

## The menace of the Fulani herdsmen and the Nigerian police force

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### Abstract

This paper examines the deterioration of the Nigerian security situation especially since the return to democracy in May 29th, 1999. The paper argues that the Nigeria's security system has become dysfunctional and the Nigerian security agents, especially the police have not been able to come up with an efficient and enduring system that can curtail the activities of Fulani herdsmen, who carry out their deadly attacks without any fear of constituted authority. Hence, enforcement of laws in Nigeria has become a flop. The focus of the paper therefore, is to identify the underlying challenges faced by the Nigerian police in tackling the menace of Fulani herdsmen. The study adopted the documentary research design. The theoretical framework adopted was the Routine Activity Theory, while the method for data analysis was the Descriptive Analytical Method. The findings reveal that there are some levels of inadequacies and challenges in the Nigerian Police Force which hamper them from nipping the menace in the bud. It was recommended amongst other measures that the Nigerian Police should be

overhauled in accordance with best practices in staffing, funding, weaponry, mobility, and capacity building/training.

**Keywords:** Nigerian Police Force; Fulani Herdsmen; Security; Insecurity and Democracy

## Introduction

Security is a state in which people in a society can go about their everyday living or activities without the fear of any threat or loss of their possessions.

Anything short of this definition represents a security risk. Security, according to Oladeji, and Folorunso (2007), is a condition or sensation of safety from threat, peril, or menace, deterrence, shielding or protection, and exclusion of threat to achieve values. McGrew (1988) stated that a nation's security is based on two key pillars: maintaining and protecting the socioeconomic arrangement when faced with internal or external threats, and promoting a preferred international structure that reduces threats to core values and interests, in tandem with the domestic arrangement. According to Nwolise (2012), security is constrained by certain conditions, indicating that a country must be fortified by a network of armed forces; that there must be a pledge of the state's supremacy by a democratic

and nationalistic government, which must be guarded not only by the military and police in particular, but also by the people in general; and that citizens must not only be protected from external invasions but also from internal ones. Dike (2010) and Omede-Ajufo (2013) both believe that Nigeria's security should be regarded holistically, with citizens as the primary recipients of all security and developmental benefits that the government may provide. Hence, all efforts or endeavors to strengthen the Federal Republic of Nigeria to move forward in a purposeful manner should be part of the country's security concern. Insecurity, on the other hand, according to Beland (2005), entails insufficient protection from crime and a lack of freedom from psychological trauma. It can thus, be defined as any breach or violation of any sort, of peace and security, that contributes to the re-emergence of conflicts and results in the willful and unjustified destruction of lives and property.

Nigeria reverted to democracy on May 29, 1999, after long years of military rule. Since then, the country's security situation has deteriorated. One of the flaws of the civilian governments' from 1999 to date has been an insufficient reaction to the security of lives and property. The worst-case scenarios were witnessed in the last ten years due to the high influx of pastoralists known as Fulani herdsmen from northern part of Nigeria to all nooks and crannies of the southern part of the country in search of pasture for the grazing of their livestock. The brutal radicalism being unleashed on rural farmers by the Fulani herdsmen is one of the most indisputable and undeniable threats to the Nigeria's national security. There is almost no week that goes by without the Fulani herdsmen perpetrating some form of violent extremism. Rural communities have been terrorized, with domestic animals slain, houses set ablaze, and women raped.

According to Okoli and Atelhe (2014), Nigeria has witnessed numerous incidents of natural resource conflict since the early 1990s, particularly battles between Fulani herders and farmers. Abugu and Onuba (2015) on their part decried the brutal clashes between Fulani herdsmen and farmers in recent times.

The situation according to Gbaka (2014) has ruffled all sections of the country, making it a national issue. Odaudu (2016) noted on his part that the attacks have become the nation's identification mark in recent times. The impression is that there is no solution being engaged by the Nigerian Government and invariably the Nigerian Police to tackle the menace. The vandals are alarmingly carrying out their deadly attacks without the fear of any constituted authority, thus, enforcement of laws in Nigeria has become a flop.

The basic objective of government, according to Section 14(1b), No. 24 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (Promulgation), is to ensure the security of the people. In light of this, Omoyibo and Akpomera (2013) asserted that security comes first, and the state exists to offer security. As a result, the state, through its administrative apparatus, should be able to provide adequate or necessary security to justify its existence (Gaskin, 1996). Sadly, Nigeria has seen unprecedented levels of insecurity recently, the state has failed to live up to its constitutional role to provide the much-needed security to its citizenry. The level of insecurity in Nigeria is frightening, making national security a serious concern for the government.

According to Ewetan, (2013), this was why the national legislature approved the Anti-Terrorism Act in 2011 and also voted a large allocation of the national budget to security in the 2013 budget. According to Alabi (2021), the Buhari administration signed the Act creating the Nigerian Police Trust Fund into law in 2019 and the Bill modifying the Nigerian Police Act in 2020, all in the effort to strengthen the Nigerian security system.

