



TERRORISM AND SOCIAL-POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS ON NATION-BUILDING IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

A country that is self reliant is believed to proceed with Development Norms that will lead to Nation-building which is necessary and a stage by stage intended process rather than playing a greater role for leadership option that leads to Nation-building. The purpose of this paper is to analyze the Social-political impediment, problems on Sunah Lid-dawat Wal-Jahad, popularly known as Boko Haram sect that has its headquarters in Maiduguri, Borno State. The paper went further to study the activities of the Boko Haram sect, its effects, consequences and anti- theses of the nation building. The paper concluded that the dreaded Boko Haram terrorists have succeeded in posing imposing threat to lives, property and economy of Nigeria, especially, the North East. Recommendations were made based on the challenges posed by Boko Haram.

Keywords: *Terrorism, Nation-Building, Community-Buiding, Balkanization, Boko-Haram,*

Introduction

The phenomenon of terrorism in Nigeria has become a holocaust due to their heartless attack on lives and properties of the affected areas. Terrorism, the wicked organization has become and will remain a subject of discussion in Nigeria, even though Nigeria has been bedeviled with myriad of crises, some of which were catastrophic and almost culminated in national disintegration. As it were, it is arguable that crises like The Census Crisis of 1962/65, The Nigeria Civil War (1967-70), The Action Group Crisis of 1962, Kaduna Riot of 2000, The Niger Delta Crisis which has been age-long, were considered political and viewed against the back drop of the realities that various ethnic associations that sprang up in the wake of struggle for independence of

Nigeria where each region has its Youth Wings that can best be described as militant groups and the political gladiators which were/are used to further their political interests. The blood bath in terrorist attacks dominated the news in every part of our country. The violent crimes committed by Boko Haram have made them the most heartless terrorist organization on the planet earth. The Boko Haram sect differs in operation, unlike the Maitasine which manifested in Kano (8th December, 1979), Maiduguri, Yola, Kaduna and Gombe, because the Boko Haram sect uses sophisticated weapons, bombs and they are vast in regional operation and a bona fide member of the International Terrorist Organization(ITO). The Sudan experience of terrorism by Nigerians under the manipulations and execution of Boko Haram which caught worrisome attention of Nigerians started as far back as 2002 in a location west of Machika Local Government and by then known as Talibans. Terrorism is designed to have psychological effect that stretch far beyond causality of the immediate victims and material objects of attack. We need to ask ourselves what is our hope of nation building where there is virtually lack of mutual trust amongst the much ethnic configuration of Nigerian nation and confidence in one Nigeria as agitated by its founders? This is because the Nigerian authority has failed in checking the activities of Boko Haram as recent time suggests that Nigeria is gradually and speedily losing control of its security outfit.

In another dimension, just as the magnitude of the uprising jolted Nigerians, so also was the out-powering of conflicting and confusing statements (Okanya 1995:115) about the Boko Haram groups and their motives. Nigerians were engulfed in misstatements as some say a crisis created logically after losing the 2011 Presidential bid, while some see it as religious riots; not different from other acts are seen as a sponsorship of powerful groups and individuals who want to discredit most especially the federal government under the leadership of Goodluck Jonathan on security lapses. Nevertheless, others see it also in connection to religion but more than other past religious riots in the country because it is targeted at fulfilling the prophesy of the Trojan Horse inform of Libyan leader Maumar Gaddafi concerning balkanization of Nigeria alongside its major ethnic groups.

Against the intended plans and research on the above topic, this paper suggested among other things that Nigerians are left in the dark as to the motives of Boko Haram.

History of Terrorism

Terrorism has been existing over centuries, 2000 years ago the first act of terrorism came to being when Zealots of Israel in Judea attack by dagger in day light to resist oppression from the Roman empire.

The movement out of religious justification of terrorism to challenge divine rule by monarchs through revolutionary means mark the period of French revolution to World War I Terrorism, after World War II Terrorism to previous revolutionary associations. Essentially, during the 1940s and 1960s terrorism was used to describe the violence perpetrated by indigenous nationalists. Terrorist groups are large in number and they have maltreated the Middle East, Asia, European and African Countries.

During the 1960s and 1970s terrorism assumed an ideological preplanned terror activity and again in late 1960s and early 1970s terror group came up to resist American domination in Vietnam. (Hoffman, 2006). Another development of international terrorism was the rise in state sponsored terrorism and the resurgence of religious terrorism. The attempted assassination of Pope John Paul II in 1981 by a Turkish citizen who allegedly was working for the Soviet and Bulgarian Secret Service, the Iranian backed car and truck bombing of the American Embassy and US Marine barracks in Beirut, Lebanon in 1983. The latest in history of terrorism is the events of September 2, 2001 attacks.

Therefore, after exhaustive evaluation of Boko Haram we conceptualized terrorism to refer to subjective driven acts of hit and run killing of human persons and unnecessary destruction of properties of nation — building.

