Summary

- For the period of 19 to 25 February 2018, there were 50 critical incidents in Nigeria, resulting in 42 deaths and 32 arrests. Security-related operations accounted for 22% of total recorded incidents, followed by human & social-related incidents and criminality with 20% each.

- The herdsmen-farmers crisis continued to dominate the headlines in Nigeria this week. Abia State is preparing to pass its own anti-grazing law and Benue’s Governor alleged a plot by a group of herdsmen to kill him. In Delta State, one person was killed at his cassava farm in an herdersmen attack. In Ondo state, a Yoruba nationalist group volunteered to secure Akure Airport after grazing cattle disrupted the landing of aircraft. Meanwhile, the Nigerian government has renewed focus on Benue, Taraba and Nasarawa, with more deployments of soldiers to counter herdersmen attacks.

- Infectious diseases are causing more concern in several parts of Nigeria. In Niger state, meningitis killed four as the heatwave continued to spike. In Delta State, three people died from Lassa fever.

- Boko Haram attacked a village in Yobe state, abducting dozens of schoolgirls in a manner similar to the Chibok girls' kidnapping four years ago. The news of the attack increased tension across the country, given the potential for a repeat of the Chibok disaster. The federal government remains hesitant to comment on the case due to its political implications, at the same time expanding the military’s campaign to search for the missing girls. Two victims have already been found dead. Boko Haram also staged an attack on a 20-vehicle convoy in Borno, kidnapping several passengers.

- In Niger state, a mass trial of Boko Haram suspects ended with the court convicting 205 of them, with sentences reaching up to 66 years in prison. Other 475 suspects were released due to lack of evidence.

- The Nigerian authorities continue to spend heavily on security and defense procurement. The Nigerian navy has acquired several small ships and patrol crafts to curb crime in the country's rivers, in particular in the Delta’s waterways. The Air force, for its part, is preparing to establish a base in Lafia, the capital of Nasarawa State, in an effort to bring an end to various security crises in the state.

- Nigeria’s anti-corruption campaign continued this week with the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) filing charges against the Chairman of the Code of Conduct Tribunal (CCT), Justice Danladi Umar, on a bribery case. The commission also questioned former Chief of Army Staff, Azubuika Ihejirika, over his alleged role in the $2.1 billion arms procurement scandal under the administration of former President Goodluck Jonathan.
Nigeria Weekly Report

Significant Events: 19 - 25 February 2018

- **Niger: 20 February 2018**: Court convicts 205 Boko Haram members.
- **Abuja: 22 February 2018**: Four students die of food poisoning.
- **Niger: 22 February 2018**: Menin-gitis kills four in Niger state.
- **Jigawa: 22 February 2018**: Ten killed in Jigawa traffic accident.
- **Yobe: 19 February 2018**: Boko Haram kidnap schoolgirls, dozens still missing, two found dead.
- **Borno: 17 February 2018**: Boko Haram attacks 20 vehicles, kidnaps passengers.
- **Borno: 20 February 2018**: Police foil suicide attack in Maiduguri.
- **Nassarawa: 20 February 2018**: Air Force to establish base in Lafia.
- **Akwa Ibom: 17 February 2018**: Suspected militants kill four in Akwa Ibom.
- **Delta: 22 February 2018**: Herdsmen resume attacks on Abraka, one killed.
- **Delta: 19 February 2018**: Three die from Lassa Fever in Delta.
- **Kwara: 21 February 2018**: One killed in Kwara communal conflict.
- **Nigeria: 22 February 2018**: Boko Haram attacks 20 vehicles, kidnaps passengers.
- **Borno: 17 February 2018**: Boko Haram attacks 20 vehicles, kidnaps passengers.
- **Nassarawa: 20 February 2018**: Air Force to establish base in Lafia.
- **Niger: 22 February 2018**: Menin-gitis kills four in Niger state.
Anti-corruption watchdog files charges against the Chairman of the Code of Conduct Tribunal

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) filed charges against the Chairman of the Code of Conduct Tribunal (CCT), Justice Danladi Umar, based on a ruling of the High Court in Abuja. Justice Chizoba Oji had admitted the initial statement by Ali Gambo Abdullahi, the Personal Assistant to the CCT chairman, in which he claimed that he collected a bribe for Justice Umar, paving the way for charges against the CCT chairman.