In recent times, Nigeria has witnessed some essential surveillance, as well as investigations of some unlawful crimes, enhancing of security agencies with security facilities, intensification of physical security measures, for instance, the establishment of a combined security operatives made up of the Nigerian Police, the Nigerian Army, the State Security Services, the Air Force, and the Nigerian Navy, aimed at scaring off or dissuading potent criminals. Recently, Nigerians have been informed of the attempts by the government to sponsor a National Grazing Bill through the National Assembly (Odudu, 2016). Similarly, there is reportedly a proposal to establish grazing environments for herdsmen in every state of the country by the State and Federal governments (*Premium Times*, 2016). In all these,

Nigeria's level of insecurity continues to be on the increase. Some scholars have argued that this may be as a result of inadequate academic attention given to the issue of security in the country (Orji, 2012). Observations show that a lack of academic attention to security has resulted in lack of emphasis on crime prevention strategies of curbing lawlessness.

The reality on the ground according to Cohen and Felson (1979) is that lawlessness/crime thrives in communities where there is an absence of adequate security. Nigerian rural areas are very porous, and this has intensified the attacks of herdsmen. Inadequate police presence in rural areas has constantly given golden opportunities for crime by herdsmen as they constantly take advantage of the vulnerability of the farmers in the rural areas to relentlessly cause havoc. The former Inspector-General of Police, Mr Ibrahim Kpotun Idris, (2016-2019) confirmed this inadequacy in 2017, when he stated that the Nigeria Police Force needed extra 155,000 personnel to accomplish the UN ratio requirement of one police officer to 400 citizens in a country, in order to sufficiently provide adequate security to Nigerians. To achieve this, Idris affirmed

that the Nigerian Police Force required the employment of thirty-one thousand (31,000) officers every year for five years. The force had not employed into its rank and file cadre from 2011 till 2016 when the Federal Government approved the recruitment of only Ten thousand (10,000) applicants. Bearing in mind cases of resignations, retirements and deaths, the development left an enormous gap in the manpower requirement of the Police Force (<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2017/05/155000-additional-personnel-required-adequately-police-nigeria-g/>). Based on the foregoing, the objective of the study is to explore possible solutions to the issues faced by the Nigerian police in combating the threat posed by the Fulani herdsmen.

### **Study design and method**

The qualitative research design was employed in this study, using exploratory and historical elements. This method entails the traditional interplay between induction and deduction, in which discourses uncovered through inductive processes are tested deductively, culminating in rigorous descriptive analysis that gives signals to policymakers about such phenomena. The secondary or documentary sources of

data were adopted for data collection in the study. Textbooks, journals, magazines, newspapers, seminar and thesis papers, bulletins, government and non-governmental organization publications, library and internet sources were all used intensively in the study. Based on the fact that the study's focus is on the Nigerian Police Force's management of the Fulani herdsmen's threat in Nigeria, all concerns of insecurity and security that influence Nigerian security operators and the Fulani herdsmen's operations form the primary focus of the data collection for this research.

The data was analyzed using the qualitative descriptive approach. This form of analysis was justified because the researcher was unable to acquire direct access to the study's subjects, notably the Fulani herdsmen, due to personal security concerns. Data collected from documentary sources of data were descriptively assessed during the study as non-experimental research.

### **The Nigerian Police**

The police force can be defined as an official group whose responsibilities include enforcing the laws of the land, preventing crimes, and safeguarding lives and property. Fundamentally, it is a legal

entity charged with carrying out the government's primary responsibility of ensuring security for the people. Ekweremadu (2013) notes that "the word police is related to the Greek word *"politeria,"* which means state, administration, or the art of controlling and regulating the welfare, security needs, and order of the city-state in the common good of the people" (p. 6).

In general, the role of the police is widely accepted. According to a report by the Police Foundation and Policy Studies Institute of the United Kingdom (1996), the role of the police is expressed thus:

The purpose of the police service is to uphold the law fairly and firmly; to prevent crime; to pursue and bring to justice those who break the law...to protect, help and reassure the community; and to be seen to do this with integrity, common sense and sound judgment (p. xii).

According to Ekweremadu (2013), in Nigeria, the functions of the Nigerian Police Force are defined by the Police Act to include:

Preventing and detecting crime,

apprehension of offenders, preservation of law and order, protection of lives and property and the due enforcement of all laws and regulations with which they are directly charged; and ...such military duties within or without Nigeria as may be required of them by or under the authority of this or any other Act (p. 7).

