

**PROACTIVE POLICING, COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS
COMPLIANCE IN MASS GATHERINGS:
AN ANALYSIS OF THE OGUN STATE POLICE COMMAND’S OJUDE OBA
FESTIVAL 2026 SECURITY OPERATION**

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ABSTRACT

The Ogun State Police Command’s 28 May 2026 deployment of over 2,500 personnel for the Ojude Oba Festival reflects a proactive policing posture for mass gatherings. This paper analyses the operation and expands it into a framework for managing security at cultural festivals and mega events. It delineates the roles and responsibilities of formal security agencies and informal militia groups, outlines techniques for intelligence, surveillance and monitoring of criminal activities, and integrates legal safeguards to prevent human rights abuses during counter-terrorism, counter-insurgency, anti-banditry and anti-kidnapping operations. Drawing on Nigerian statutes and the doctrinal works of Barrister Adebayo Akinade including *Managing Security In Tourism Cultural Festivals and Mega Events 2007*, *Communal Conflict and Violence: Response, Resolution and Prevention 2009*, *Contemporary Security Issues on Governance and Statecraft 2018*, and others the paper argues that effective festival security requires fusion of formal and informal actors under legal oversight, community partnership, and intelligence-led operations. Recommendations address coordination, oversight, capacity building and accountability.

Keywords: Festival Security, Proactive Policing, Intelligence-Led Operations, Community Militias, Human Rights, Criminal Intelligence, Nigeria.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Cultural festivals such as Ojude Oba attract large crowds and create vulnerabilities for terrorism, banditry, kidnapping and violent crime. On 28 May 2026 the Ogun State Police Command announced a comprehensive deployment of 2,500+ personnel and specialized units for the 2026 edition.

1.2 Problem Statement

Large-scale deployments can prevent disorder but also risk human rights violations, uncoordinated action by informal groups, and poor evidence handling if not guided by law and clear roles.

1.3 Aim and Objectives

Aim: To develop a legally grounded, intelligence-driven framework for securing cultural festivals and mega events in Nigeria, clarifying the roles of formal and informal security actors.

Objectives:

1. Analyse the Ogun State Police Command's Ojude Oba 2026 plan.
2. Define roles and responsibilities of formal agencies and informal militia groups.
3. Examine intelligence, surveillance and monitoring techniques for event security.
4. Integrate human rights safeguards and Akinade's doctrinal framework.

1.4 Methodology

Doctrinal legal analysis, policy analysis of the press release, and synthesis of literature, including Akinade's works listed in Section 12.

2.0 CONTEXT OF THE OGUN OPERATION

2.1 Event Profile

Ojude Oba is a major cultural festival in Ijebu Ode with high crowd density, vehicular congestion and symbolic targets.

2.2 Announced Security Posture

- 2,500+ personnel from PMF, SWAT, VCRU, Anti-Kidnapping Unit, Monitoring Unit, Force Intelligence Department, EOD-CBRN, MTD.
- APCs, patrol vehicles, motorcycles, surveillance and undercover teams.
- Coverage of pavilion, highways, hotels, worship centres, motor parks, markets.
- Focus on Sagamu Interchange, Ijebu Ode–Benin Expressway, Molipa axis.
- Directive for collaboration with traditional rulers, community leaders, transport unions and event organisers.

3.0 LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

3.1 Constitutional Basis

Sections 14(2)(b), 33-46 of the 1999 Constitution govern security duties and rights limitations.

3.2 Statutory Framework

- **Police Act 2020:** Public order and crime prevention.
- **Terrorism Prevention and Prohibition Act 2022:** Intelligence sharing, disruption of financing.
- **ACJA 2015:** Arrest, detention, investigation standards.
- **Evidence Act 2011:** Admissibility of electronic and forensic evidence.
- **Public Order Act Cap P42 LFN 2004:** Regulation of assemblies.

3.3 International Standards

UN Basic Principles on Use of Force; UN Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement; ECOWAS Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance.

4.0 CONCEPTUAL AND DOCTRINAL FRAMEWORK

Akinade's body of work provides the integrated framework applied here:

1. Managing Security In Tourism Cultural Festivals and Mega Events 2007 Four-pillar model: risk assessment, integrated command, crowd psychology management, and post-event review.
2. Communal Conflict and Violence: Response, Resolution and Prevention 2009 Models for early warning, mediation, community policing and the role of traditional institutions.
3. Contemporary Security Issues on Governance and Statecraft 2018 Analysis of disinformation, governance deficits and their impact on violent crime.
4. Security Operations, Crime Prevention and Good Governance: Pattern and Trends 2007 Protocols for command, control, documentation and accountability in Nigerian security operations.
5. National Security, Social Coercion and Sustainable Development: Panacea to Conflict, Violence and Xenophobia 2008 Limits of coercion and the need for development-centred security.
6. Security Culture, Diplomacy and Communication Skills in International Relations 2008 Framework for inter-agency and international intelligence sharing.
7. Managing Strategic Security in Statecraft, Public Affairs and Foreign Relations 2019 Fusion cell model for integrating intelligence, diplomacy and operations.

Together, these works form a coherent doctrine for lawful, intelligence-led, community-anchored security management.

5.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SECURITY ACTORS

5.1 Formal Security Agencies

Agency	Role in Festival Security	Legal Basis
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Nigeria Police Force	Lead agency for public order, crowd control, crime prevention, investigation. Conduct intelligence-led patrols, stop-and-search, arrests.	Police Act 2020; ACJA 2015
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Department of State Services	Domestic intelligence, threat assessment, undercover operations, counter-radicalisation.	DSS Act 1986
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Nigerian Army/Air Force	Support role: perimeter security, air surveillance, rapid reaction on request of civil authority.	Armed Forces Act; Harmonised ROE
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Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps	Protection of critical infrastructure, crowd guidance, support to police.	NSCDC Act 2007
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National Intelligence Agency	External intelligence on trans-border threats, financing flows.	NIA Act 1986
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5.2 Informal Militia Groups and Organisations

Informal groups include vigilantes, community watch, hunters and transport union marshals. Their role must be limited to:

1. **Observation and Early Warning:** Report suspicious movement to formal agencies.
2. **Access Control Support:** Assist with pedestrian flow under police supervision.
3. **Community Liaison:** Facilitate trust between police and communities.