Abia: Abia State to have its own anti-grazing bill

The Abia state assembly is set to release a new bill banning open grazing in the state. Cosmos Ndukwe, Deputy Speaker at Abia’s House of Assembly, said the House would soon pass into law the anti-grazing bill, just before the farming season begins. He agreed that Abia farmers needed security as they go into farming season, hence there’s a need to accelerate the passage of the bill in order to curtail the occasional clashes between herdsmen and farmers.

Benue: Benue Governor says herdsmen are plotting to kill him

Benue State Governor, Samuel Ortom, spoke this week of an alleged plot to kill him. The attack was allegedly schemed by a group of herdsmen linked to the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN). The governor even identified former MACBAN Coordinator in the state, Alhaji Garus Gololo, as the gang leader, who had been threatening his life. Herdsmen recently attacked and destroyed Ortom’s farm house in Gbajimba, Guma Local Government Area of Benue State.

Human & Social

Rivers: Dana Air plane skids off runway in Port Harcourt

A Dana Air plane skidded off the runway while landing at Port Harcourt International Airport, on 20 February. Passengers were evacuated by emergency officials of the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN). No casualties were reported. The FAAN attributed the incident to heavy rain accompanied by a strong winds and storm. Flight number 9J0363 took off from Abuja.

Plateau: Fire destroys IDP camp in Shendam

The newly constructed camp for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Shendam, Local Government Area (LGA) of Plateau State, has been razed by fire on Tuesday, 20 February. The camp was constructed by the Presidential Committee on Flood, Relief and Rehabilitation, following the 2012 floods that devastated 24 states. The Plateau Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) said it had been unable to assess the level of damage due to insufficiency of funds.

Abuja: Four students die of food poisoning

Four pupils of the Local Education Authority II Primary School, in Kubwa, a suburb of Abuja, died after eating poisoned biscuits at the school premises. The biscuits had been brought in by another child. Two of the deceased kids were from the same family. It was...
reported that the victims bled through their mouths and ears before they died. The incident caused panic in the community as parents rushed to withdraw their children from the school.

Niger: Meningitis kills four in Niger state
As the heatwave continues across Nigeria's northern states, four people have been confirmed dead in Magama Local Government Area of Niger State, following an outbreak of Cerebrospinal-Meningitis (CSM) in the state. Commissioner for Health, Mustapha Jibril, said 31 cases have been reported so far across the state. The commissioner however said that the outbreak of the disease has been narrowed to two local government areas. One of them showing the great majority of cases with 27 people affected, and four deaths.

Delta State: Three die from Lassa Fever in Delta
Widespread fear was reported among residents of Delta State following three people new deaths of people infected with Lassa fever. Seven new cases of the fever have also been confirmed, while 24 others are currently under close surveillance by health authorities. The outbreak of Lassa fever in Delta state began in January 2018 with the admission of four patients at the Asaba Federal Medical Centre.

Kwara: One killed in Kwara communal conflict
Clashes erupted again over a land dispute between Offa and Ijagbo communities in Kwara state on 21 February, forcing people residing in border areas of the communities to flee. One person was reportedly killed and 21 others, including two policemen, were severely wounded. During the clash that lasted several hours, exchange of gunfire between hunters from both communities made people run for safety as most of the villagers deserted their homes. Offa Central Hotel and several other properties were destroyed in the fight. Traffic, business and school activities were also suspended and a barricade was raised on the major road linking both communities.