The Nigerian Police can be traced to the colonial government whose primary interests were purely towards the sovereignty of the British overlords, hence:

Nigeria Police was first established in 1820. In 1879, a 1200 member armed paramilitary Hausa Constabulary was formed. In 1896, the Lagos Police was established. A similar force, the Niger Coast Constabulary was formed in Calabar in 1894 under the newly proclaimed Niger Coast Protectorate. In the North, the Royal Niger Company set up the Royal Niger Company Constabulary in 1888. When the protectorate of Northern and Southern Nigeria were proclaimed

in the early 1900s, part of the Royal Niger Company Constabulary became the Northern Nigeria Police and part of the Niger Coast Constabulary became the Southern Nigeria Police. During the colonial period, most police were associated with local governments (native authorities). In the 1960s, under the First Republic, these forces were first regionalized and then nationalized. The British merged Lagos colony and the southern and northern protectorates in 1913 and named the new colony Nigeria. The northern and southern regional police forces were later merged, in 1930, to form the colony's first national police – the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) ([https://www.npf.gov.ng/aboutus/history\\_Nigeria\\_police.php](https://www.npf.gov.ng/aboutus/history_Nigeria_police.php):1).

According to section 214 (1) of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution, pages 144-145, the Nigerian police force is defined thus:

There shall be a Police Force for Nigeria, which shall be known as the Nigeria Police Force, and subject to the provision of this

section no other Police Force shall be established for the Federation or any part thereof. Section 214 (2) states that subject to the provisions of this Constitution- (a) the Nigeria Police Force shall be organized and administered in accordance with such provisions as may be prescribed by an Act of the National Assembly: (b) the members of the Nigeria Police Force shall have such powers and duties as may be conferred upon them by law and (c) the National Assembly may make provisions for branches of the Nigeria Police Force forming part of the armed forces of the Federation or for the protection of harbours, waterways, railways and air fields (1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria).

Currently, the Nigeria Police Force (henceforth NPF) has a staff strength of about 371, 800. It consists of 36 State commands grouped into 17 zones, thus:

- Zone 1- Kano;
- Zone 2- Lagos;
- Zone 3- Yola;

- Zone 4- Makurdi;
- Zone 5- Benin City;
- Zone 6- Calabar;
- Zone 7- FCT, Abuja;
- Zone 8- Lokoja;
- Zone 9- Umuahia;
- Zone 10-Sokoto;
- Zone 11- Oshogbo;
- Zone 12- Bauchi;
- Zone 13- Ukpo-Dunukofia (Awka);
- Zone 14- Katsina;
- Zone 15- Maiduguri;
- Zone 16- Yenegoa and
- Zone 17- Akure  
([www.npf.gov.ng](http://www.npf.gov.ng),).
- Finance and administration;
- Operations;
- Logistics and supply;
- Criminal investigation;
- Training;
- Research and planning and
- Information and Communication Technology  
([https://www.npf.gov.ng/aboutus/history\\_Nigeria\\_police.php](https://www.npf.gov.ng/aboutus/history_Nigeria_police.php))/ngojobvacancies 2024).

Also the force has the following ranks:

- Inspector General of Police
- Deputy Inspector General of Police
- Assistant Inspector General of Police
- Commissioner of Police
- Deputy Commissioner of Police
- Assistant Commissioner of Police
- Chief Superintendent of Police

The NPF is supervised and controlled by the Police Service Commission, the Nigerian Police Council, and the Ministry of Interior. The force is divided into seven (7) main administrative departments numbered from A to G, which include:

- Superintendent of Police
- Deputy Superintendent of Police
- Assistant Superintendent of Police
- Inspector of Police
- Sergeant Major
- Sergeant
- Corporal
- Constable  
([https://www.npf.gov.ng/aboutus/history\\_Nigeria\\_police.php](https://www.npf.gov.ng/aboutus/history_Nigeria_police.php)).

Levels of entry in the NPF are:

- Constable  
(WASSCE/GCE/NECO/NABTEB credit passes in English & Mathematics)
- Cadet Inspector (GCE Advanced level; OND; and NCE)
- Cadet Assistant Superintendent of Police (B Sc or B.A. degree in any field)
- Nigeria Police Academy degree programme  
(WASSCE/GCE/NECO/NABTEB

with six (6) credits in not more than two (2) sittings, including English language and Mathematics  
([www.polac.edu.ng](http://www.polac.edu.ng)).

### **Theoretical framework**

The Routine Activity Theory was used as the study's theoretical framework in order to highlight the absolute character of the Fulani herdsmen-farmers conflict across the country and the NPF's incapacity to stop it. Lawrence Cohen and Marcus Felson created the Routine Activity Theory in 1979, which is based on three elements: a potential/motivated offender, an appropriate target, and the absence of a capable guardian (Kitteringham & Fenelly 2020). Hence, crime happens when the three ingredients listed above come together.