Limits and Safeguards:

- Must operate under written mandate from the Commissioner of Police.
- Prohibited from carrying out arrests, searches or use of force except in citizen's arrest conditions under Section 12 ACJA 2015.
- Subject to training on human rights and use of force, per Akinade 2009.
- Liable for abuses under criminal law and civil liability.

5.3 Coordination Mechanism

Establish a *Festival Security Fusion Cell at the state level chaired by the Commissioner of Police, with representatives of DSS, NSCDC, military liaison, local government, traditional council, vigilante umbrella body and event organisers. This mirrors Akinade 2007 and 2019 models.

6.0 INTELLIGENCE, SURVEILLANCE AND MONITORING TECHNIQUES

6.1 Pre-Event Intelligence Cycle

- **Planning:** Define threat scenarios: terrorism, banditry infiltration, stampede, pickpocketing.
- **Collection:** HUMINT from community sources, OSINT from social media, technical surveillance of communication and CCTV.
- **Analysis:** Link analysis of known criminal networks, risk mapping of venues.
- **Dissemination:** Real-time alerts to commanders and fusion cell.

6.2 Surveillance Techniques

- **Technical:** CCTV with facial recognition, drones for crowd monitoring, electronic interception under court order.
- **Human:** Undercover operatives, community informants, transport union marshals.
- **Physical:** Mobile patrols, checkpoints at entry points, K9 units for explosives detection.

6.3 Monitoring of Criminal Activities

- **Financial Monitoring:** NFIU tracking of suspicious transactions linked to kidnapping syndicates.
- **Digital Monitoring:** Analysis of social media for incitement and mobilisation, addressing issues raised in Akinade 2018.
- **Crowd Dynamics Monitoring:** Use of crowd density sensors and behavioural analysis to prevent stampedes, per Akinade 2007.

6.4 Legal Safeguards

All interception and surveillance must comply with Cybercrimes Act 2015 Sections 38-40 and obtain judicial authorization. Evidence must meet Evidence Act 2011 standards.

7.0 PREVENTING HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES

7.1 Use of Force

Force must be lawful, necessary and proportionate. Officers and supervised militia must receive de-escalation training, per Akinade 2008 on social coercion.

7.2 Accountability

- Real-time body-worn cameras for deployed personnel.
- Independent observers from NHRC during operations.
- Complaints mechanism with 48-hour response timeline.

7.3 Oversight of Informal Groups

- Mandatory vetting and registration of vigilante members.
- Clear rules of engagement issued by the Commissioner.
- Periodic audit of actions by the State Police Command, reflecting Akinade 2007 protocols on documentation and accountability.

8.0 PROSPECTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

1. **Institutionalised Fusion Cell:** Festival can serve as a testbed for permanent state fusion cell.
2. **Data for Risk Mapping:** Crowd and incident data improve future planning, aligning with Akinade 2007.
3. **Community Trust:** Visible professionalism strengthens police legitimacy, per Akinade 2009.
4. **Public-Private Partnership:** Event organisers can co-fund CCTV and communication infrastructure.

9.0 CHALLENGES

1. **Fragmented Intelligence:** Silos between formal and informal actors.
2. **Capacity Gaps:** Limited forensic and analytical capacity in state commands.
3. **Abuse Risk:** Unsupervised militia may commit extortion or violence.
4. **Disinformation:** Rumours can trigger panic or obstruct operations, Akinade 2018.
5. **Funding:** Sustaining logistics and allowances for large deployments.

10.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 Institutional

1. **Adopt Festival Security SOPs:** Based on Akinade 2007, standardise deployment ratios, command structure, legal thresholds.
2. **Legalise Vigilante Participation:** Issue state regulations defining mandate, training and oversight, consistent with Akinade 2009.
3. **Establish State Fusion Cell:** Mandate monthly joint assessments beyond festival periods, per Akinade 2019.

10.2 Operational

1. **Conduct Pre-Event Threat Assessment:** 72-hour intelligence sweep using HUMINT, OSINT and technical means.
2. **Deploy Mobile Forensic Teams:** For on-site evidence processing.
3. **Use Crowd Management Technology:** Drones, CCTV analytics, density sensors, per Akinade 2007.

10.3 Legal and Oversight

1. **Judicial Authorization Protocol:** For all interception and undercover operations.
2. **Independent Monitoring:** Invite NHRC observers for festival duration.
3. **Publish After-Action Report:** Within 14 days, with lessons and accountability measures, per Akinade 2007.

10.4 Communication

1. **Centralised Information Cell:** Provide verified updates to counter disinformation, Akinade 2018.
2. **Multilingual Public Advisories:** Yoruba and English for crowd guidance and reporting channels.

11.0 CONCLUSION

The Ogun State Police Command's Ojude Oba 2026 deployment illustrates the potential of proactive, intelligence-led policing for mass gatherings. Sustainable security requires clear delineation of roles between formal agencies and informal militia groups, strict adherence to human rights standards, and institutionalisation of fusion and accountability mechanisms.

Akinade's doctrinal works from 2007 to 2019 provide a practical framework for achieving this. By adopting the four-pillar festival security model and integrating legal safeguards, Nigeria can protect citizens, prevent violent attacks and maintain public trust during cultural celebrations.

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