In the context of an long-standing land dispute between families from the two communities, the altercation broke out following alleged efforts by one family to develop the disputed land, which were reproved by the other.

Abuja: Gas explosion in Abuja kills three
Three people lost their lives and other three were injured following a gas explosion that took place in Abuja on 23 February. The explosion took place when a welder brought his gas cylinder for refill at a station in Zuba, Gwagwalada area council of the Federal Capital Territory, FCT. The deceased were two gas attendants and the customer.

Jigawa: Ten killed in Jigawa traffic accident
Ten people were confirmed dead and 10 other injured on 22 February in a road accident which occurred around 11.30 am at Majiya town, Taura Local Government Area of Jigawa state. Police Spokesman Adamu Shehu said the accident involved vans. The cause of the accident is yet to be ascertained.
Security
Nigeria Weekly Report

Yobe: Boko Haram raids Dapchi village, kidnaps schoolgirls

The agrarian community of Dapchi in Yobe state was attacked on 19 February by Boko Haram gunmen. Local residents and some officials said the attackers’ mission was to abduct the female students of the Government Science and Technical College. The Nigerian government has been hesitant to comment on the abductions and to attribute the kidnapping to Boko Haram.

According to witnesses, the incident took place at about 6.30 p.m., when eight vans and a truck coming into the town as people were about to commence their prayers. Reportedly an undetermined number of gunmen got off the vehicles and began to shoot sporadically. After a while, as everyone was trying to escape, the men were seen taking the girls out of the school premises and into the bush. Troops of the Nigerian Army later rescued 50 of the pupils. The Yobe state Commissioner of police, Abdulmaliki Sumonu, said that 111 girls are still unaccounted for.

The government has been hesitant to give information on the incident, given the potential political impact to the Buhari administration. Meanwhile, the military ordered more troop deployments to Yobe and surrounding states in an effort to recover all the missing girls. The troops’ search has been enhanced by the deployment of surveillance aircraft.

The abduction comes almost four years after the kidnapping of 275 schoolgirls in Chibok, Borno State.

Yobe: Two Dapchi schoolgirls killed in rescue operation

The bodies of two missing Dapchi schoolgirls abducted by Boko Haram on 19 February in Yobe state, were recovered on 22 February by the Nigerian military during a rescue operation. Reports also indicate that the Nigerian military also rescued dozens of the schoolgirls during the same operation. However, information remains sketchy as several conflicting reports have emerged since the incident took place. While some reports claimed the Nigerian army rescued 68 of the victims and that 111 of them were still missing, other reports claimed only 76 were rescued, in addition to the two discovered bodies.

Delta: Herdsmen resume attacks on Abraka, one killed

One person was killed and another wounded on 22 February, following a herdsmen attack on his cassava farm located in Abraka, Delta state. The incident took place two days after another resident escaped a group of herdsmen who had kidnapped her from her farm.

Borno: Boko Haram attacks 20 vehicles in Borno, kidnaps passengers

Information recently emerged that a convoy comprised of 20 commercial and private vehicles traveling on a major highway in Borno state was attacked by Boko Haram on 17 February. Local reports said the insurgents fired several shots on the convoy at Yeleri, along Maiduguri-Damboa road, despite having military escorts. Reportedly, several passengers were kidnapped in the attack, although authorities have not yet confirmed it.

Akwa Ibom: Suspected militants kill four in Akwa Ibom

Suspected militants have reportedly beheaded a soldier after a shootout with the security forces. The soldier’s headless body was found at Urua Obo Inyang market. The shootout took place on 18 February during a raid on the militants’ hideout in Etim Ekpo Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State. The raid intended to arrest Aboy Ikpor and his gang, who reportedly staged the Ikot Ekpene prison break in December 2017, in which at least 40 inmates escaped. Separately, three civilians were killed by suspected cultists in Udianga Enem.