The theory is based on both perpetrators' and victims' daily activities. In this example, the potential/motivated perpetrators are Fulani herdsmen, who frequently and forcibly take over people's farmlands for cow breeding. The violent herdsmen's retaliation to farmers' resistance usually culminates in violent attacks on the farmers who are the appropriate targets. Because of the lack

of capable guardians, which were supposed to be the NPF, their offensives are carried out successfully. The majority of these offensives take place in rural areas, and the lack of adequate police presence in most rural areas of the country has always provided crime opportunities for Fulani herdsmen, who normally take advantage of the defenseless and vulnerable nature of such rural communities and their inhabitants to unrelentingly cause havoc. Due to a lack of protection from security services, particularly the Nigerian Police, rural farmers have turned to self-defense to keep the hostile herdsmen out of their towns. Regrettably, this has resulted in the loss of lives and properties.

### **Overview of the menace of the Fulani Herdsmen and the efforts of the Nigerian Police**

According to the 2017 Global Terrorism Index study, Fulani extremists, the majority of whom are herders, were responsible for 466 terrorist incidents and 3068 fatalities in four West African nations between 2010 and 2016, with 92 percent of the fatalities occurring in Nigeria ([www.re liefweb.int](http://www.re liefweb.int)). The herdsmen were responsible for 26% of terror-related deaths in Nigeria in 2019 amounting to 325 deaths) (Nwangwu,

2021). According to Umeh (2016), Nigeria has increasingly documented confrontations between arable crop producers and pastoralists since 1991.

Violent conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers have been more common in the previous two decades. Though the battles began as simple land-use disputes, they escalated into serious violence, resulting in loss of lives and the destruction of both private and communal properties. As a result of the Fulani herdsmen's onslaughts and assaults, the insecurity situation in Nigeria has been on the increase and volatile resulting in the herdsmen in Nigeria being ranked as the world's fourth most dangerous terror group (Nwangwu, 2021). Fulani herders' and farmers' clashes have grown sophisticated, well-organized/coordinated, and quite common in Nigeria.

The war had expanded across the country's six geopolitical zones. For instance, Uzo-uwani Local Government Area of Enugu State, Southeast Nigeria, has become a hotbed in the crisis. The Ukpabi-Nimbo atrocity, which occurred on April 25, 2016, is still very fresh. Similarly, in the same 2016, four

members of Ogbodo Nwarum's family were killed in Ndiagu, a community in Attakwu, Akegbé-Ugwu in Enugu State's Nkanu Local Government area, including a pregnant woman presumed to be Ogbodo Nwarum's wife, whose tummy was ripped open. Lazarus Nwafor, a Catholic seminarian and Ogbodo Nwarum's tenant, was also killed in the incident (Igata, 2016). Ohafia, Bende, and Umunneochi, three Local Government Areas in Abia state, Southeast, Nigeria are mostly affected by the activities of the herdsmen. Umunneochi Local Government Area is where their cattle market is currently located. The herders raised their flag in Ohafia, declaring it a "Fulani Republic." This led the Abia State House of Assembly to call for a thorough investigation of the situation (Vanguardngr.com, 2016).

In the riverine Bayelsa State South-Southern Nigeria, the farmlands of farmers are being routinely damaged by the Fulani herdsmen, pitting highly armed herders against vulnerable rural farmers. Violence has been reported in the Aruke and Ogoropre farmlands on the Forcados River's bank. Conflicts have also been reported in almost all of the towns in Cross River State, another state in South-South region. The most recent conflict

occurred in the northern section of the state, in Wanikade and Wanihem, in early 2016. In July 2014, the state's Odukpani Local Government District was assaulted, with over fifty people killed and residential dwellings set on fire (Vanguardngr.com, 2016). On April 20, 2016, citizens of Delta State's twenty-five Local Government Areas protested the invasion of 63 towns in the local government by the Fulani herdsmen, who allegedly raped women, destroyed farmlands/crops, and killed about 23 people. The Benin-Asaba expressway was shut down because of the protest (Akenzua & Opara, 2016).

According to Vanguard news (2016, March 19), the troublesome areas in Ondo State, Southwest Nigeria are Akoko's Southeast, Southwest, Northeast, and Northwest sub-regions, all in the state's northern region. Ogbese in Akure North and Ala River in Akure South are two other flashpoints. Recent confrontations in the state have prompted the state government to use its big stick, announcing a ban on night grazing, a halt to the movement of cows across the state at night, and the breeding of cattle within Akure and its environs. Chief Olu Falae, the former Secretary to the Government of the

Federation in Nigeria, was kidnapped on his farm in Ondo state in 2015 by suspected Fulani herdsmen. Other states in the Southwest, such as Osun and Oyo, are not immune to these offensives. In February 2018, six communities in Ogun state, including Ikotun, Ologiri, Akeru, Ilukan, Ijegu, and Ajibode, were assaulted, with several people killed (Okogbu, 2018).

