abduction, hostage taken, murder, suicide bombing, arson and other sundry criminal acts are serious felonies. The criminal sanction of these acts under the Terrorism (Prevention and Prohibition) Act, 2022, attract death sentence and life imprisonment. These activities are occurring in the northeast nearly on daily basis.

6.0 CONCLUSION

From the foregoing indicia and in consideration of measured devastation caused by internal security challenges in the northeast. It is safe to conclude herein that there are identifiable negative criminal effects in northeastern Nigeria. The prevailing criminal activities are carnages, rapes, kidnappings, abductions, suicide bombings, incendiary bombs, destructions of telecommunication, electricity, oil and gas installations. The escapades of terrorist groups in the cadastral zone of northeast is not ebbing, but momentarily increasing with dynamics and vigour as the day go bye.

It is the recommendation that the armed forces of Nigeria should intensified efforts to stay security challenges in the northeast. The antiterrorism campaign going in the country should be intensified, matching words with action. It is the further recommendation, that Nigeria being a plural State with numerous ethnicities should be prepare for likely secession. By this, clauses in support of plebiscites, negotiations, dialogues and conditions for peaceful secession be incorporated into the *Grundnorm*. Modern and civilized countries in the world which have multi racial agglomerations as in Nigeria, have reserve such clauses in their *Grundnorm*.⁸⁷ This is targeted to obviate blood bathe episodes as it were in the then Yugoslavian enclave. In still further recommendations, stronger bilateral ties for security collaborations should be created with all international boundary neighbours of the country. Additional recommendation, more strategic approach should be embarked upon in the fight against insurgencies in Nigeria.

⁸⁷ Spain, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, even Cameron and etcetera have such clauses in order to curb incidences of shedding of innocent blood in circumstances of disintegration into tribal ties.