

Beat: Travel

21 die in attempted jail break at Nigeria's secret police HQs

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USPA News - More than 20 detainees were killed on Sunday in an attempted jail break at the headquarters of Nigeria's secret police in the capital Abuja, close to the presidential villa, officials said. Few details about the circumstances were immediately released.

The incident began at around 7:15 a.m. local time on Sunday when an officer entered the detention facility at the headquarters of the Department of State Services (DSS) to feed the detainees. "One of the suspects attempted to disarm him by hitting him at the back of his head with his handcuff," said Marilyn Ogar, a DSS spokeswoman. "His attempt to escape drew the attention of other guards at the facility who fired some shots to warn and deter others," Ogar explained. "The gun shots attracted the attention of the military with whom we have an understanding of mutual assistance in the event of any threat. The Army immediately deployed a team to reinforce our perimeter guards to forestall any external collaborators." The spokeswoman later confirmed that 21 detainees had been killed while two DSS officers were injured. But it remained unclear how the 21 detainees were killed and whether all of them were armed, or if they received help from outside. The identities of the casualties and the reasons for their detention were also not made public. The heavy gunfire in the area initially prompted fears that an attack was underway at the nearby presidential village. "What happened at the SSS headquarters has nothing to do with the Villa. President Jonathan is safe and well. Thank you for your concern and support," said presidential spokesman Reuben Abati.

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