The North Central region of Nigeria seems to have been impacted the hardest in recent times, with the Agatu community in Benue state being case in point. The communities have been subjected to several attacks by herders, resulting in the deaths of thousands of people and the loss of property. There have been reports of unrelenting killings of Agatu farmers on their farms, raping of Agatu women, and destruction of agricultural products up to mid-2016. Tse Chia, TseNhumbe, Deghia, and Ngorukgan are four settlements in Agatu that are constantly attacked. Another noteworthy massacre in Benue State was the 59 people that were slain in three communities in the Guma, Gwer, and Logo Local Government regions, including Ugondo, Tutan, and Gabo Nenzev in the Logo Local Government area on June 20th, 2016, (Vanguardngr.com, 2016).

Nasarawa State has been in turmoil for the past five years as a result of the Fulani herdsmen attack, which has resulted in the deaths of hundreds of people and the destruction of properties worth millions of naira. Riyom and BarkinLadi Local Government Areas in Plateau are among the hardest hit localities. There was seldom a day that passed by without one of these frightening herders killing someone. Armed battles between rural farmers and Fulani herdsmen have been reported in Abuja's rural neighborhoods, indicating that the threat is still escalating.

The offensives have not spared the states of Kwara and Kogi. On the 19th of March 2018, Onu Agbenema, Musa Edibo, the traditional monarch of Agbenema kingdom in Kogi state, was killed, according to Odogun (2018). The attack resulted in the destruction of several homes in the town, as well as the death of the traditional ruler's wife.

According to Vanguard news (2016, March 19), no week goes by in Adamawa's Northeastern region without stories of onslaughts between farmers and Fulani herdsmen, resulting in the loss of lives and property. The most vulnerable Local Government Areas in Adamawa

State are Fufure, Demsa, Girei, Yola South, Numan, and Lamurde. These offensives have not spared Shelleng and Guyuk, located inside the Kiri Dam project which provides fertile territory for farming and pasturing. Other locations such as Yola in Taraba State is not left out.

States like Kaduna, Zamfara, and Katsina in Nigeria's Northwest geopolitical zone are also not exempted, with incidences confirmed in Kaduna, Zamfara, and Katsina. Amaza (2020) reported an unusual incidence of accused herdsmen adopting 12 Nigerian police officers near the Katsina Zamfara expressway. In August 2020, at least nineteen (19) persons were killed by suspected Fulani herdsmen in the Zangon Kataf Local Government Area of Kaduna State (<https://www.garda.com>>news-to).

The Nigeria Police Force is mandated by the Nigerian Constitution to enforce and preserve peace and order. However, recent attacks by Fulani herders have cast doubt on the force's capability. There is hardly a day that goes by without the news of Fulani herdsmen's attack in the media. The most worrisome aspect is that there is no information on the arrests and subsequent prosecutions of the

perpetrators of each attack. The Nigeria Police Force and other security forces have done nothing concrete to stem the tide. This must have aggravated the horrific slaughter of local farmers in villages across the country as seen in recent years.

The number of individuals killed by the Fulani herdsmen between 2015 and 2020, according to estimates provided by the Statista research department on January 29, 2021, was seven thousand four hundred (7,400). ([www.statista.com](http://www.statista.com)). The bottom line is that Nigerian security forces, particularly the Nigerian police, appear impotent in the face of these attacks across the country. This was especially true in August 2020 in Zangon Kataf, where the attack occurred despite a 24-hour curfew in Kaduna state. A major concern is this scenario is the NPF's public image which has already acquired the negative reputation of being corrupt, harsh and ineffective in its law enforcement activities. According to Dambazau (2014), it is not just the prevalence of crime, that is the biggest source of concern here but the public's image of the Nigerian's police, which has a reputation of a harsh, corrupt, and ineffective law enforcement agency. This is because, as Emile Durkheim, a 19th-

century French philosopher, argued in his classic book "The Division of Labor in Society", crime is a common occurrence in all societies. Without a powerful law enforcement agency with a high level of professionalism, no nation can be assured of security.

Extrajudicial killings by the Nigerian police have been alleged at various times. It should be noted that it was the single act of extrajudicial killing of Boko Haram leader, Mohammed Yusuf and many of his followers in 2009 that became the principal driver of the present Boko Haram conflict in Nigeria's Northeast region. It is not a case of a few rotten apples among the Nigerian cops; it is a case of practically all the apples been rotten. When it comes to corruption, the NPF has earned public distrust. Apart from a bad police – public relation, the quality of police personnel, equipment, and facilities in the NPF are exceedingly inadequate. The combination of these elements makes it impossible to trust the police in Nigeria to enforce law and order.