Nigeria renews focus on Benue, Taraba and Nasarawa to counter herdsmen attacks

The Nigerian government has reorganized the command and control structure of army formations in Benue State as part of the administration’s response to herdsmen attacks in the region, Vice-President Yemi Osinbajo disclosed this week. The Vice-President also reported that the
army will launch a new campaign next week to counter herdsman, gangs and militias in areas in Benue, Taraba, and Nasarawa states.

Nasarawa: Army Chief insists that the days of herdsman attacks are over

In a call to the Governor of Nasarawa, Umaru Tanko Al-Makura, the Chief of Army Staff, Lieutenant General Tukur Buratai, said that "the days of herdsman attacks are over." He also claimed that the army has discovered the routes used by suspected herdsman in attacks along the Nasarawa-Benue border, and have thus deployed armed officers to monitor the affected areas. Buratai added that the military has also arrested some herdsman and that they are presently being interrogated.

He said operation Cat Race, launched initially in Benue state to counter herdsman, will be extended to Nasarawa. It is expected that within six weeks of its operation, operation Cat Race will manage to restore peace and order in the affected areas, where the attacks have led to the displacement of more than 25,000 farmers.

Meanwhile, the Inspector General of Police (IGP), Ibrahim Idris, reported that the clashes between herdsman and farmers in Benue have eased and that peace was gradually returning to the state.

Edo: Police arrest self-confessed Boko Haram suspect

The Edo Command of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps (NSCDC) confirmed the arrest of a self-confessed Boko Haram suspect on 24 February. The suspect was arrested at the premises of the Nigeria Television Authority (NTA) after he was spotted loitering.

Jindi admitted to being a Boko Haram member and carrying out several attacks on its behalf.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Justice announced the release of 475 suspects due to lack of evidence. The released individuals have already returned to their home states for "proper rehabilitation" before being sent back to their families.

Delta: Navy procures new ships to tackle maritime crimes

The Nigerian navy has acquired several small ships and patrol crafts to curb crime in the country's rivers, in particular in the Delta waterways. In addition to the 200 locally-built flat bottom boats for brown water operations purchased locally, two new 35-meter SDBs from France will be added to the fleet in the coming weeks. The navy has also revamped previously operational ships. The Chief of Naval Staff, Vice Admiral Ibas, said the acquisition will greatly enhance the Navy's ability to perform its statutory roles.

Niger: Court convicts 205 Boko Haram members

The special sitting of the Federal High Court in Wawa Cantonment, in Kainji, Niger State, has ended the trial of Boko Haram suspects, with the conviction of 205 alleged members, who were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. One of the convicts, identified as Alhaji Bukar Jindi, got the longest term of imprisonment, sentenced to 66 years on a two count charge.

Borno: Police foil suicide attack in Maiduguri

On 20 February, Borno Police foiled a suicide bomb attempt on the University of Maiduguri. Security personnel deployed to the area neutralized the lone suicide bomber at one of the entry points of the university. The attacker, believed to be a member of Boko Haram, detonated the explosive devices strapped to his body after the attack was foiled, killing

Commercial in Confidence
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himself. There were no other casualties.

Ondo: Yoruba nationalist group volunteers to secure Akure Airport after cattle were seen grazing there

A Yoruba nationalist organization, the Oodua Peoples Congress (OPC) said its members would volunteer to protect the Akure Airport following the "invasion of the airport" on 18 February by cattle suspected to belong to nomadic herdsmen. The cattle were said to be still grazing on the tarmac, creating tension among the airport passengers. The airport runway was overrun by cows, which disrupted the landing of an Air Peace flight, delaying its landing for several minutes. In addition to offering volunteers, OPC urged the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) to provide tighter security to the airport. Meanwhile, FAAN suspended the head of security at the Akure Airport and interrogated the airport manager over the incident.

