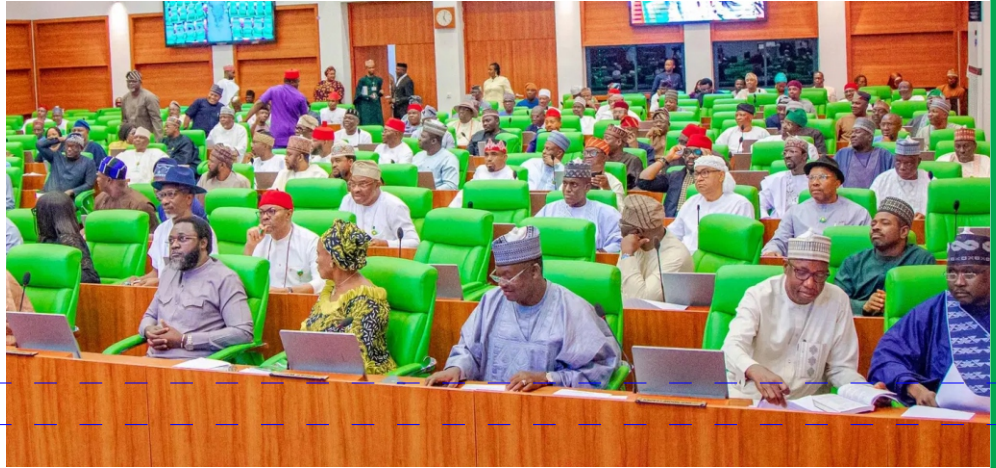


Nigerians Will Revolt If Action Is Not Taken, Reps Warns

The House of Representatives has warned of citizen's revolt, if the Federal Government failed to address insecurity in the country, which has been on the upswing in the last few weeks. This came on a day Senate President, Godswill Akpabio, told his colleagues that the insecurity and parlous state of the nation's economy are stretching the patience and resilience of Nigerians to the limit, and asked them to respond with legislative actions. Lawmakers from areas ravaged by insurgency and killings by herdsmen in the country, who led the debate on the issue at plenary, also accused the Presidency of not doing enough to resolve the insecurity problem in the country, despite the over N19.7 trillion spent on security. However, efforts to get the Presidency to react to this proved abortive as Special Adviser, Media and Publicity to the President, Mr. Bayo Onanuga, directed Vanguard to the National Security Adviser, NSA, Malam Nuhu Ribadu.



The NSA could not also be reached at press time last night, as both calls and text messages sent to him were not replied. But the debate in the House was sparked by a motion of urgent public importance moved by Ahmed Satomi on the recent fire at the armory at Giwa Barracks and the escalating attacks on military formations in Borno and Yobe states respectively. The motion soon snowballed into emotional testimonies and dire warnings, with some lawmakers declaring that if urgent steps are not taken by government to solve the problem, Nigerians might turn on their elected representatives. In his contribution, Yusuf Gagdi (APC, Plateau) rebuked those downplaying the severity of the crisis, saying "when the governor is crying and someone within the comfort of his zone says the governor is raising an unnecessary alarm, we are rascals. Nigerians are being killed. This is unacceptable. "Until the right thing is done by us here, until government responds with action, not just media statements, don't bet that any member of the National Assembly is safe. We may be attacked not by Boko Haram, but by the people that elected you and I. "Time will come when, if action is not taken, Nigerians will take their destinies in their own hands. "Mr. Speaker, we must stand up and find a way of bringing this issue of insecurity to a halt, otherwise, you and I are not safe. No matter how Nigerians respect us, we are moving to a level that they will fight us the way they fight criminals and the way they fight Boko Haram.