In a climate of popular suspicion and skepticism, how can the police be effective? Sir Robert Peel (1788-1850), a former British Prime Minister who formed

the Metropolitan Police Service, underlined the fact that the real key to policing is the principle enshrined in the statement "the police are the people and the people are the police (lawenforcementactionpartnership.org...)." Because of the strained relationship between the public and the police, the adopted community policing in Nigeria is difficult to implement. While little effort is being made to address police errors in Nigeria, the military has been saddled with ordinary police duties for which they are neither trained nor constitutionally responsible (Dambazau, 2014).

### ***Challenges faced by the Nigerian Police in tackling the menace of Fulani Herdsmen***

#### **Attitudinal disposition/Bad leadership**

This can be viewed from two perspectives: –the security personnel's terrible attitude and their wrong behavioral disposition. These problems could be a result of some personnel being influenced by communal, ethnic, or religious sentiments, making them easily keen to serve their people rather than the nation. Instead of serving as national watchdogs, defending national interests and values, and protecting citizens from criminal elements, the police has quickly become government saboteurs,

supporting and fueling insecurity by leaking vital security information or assisting criminals in obtaining weapons and evading the long arm of the law (Ekweremadu, 2013). Again, the security operatives tasked with protecting the lives of Nigerians' are permeated by terrorist ideologies, hence, the continuing carnage against the vulnerable in Nigeria. According to Adisa (2012), Nigerian security operatives' patriotism has been harmed as seen in their occasional show of allegiance and sympathy to the herdsmen due to ethnicity, religion and politics. This has put the country on a perilous road that may take a long time to correct.

Secondly, the government's attitude, reveals lack of political resolve to stem the problem of insecurity as exemplified in the instance of Chief Olu Falae's kidnapping on September 21, 2015, while celebrating his 77th birthday. Some persons were allegedly detained and convicted, but that was not made public, and the issue was swept under the carpet.

Lack of disclosure of information on such cases indicates that the criminal justice system is essentially protecting criminals from the public. This means that their

relatives in government, particularly in the administration of former President Muhammadu Buhari are being sympathetic to the criminal herdsmen. This is because the administration failed to publicly condemn the herdsmen's actions or launch a major security operation against them. This raises suspicions and questions about the government's stance on issues involving the Fulanis in Nigeria. This approach will substantially de-motivate officers of the NPF, who are well aware that fighting herdsmen head-on will not generate any positive result.

#### **Lack of Funding, Tradition of Waste and Public Unaccountability by the NPF**

Lack of funding has resulted to insufficient, poorly educated, and poorly equipped police personnel to address security challenges in Nigeria for decades, particularly the threat of Fulani herdsmen. Thus, Akpede (2019) laments that:

While government and stakeholders continue to lament the challenge of paucity of funds to recruit more policemen to scale up policing and security in the country, revenue estimated at one hundred and thirty five billion naira (N135

billion), generated from attaching police officers to VIPs, banks and other corporate organizations are publicly unaccounted for (p. 1).

### **Wrong Placement of Priority by the NPF**

Akpede (2019) cited a story by The Guardian newspaper in which the Police Service Commission bemoaned the fact that as of 2018, more than 150,000 police officers were illegally linked to unofficial Very Important Persons (VIPs) in the country. According to Rasheed Akintunde, the Assistant Inspector-General of Police (AIG), Zone 5, Benin, more than 80% of police officers are assigned to government officials, multinational companies, corporate organizations, private businessmen, and so on, while the remaining 20% are assigned to their basic civic responsibility of protecting citizens' lives and property (Akpede 2019). In an interview with the Premium Times in 2018, Mike Okiro, the Chairman of the Police Service Commission, confirmed the above when he stated that the NPF had more than half of its population in private hands.

Though President Muhammadu Buhari issued a directive in 2015 ordering all police personnel attached to (VIPs) and unofficial persons in the country to be withdrawn and then deployed to address security concerns in the country, the directive was not rigorously followed (Akpede, 2019).

Akpede (2019) stated that President Buhari upped the salaries of the Nigeria Police Force and pledged his administration's continuous support for the force's operational needs and welfare. As a result of this declaration, the government appropriated more than 6 billion (N6,865,973,709) to the Police Service Commission, representing a 249.03 percent increase over the previous ten years. Similarly, given the pledge made in 2018, the government approved an allocation of N366,133,777,795 to the Police Formation in 2019. However, within NPF, the aftermath of this raise is still a mirage, as the force continues to lament that old salaries are still being owed. The implication is that the approval was not implemented (Akpede 2019).