Criminality

Rivers: Five arrested for murder of PDP official

Four of the five suspects allegedly involved in the murder of a top official of the Peoples Democratic Party in Rivers State, Heaven Ihuigwe, were paraded on Tuesday, 20 February at the State Police Command in Port Harcourt. Ihuigwe was killed on 16 September 2017 in Rumuekini in Obio/Akor LGA. The police said the suspects had confessed to the crime.

Benue: 17 arrested in Gboko for killing police officers

The Nigeria police arrested 17 people in connection with the killing of several officers in different parts of Benue state. They were arrested following a tip off by residents of the state. Eleven of them were arrested in connection with the killing and arson of seven travelers in Gboko on 31 January. Six others were linked to the murder of police officers in the state.

Abuja: Corruption watchdog targets former Chief of Army Staff Ihejirika

Nigeria’s anti graft agency, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) questioned former Chief of Army Staff, Azubuika Ihejirika, on 22 February over his alleged role in the $2.1 billion arms procurement scandal under the administration of former President Goodluck Jonathan. Ihejirika is one of the 18 retired army officials investigated for defense equipment procurement fraud. The committee investigating the allegations taking place between 2007 and 2015, was set up by President Muhammadu Buhari when he took office. The special committee has already indicted 18 top military personnel, 12 government officials and 24 heads of companies for fraudulent dealings in arms procurement contracts.

Lagos: Cult gang attacks polytechnic institute in Ikorodu

One person was killed and several others wounded on 20 February, following a violent attack on the Ikorodu Campus of the Lagos State Polytechnic (LASPOTECH). The attackers are suspected cultists. The deceased person was identified as a former LASPOTECH student, who had been expelled from the institution. It is believed that he attack was a punitive expedition, during which the gang raided the campus from different directions, chasing the students around the polytechnic with guns, machetes and knives. The raid continued until the police intervened.

Benue: Three herdsmen jailed in Benue state for illegal grazing

On 23 February, a Makurdi Magistrates’ Court sentenced three herders to a year in prison each, for violating the 2017 Benue Anti-Open Grazing Law. The convicts were charged with criminal conspiracy, open nomadic livestock rearing and grazing. The prosecutor reported that the three herdsmen, and others now at large, were openly grazing their cattle along Yeluwata Road in Guma local government area of Benue. The herdsmen pleaded guilty to the charge against them, saying that they were not aware that open
grazing had been prohibited in Benue.

Sokoto: Two dead as gang attacks prison van
The Sokoto police confirmed on 23 February the death of two people during a confrontation between a criminal gang and prison service officials in Sokoto city. Reportedly, the gang attacked a prison van while conveying 18 inmates to court, in an effort to free them. During the failed attempt, two of the attackers lost their lives and one person was hospitalized.

Rivers: Pastor accused of killing three church members
A pastor in Afam, Rivers State, has been arrested in connection with the murder of three members of his church - two women and a baby. The police accuse the pastor of committing the murders on 13 December 2017.

Nasarawa: Police arrest alleged mastermind of Benue killings
The Nigerian Police Intelligence unit informed on the arrest of the alleged mastermind of the killing of 73 Benue State residents. Identified as Alhaji Laggi, he was arrested along with three other men who may have also been involved in the Benue killings. The suspects were also arrested for the killing of several policemen in the state. The men were intercepted in Tunga town.

Akwa Ibom: Gunmen kidnap youth leader in Akwa Ibom
Itoro Inuaowo, youth leader of Udianga Enem community, in Etim Ekpo, Akwa Ibom State, was kidnapped by gunmen on 20 February. His abductors are suspected members of the Iceland cult. The gunmen arrived at the youth leader’s compound on three motorcycles early in the morning and took him away at gunpoint. The Iceland gang, popularly called The Red, had been on the prowl to avenge the murder of their leader, Akaniyene Jumbo (Iso Akpafid), who was ambushed and killed by security agents last month.