On his part, Ahmed Jaha (APC, Borno), whose constituency includes Chibok, gave a chilling account of Boko Haram's exploits in his area. He said: "10 farmers were slaughtered in Pulka; 14 in Chibok, and military officers at Izge and Kampu. In Wajiboko, Boko Haram used weaponized drones. The Nigerian Army is outgunned and undermanned. I have seen it, nobody told me, I was there." Jaha warned the House not to be complacent, saying "between 2015 and 2019, the government spent N19.7 trillion on security, yet Boko Haram is resurging, worse than ever. We must do proper oversight. "Mr. Speaker, I am talking as a victim of the recent resurgence of Boko Haram insurgency. I went to my

constituency on Saturday to sympathize, to condone with the people that lost their lives as a result of this sporadic, uninterrupted attack. "In my constituency in Pulka, 10 peasant farmers went out to scavenge for what we call 'saw root.' They were slaughtered by Boko Haram members and five are still missing, while three are critically ill in the hospital. In Chibok, 14 peasant farmers were attacked in their community. "In the twinkle of an eye, they (insurgents) reduced 14 people to nothing. People were cut down while running for their lives by insurgents firing new AK-47 rifles. I lost two military officers as a result of the attack. "In Kampu, I lost two men and one military officer. This will be on record. They (Boko Haram) are using armed drones, weaponized drones, which the Nigerian Army is not using. In other words, they are more sophisticated and advanced than the Nigerian Army. "Boko Haram is coming back worse than what we had in the past. Take it or leave it. Boko Haram are coming back. Let us do something serious in order not to go back to the days 22 local governments out of 27 were occupied by Boko Haram. "We shouldn't be complacent with this. I align with the Deputy Speaker by saying we should do our part by doing proper oversight as expected, because between 2015 and 2019, Nigerian government spent N19.7 trillion on security issues. I have the record with me. So we shouldn't be complacent."

In her contribution, Zainab Gimba (APC, Borno) corroborated the use of drones and foreign fighters in recent attacks. She said: "In my constituency, 20 soldiers were killed in a Boko Haram ambush on a multinational force base. The commander told me that among the insurgents were several white men; there is foreign influence here." She condemned the positioning of military formations within cities, citing the Giwa Barracks fire in Maiduguri, which led to explosion of military bombs. "Before the public knew what was happening, panic had already spread. These formations should be outside city centers. Our lives should not be politicized. "Mr. Speaker, another issue of concern for this House is that the exit of Niger, Burkina Faso and Mali from ECOWAS has also posed a lot of threat, especially at the border of Mali and other Nigerian borders. "If there is no synergy, this insurgency will pose several threats to the country, not only to the state. "We are giving the impression that the fire in Maiduguri came as a result of either a fire source or whatever within the barracks. On that particular day, there wasn't any Boko Haram attack. "In my own constituency, in Mungo, Mr. Speaker, there has been a Boko Haram attack on military formation of the multinational joint task force where more

"These are not just news headlines; they are the bleeding wounds of the republic. Our people look to us, not for rhetoric, but for rescue. But I believe that there is no river we cannot cross if we put our trust in God and faith in the people He has ordained to lead us in both the executive and legislative arms of our government. "In the media, during our recess, the reform of our electoral and judicial systems, and the role of the legislature in sustaining democracy are not idle conversations. They are the heartbeat of our democratic future. Let us rise up and meet these expectations. "Colleagues, let us make no mistake, we are under watch. The people are watching. The world is watching. Our constituents are watching. And history silent, but unsleeping is watching. "No test must find us wanting. No challenge must catch us unprepared."

than 20 soldiers were killed. "It will interest you to know that I visited that formation and the commander told me that out of about 100 soldiers in that formation, we have only six Nigerian soldiers. And it is a multinational joint task force where we expect to have, if not equal number, at least substantive number of Nigerian military men. "Again, Mr. Speaker, the commanding officer of that formation revealed that it wasn't the first or the second time the formation has been attacked, but on that very day, March 24, 2025, the attack was unprecedented."