Nation building stands for the process by which people transfer their commitment and loyalty from small tribes, villages or petty principalities to the larger central political system. It involves community building, infrastructural building, socio-political development which changes the norms, motives, standard of living of citizens of a given nation. It gives them a national identity cutting across their group loyalties based on religion, race, language, region, culture, ideology, culture and occupation, etc. It involves developing the concept of the legitimacy of the nation as the dominant political player (Gaubu, 2009).

According to Elaiwu in Oboke (2006:11) nation building is the process of creating utility and sense of belonging among multi-stage groups in the state.

Boko Haram as Anti-Nation Building in Nigeria

A country is besieged with Boko Haram attacks due to their molestation, harassment, intimidation, obstruction of normal activities, building transformation. Essentially, a lot of violent actions of both political and religious nature which have taken place in the past seriously undermined the unity as well the logic of nation-building in Nigeria. In this vain, we cannot forget historically, the devastating effect in our national life, the first republic politics that towed the line of ethic configuration.

The series of religious violence that has taken place in Kano, Kaduna, Jos, Yola, Gombe, Maiduguri, etc. in the northern part of Nigeria at different times has

affected the hope of nation — building and its logic in the country. However, we must point out that in both magnitudes, real and psychological, the effect of the above instance of violence put together cannot be equated to the injury Boko Haram has inflicted in the minds of Nigerians especially the North East region. In this direction, the Canadian government (2011), which mourned the victims of the explosion of the 6th June, 2011 in Abuja described it as unacceptable terrorist attack. According to it:

The building of the Nigerian police headquarters in Abuja was cowardly and despicable act. It is a direct attack on the right of the people of Nigeria to live in safety and peace.

Commenting on the dastardly activities of the Boko Haram sect, Obasanjo (2011:2) said that:

We must not take this for granted as the lives of majority of Nigerians are at risk. We need information to tackle the Boko Haram issue. There is so much to know and so much to find out about them. If there is the need to deal with them through the stick and carrot approach, we must be able to know what should be the stick and what should be the carrot.

On the rampant killings and property destruction CENN (2011:51) asserted that the heartless operations of the Boko Haram must be considered an act of war and terrorism in the class of a foreign invasion against the country and must be confronted. And in consonance, Onwuamaeze (2017:17) noted thus;

Currently, Nigerians in these villages and in the cities now live in fear without knowing when an armed robber, a kidnapper or suicide bomber would come their way and several other states.

But going by the action so far launched by Boko Haram in Nigeria and many heart breaking statements credited to it, the question then is “will nation building be realistic under the threat or is there any other option?”

Effect of Boko on Nation Building

Boko Haram has inflicted so many wounds in the hearts and souls of Nigerians, thereby subjecting Nigerians to trauma. The North East were made refugees, losing their national identity as most of them were forced to Cameroun, Niger, Chad and other parts of Nigeria.

The etymologies of our visitors are the extension of Boko Haram which can be traced to 2012 by demanding:

- i. Imposition of Sharia in the North
- ii. Declaration of Western Education as sinful

- iii. Forbidding Muslims from taking part in all political or social activities including voting, wearing of skirts or receiving secular education.

In the North East, the attacks by Boko Haram has destroyed the lives and properties, schools, hospitals, bridges, water system, so the North East Development Commission should be serious in developing the zone. The slow pace of development in this zone does not match with the problems faced by the displaced persons.

Methodology

The paper adopted the survey method. Specifically the longitudinal survey. Secondary data was obtained from text book, journals and newspapers.

Conclusion

Nation building can be sharpened on regarding the fact that all states in the present Africa, Asia and Latin America are indeed multinational states, and in this paper history of terrorism and nation building, including effect of terrorism has been examined. The paper also discussed the security challenges posed by Boko Haram as affected areas don't go to farm, school and market.

Therefore against the backdrop of enormous waste of human lives and properties as well as trauma, oppression, depression experienced by the locals as a result of Boko Haram activities in Nigeria, especially North East, there is a need for drastic alternative arrangement in view of how Nigeria and North East will be in the near future.

Recommendation

Considering the challenges of the dastardly acts by Boko Haram to have an effective nation building in Nigeria, the paper recommended as follows:

- i. Leaders of countries should be serious with the security matters, to give effective assistance to agencies in order to maintain a network that can penetrate all facets of human activities, the State Security Services (SSS), Nigerian Intelligence Agency (NIA) and other paramilitary, public to assist the armed forces in fighting Boko Haram.
- ii. There is a need for a dialogue, because terrorist attacks are inevitable, since they have many ways to attack the public.
- iii. Government should be cautious in any arrangement to grant amenity to some repentant Boko Haram. In any case the pipe blowers of a typical terrorist sect should be punished according to law.
- iv. Destroyed infrastructures, schools, markets, should be repaired, guarded by security agents.

- v. Collaboration with village heads, JTF and boarder to boarder checking should be adhered to.
- vi. The stick and carrot system of tackling Boko Haram terrorist should be strictly considered.
- vii. The North East Development Commission (NEDC) need to be transparent in handling the affairs of the zone.
- viii. Those in IDPs camps should be assisted to avoid rejoining the terrorist club.

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