**Table 1: Federal Government of Nigeria's Appropriations to the Nigerian Police Force between 2010 and 2019**

YEAR	RECURRENT	CAPITAL	POLICE FORMATION ALLOCATION (N' Billion)
2010	186.5	30.0	216.5
2011	293.6	11.2	304.7
2012	298.8	9.0	307.9
2013	295.0	16.1	311.2
2014	295.6	7.3	302.9
2015	303.8	17.8	321.6
2016	292.8	16.1	308.9
2017	307.1	16.1	323.2
2018	299.0	25.2	324.2
2019	344.1	22.1	366.1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2916.2</b>	<b>170.9</b>	<b>3087.2</b>

Source: Akpede 2019

Dataphyte inquiries on information from senior officers of the police as well as crowd- sourced data on NPF's encounters with some VIPs whom some officers are attached to, found that the total sum paid to each officer attached to a VIP was at a monthly average of N75,000,

according to Akpede (2019). It was also revealed that a baseline deposit cost ranging from N250,000 to N1,000,000 is given to the commission as a corroboration charge at the outset.

Based on the foregoing, Akpede (2019)

analyzed the N75,000 per police officer paid by the VIPs. The result revealed that - a total of N11.25 billion (11,250,000,000) has most likely been accruing each month from the attachment of 150,000 police personnel to VIPs. At worst, the Nigeria Police Force would have generated N135,000,000,000 per year from policemen attached to VIPs at a rate of 75,000 per month. In 2019, this sum accounts for about 37 percent (36.9%) of the Force's entire budget allocation. This means that the value of the unaccounted proceeds could pay the yearly salary of over 132,000 police constables (at an average salary of 85,000 per month), enough to replace 88 percent of the 150,000 police officers assigned to VIPs who are no longer performing their primary and legitimate role of protecting the lives and property of Nigerian citizens.

From the information obtained from the International Centre for Investigative Reporting (ICIR) and an estimate from Aircraft Compare (AC), the unremitted and unaccounted 135 billion naira revenue allegedly derived from the attachment of Nigerian police officers to VIPs can be used to purchase eight hundred and eighty five (885) Robinson R44 Raven II helicopters at five hundred

thousand dollars each. This implies that every state in Nigeria, as well as the Federal Civil Aviation Authority, will be able to purchase the helicopters. Similarly, if the proceeds from a year of contracting out police officers to VIPs were used to purchase globally commendable shotguns at N186, 000.00 (\$619), the Force would have more than 726,803 Remington 870 Shotguns, which would be sufficient to assist police officers in their protection of lives and property. More than 316,000 Colt's M4-Enhanced Patrol Rifle EPR (16") for \$1400 or N427,000 at N305 per dollar can be purchased with the aforementioned sum. Using PriceboardNG's pricing tracker, the aforementioned income may buy more than 6,136, 2018 model of Toyota Hilux for 22 million naira. As a result, each of the country's 36 states, plus the FCT, would receive at least 165 Hilux trucks. Additionally, the proceeds can be used to acquire more than 1,475,409 bulletproof vests for the police at a cost of N91,500 (about \$300) (Akpede, 2019).

### **Nigeria's weak security system**

Nigeria's weak security system is a major contributor to the country's high degree of insecurity. Ogbette (2020) identified a major contributory factor to Nigeria's

inadequate security system as the lack of intelligence collection and surveillance by the Nigerian Police. Nigerian Police are not proactive and able to forecast a prospective criminal activity. This has been linked to a lack of resources – due to inadequate budget which results in a lack of contemporary equipment for Nigerian security forces, both in terms of weaponry and training. Most security agents assigned to deal with certain security upheavals in Nigeria lack the experience and equipment to manoeuvre events in a way that can curb the problem, which is why the Nigerian police, are unable to track down the rampaging Fulani herdsmen. The police, in combating the herdsmen have fewer equipment, compared to the ones possessed by the herdsmen, this, as Abraham and Odivwri (2021) observed reveals that they are ill-equipped to fight modern-day crimes. Modern technology can quickly detect crimes in the world's most advanced countries as well as the third-world countries.

The absence of forensic investigation in the Nigerian Police Force makes the conviction of Fulani herdsmen very difficult. It will always be difficult to get a conviction in criminal offenses involving the herdsmen, unless and until,-

Nigeria takes seriously the issue of forensic investigation. Currently, the country does not have the essential infrastructure and adequate manpower for forensic investigation, unlike what is obtainable in advanced nations. Most investigations conducted by our criminal investigation units are conducted analogously. Similarly, the gap in crime reporting as a result of weak communication infrastructure is closely related to the above. As a result, there is an information/partnership gap between the police and the general public.

Further, Achumba et al. (2013) stated that inadequate welfare packages and insufficient manpower in the Nigeria Police are contributing factors to Nigeria's weak security system. According to Olonisakin (2008), the UN's requirement for the police-to-population ratio is 1:450,- thus, the UN advocates one police officer per 450 citizens . However, in Nigeria, the ratio is one police officer per 540 citizens (Akpede, 2019). The former Nigerian Police Chief, Idris, on the other hand, placed the UN ratio at one police officer to 400 citizens in a country (<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2017/05/155000-additional-personnel-required-adequately-police-nigeria-g/>). Whichever

one, Nigeria still falls short of the UN's guideline. This implies that Nigeria is chronically under-policed, which helps to explain the Nigerian Police Force's incapacity to effectively combat crime and criminality in the country.