Also contributing, Shettima Ali (APC, Yobe) called for legislative reform to allow citizens defend themselves. He said: "Let this House create a law that permits our people to protect themselves. The security forces are not enough and don't know the terrain. "Our people are being killed by the day. I want this House to come up with another idea to deal with our people, we have to think of how to create a law that will allow our people protect themselves; we just need this thing. "Like Jaha said, our security personnel are inadequate, they don't know the terrain of our communities, though they are trying their best." In a soberer tone, Babajimi Benson (APC, Lagos) said the Federal Government's security spending is not yielding results. He said: "The presidency has spent so much on the military without commensurate outcomes. We need drastic measures. The House, however, resolved to investigate the cause of the fire at Giwa Barracks armoury in Maiduguri to prevent a recurrence. It also resolved to conduct a thorough review of security measures in military installations to prevent similar incidents, ask the Federal Government to strengthen security operations in Borno and Yobe states to protect military personnel and civilians; and provide support as well as compensation to families of soldiers affected by the incidents. The House also mandated the Committee on Army, Defence and National Security to investigate and report back within weeks. Meanwhile, Senate President, Godswill Akpabio, also expressed worries over how insecurity and the economy were stretching out the patience of Nigeria. According to him, the rising cost of living, the instability in the energy sector, and the persistent insecurity in parts of the nation all demand not just attention, but also legislative action of the Senate In his welcome address to his colleagues on the

resumption of Senate plenary after the Sallah and Easter break, Akpabio reminded his colleagues that the people and the world were watching them to see how they respond to the myriad of challenges confronting Nigerians.

The Senate president, who warned his colleagues not to be found wanting, said: "I welcome you all back to this hallowed chamber after what has been a spiritually enriching and reflective recess, marked by the observance of Easter and Eid-el-Fitr. "These sacred seasons, Christianity's celebration of sacrifice and resurrection, and Islam's culmination of fasting, prayer, and charity, are not merely religious milestones, they are moral mirrors and national metaphors. "They remind us of the virtues this country so desperately needs — sacrifice, discipline, patience, unity, and the courage to rise from adversity. "Let those lessons not remain in the churches or mosques we attended. Let them walk with us into this chamber, speak through our debates, and shine in the quality of the laws we make. The burdens on our shoulders are enormous, and no season better prepares the soul to carry such burdens than the one we've just passed through. "Senators, much has transpired in our dear country while we were away. Our economy continues to stretch the patience and resilience of our people. The rising cost of living, instability in the energy sector, and persisting insecurity in parts of the nation all demand not just attention but also legislative action. "Legislative action to support the great work the executive arm, led by President Bola Tinubu, is doing to fix the myriad of challenges which besiege our nation. "In the South-East and North-West, communities still battle criminality and terrorism.

In the North-Central, farmers and herders still seek protection and justice. And in the South-South, the questions of environmental equity and resource fairness remain unresolved. "These are not just news headlines; they are the bleeding wounds of the republic. Our people look to us, not for rhetoric, but for rescue. But I believe that there is no river we cannot cross if we put our trust in God and faith in the people He has ordained to lead us in both the executive and legislative arms of our government. "In the media, during our recess, the reform of our electoral and judicial systems, and the role of the legislature in sustaining democracy are not idle conversations. They are the heartbeat of our democratic future. Let us rise up and meet these expectations. "Colleagues, let us make no mistake, we are under watch. The people are watching. The world is watching. Our constituents are watching. And history silent, but unsleeping is watching. "No test must find us wanting. No challenge must catch us unprepared. Let every vote we cast, every motion we raise, and every oversight we conduct bear the fingerprints of integrity and patriotism. "The task ahead of us this session is as solemn as it is historic. We will be examining bills critical to national stability on security reform, economic resilience, education, technology, and youth empowerment. Our committees will delve into oversight functions that could unlock the performance potential of many MDAs. "Let us carry out our duties with the spirit of statesmen, not partisans. Let us elevate debate over division. Let us govern with grace, not grudge. "To the Nigerian people, I say this: Your Senate is back at work. And we have not forgotten your hopes, your hardships, or your hunger for change. We are here, refreshed in spirit, renewed in resolve, to build a nation where peace is not an illusion, and progress not a promise, but a pattern."