Lagos: Petrol distributors warn of strike over federal debt
The Depot and Petroleum Products Marketers Association of Nigeria (DAPPMAN), representing the oil distribution industry, has given the federal government a 14-day ultimatum to settle a NGN 650 billion debt owed to its members. It warned that failure to pay, it will call for a strike that would further compound the current petrol supply crisis. The money owed reportedly account for outstanding subsidy claims inherited by the government from the previous administration. The association warned that it would be forced to shut all its depots and lay off workers if the government failed to settle the debt within the period given.

Economy

Rivers: Renewed tension in Ogoniland over oil exploration
The Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) said the Ogoni people have not endorsed any company to resume oil exploration on their land, and called on the Federal Government to intervene and monitor the activities of oil firms currently operating in the area. MOSOP’s warning came after another local organization, the Supreme Council of Traditional Rulers of Ogoni, endorsed local oil company RoboMichael Limited to explore oil in OML 11, allegedly with MOSOP’s approval. In the current crisis, political group Ken Saro-Wiwa Associates (KSA) has described the traditional rulers’ endorsement of RoboMichael as a “mere joke” that will not stand. MOSOP’s spokesman, Fegalo Nsuke, called on President Muhammadu Buhari to avert a breakdown of peace in Ogoniland, by halting the activities of Belema Oil and RoboMichael Limited, adding that their desperation for Ogoni oil has created a sharp divide among local groups.
Nigeria's Shell Chief says sabotage is cause of Nigeria's recession

The chairman of Shell Companies in Nigeria, Osagie Okunbor, has blamed the sabotage of pipelines and other facilities in the oil and gas industry, as the major cause factor that plunged Nigeria into recession in 2016. Speaking to local newspapers on 21 February, Okunbor noted that sabotage in the industry is the biggest challenge confronting oil companies operating in the Niger Delta. He said that over 90% of the oil spillage in the Niger Delta is due to militant attacks on pipelines.

Imo: Authorities shut down dozen filling stations in Imo

As petrol official prices remain above NGN 145, the Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR) in Owerri has sealed thirteen petrol stations in Imo State, nine of which violated the seal order.

Abuja: Power company records six system collapses, Nigeria braces for blackouts

Nigeria’s volatile power situation is set to worsen as Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN) recorded six system collapses in January 2018. The failures resulted in the damage of nine vital components, including transformers, which will cost the company NGN 3.85 billion to rehabilitate within nine months. TCN has also lost equipment that includes switch gears, breakers and isolators.
Politics & Security

The Nigerian authorities will continue to feel the political implications of the various security issues affecting the country.

At present, the government’s most urgent problem is the Boko Haram abduction of Yobe schoolgirls. While many have returned safe, dozens are reportedly still missing, and two have already been confirmed dead. This is a major point of stress for President Buhari, who ordered a large number of troops and resources to locate and free the missing girls. The presidency feels international and domestic pressure, as this incident could jeopardize the political future of President Buhari.

In addition to the Boko Haram threat, the other security issue that will continue to dominate the Nigeria risk factor ahead is the herdsmen-farmers conflict across a number of areas in the country.

Human and Social

The intense heat period currently affecting most of the country has already resulted in the death of four people from meningitis. This situation has come to add more stress to the Nigerian health system, currently dealing with Lassa fever and other outbreaks. The situation is not likely to improve, considering the lack of resources to contain disease outbreaks and as the heat season continues.

Communal violence and criminality will remain destabilizing factors going forward, despite efforts from the security services to reduce tension.

Economy

Power outages derived from system failures in the supply network across Nigeria are expected to lead to further blackouts. This in turn is expected to also have a negative impact on the broad economy.

The country continues to struggle with limited petrol supply, a situation that is maintaining a high level of stress among motorists and business alike.

There are no immediate remedies to fix the economy, a situation that will likely persist well into 2019 and during the presidential election.
### Forecast of Events 2018

#### Nigeria Weekly Report

*Muslim holidays are often determined by local sightings of lunar phases; dates given are approximate.*

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<td>Ramadan*</td>
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