The Nigerian security operatives, particularly the NPF, are having difficulty controlling the threat of the Fulani herdsmen because of the style of the herdsmen's operations and the difficulties in accessing the terrains where they perpetuate their crimes. According to Akputu (2019), criminal herders hide in the bushes and carry out the majority of their attacks at night, before information gets to the police. Nigerian police do not have the necessary equipment to conduct night operations. Hence, there has been the issue of the police and other security operatives being too close to crime and kidnapping scenes in Nigeria and yet failing to intervene in the incidence.

On the other hand, Nigeria's open borders have exacerbated the country's insecurity. Nigeria has international land borders with Chad, Cameroon, Benin, and Niger of about 4,470 kilometers (2,513 miles) and a coastline of 774 kilometers (480 miles) with a total area of 923, 768 square kilometers (910,768 square

kilometers on land), all of which are largely unmanned, and individual movements are largely untracked. In comparison to 84 controlled entry sites, there are 1,400 illegal, uncontrolled, and unregulated routes into Nigeria (Daily Trust, 2021, July 20).

Porous borders have allowed extremists from other countries to infiltrate Nigeria, and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons has aided militant groups, particularly the Fulani Herdsmen, in having easy access to arms. According to Kings (2016), Nigeria is home to over 70% of West Africa's estimated 8 million illegal weapons. The permeability of Nigeria's borders as a result of ineffectual security system has aided the influx of migrants from neighboring West African countries such as Benin, Chad, and Niger, as well as migrants from Cameroun. These migrants consist mostly of young men who may be part of perpetrators of crimes in Nigeria (Kings, 2016).

### **Conclusion/ Recommendations**

The Nigerian Police are currently not performing as expected in terms of putting an end to the menace of Fulani herdsmen. This is due to the aforementioned difficulties they have in combating the threat. The NPF lacks

adequate welfare packages, manpower, equipment, training- and funding. Hence, they use inferior firearms compared to the ones used by Fulani herdsmen. They neither respond rapidly to distress calls nor react quickly to attacks. Nigeria's porous borders also constitute a very big threat to the NPF in combating this menace. Adopting an approach that is proactive, rather than the current episodic, disjointed, unstable, and reactive responses used by the government in the aftermath of attacks, will greatly benefit the Nigerian citizens who have suffered greatly from the Fulani herdsmen's heinous acts. This is particularly so, if the following recommendations are followed:

1. Good governance/leadership - This is the solution for addressing Nigeria's security concerns. Good governance engenders adequate security because the ultimate goal of governance is to put the people first. The government should be responsible to the people and accountable to them. Thus, integrated efforts with all sincerity of purpose should be directed toward the enthronement of unselfish, nationalistic, transparent,

trustworthy, credible, visionary, detribalized, and proactive leadership to replace selfish, parasitic, myopic, recreant, and decaying leadership. Leadership with a national outlook, capable of instilling the ideal of common citizenship in their people or followers in order to transform the nation, regardless of tribe, gender, religion, economic or social status. Leadership that will enforce the laws of the land and facilitate the molding of contending religious and ethnic groups into harmonious relationships, thus removing the perceived mutual distrust among Nigeria's multi-ethnic groups.

2. The Nigerian Police Department's budgeting and approval process is inefficient and should be revised. A substantial volume of money is not accounted for or represented in the budgeting process since police officers are attached to banks, VIPs, and other corporate organizations. Funds that come to the force from other sources should be investigated, and methods for managing the funds should be devised, which should

be reflected in the budget planning process.

3. The United Nations' recognized security institutions, particularly the Nigerian Police, should be completely reorganized in accordance with international best practices. The following items will be addressed as part of this overhaul:

- i. Inadequate staffing, funding, weaponry, mobility, and capacity building/training.
- ii. Poor or insufficient modern/advanced technologies, particularly communication infrastructures, and poor or inadequate welfare packages.
- iii. lack of law enforcement agents' conducting of credible intelligence gathering and sharing, surveillance, and forensic

investigations.

4. The Federal Government of Nigeria should impose a curfew on cattle movement between the hours of 7 p.m. and 7 a.m. This is because the majority of the attacks by the Fulani herdsmen occur at night. Task force teams and forest guards should be established across the states, including leaders from host communities as members.
5. Nigerian's government should improve the country's porous borders. This can be accomplished by establishing effective combined/joint military/paramilitary security operatives/personnel, complemented by joint civilian security task forces, across all boarders and within the country, whose activities will always be on red alert to check the excesses of not only the herdsmen, but also other miscreants.

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