

ETHNIC MILITANCY AND INTERNAL TERRORISM ON NIGERIA'S NATIONAL SECURITY

OSABIYA, BABATUNDE JOSEPH*
*School of Management Sciences,
National Open University of Nigeria
14/16 Ahmadu Bello Way, Victoria-Island,
Lagos, Nigeria.*

The Nigerian state has continued to experience different types of insecurity before and since after her independence in 1960, arising from socio-economic and political problems. The proliferation of ethnic militias like Movement for Actualization of Niger Delta (MEND), Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP), Odua People's Congress (OPC), the Egbesu Boys, the Niger Delta Volunteer Force, Movement for the Sovereign State of Biafra (MOSSOB), and presently Boko Haram is an attempt by each ethnic group to better their own lots. Therefore, this study intends to investigate the causes and dimensions of the insecurity problem in Nigeria, the nature and its effects on Nigeria's socio-economic and political development, and what has Nigerian government been doing to improve the security situation in the country. This study recommend that the country's leaders at all levels, most especially the politicians should discontinue using religion and ethnicity in pursuing their parochial interests which they have taken to be above that of national interest. The study also recommend that further research be carried out to find out why people especially in the northern area of the country can afford to participate in suicide mission even knowing the consequences of death that goes with it, and introducing new dimension to the way Nigerians have lived their lives in the past.

Keywords: National Security, Relative Deprivation Theory, the Nigerian State and National Security, the Nature and Effect of Insecurity in Nigeria and the Challenge of Ethno-Religious Issues and Nigeria's National Security.

1. Introduction

“What is striking in Nigerian politics is not what has changed, but what has remained the same”. (Abubakar, 2011) This was the description given by a conference in 2011 in Lagos about the Nigeria situation, and that indeed is the situation of the country's national life, including her security. Nigeria's security problems have continued to degenerate since 1999, the year the country transited to democracy after many years of military dominance.

*Email: osabiyabatunde@yahoo.com

Immediately after the handover in May 29th, 1999, the country witnessed two successive security challenges, namely the Odi crisis of 1999, and the communal violence in Jos in 2000. These were followed by the electoral violence in 2003, 2007 and later in 2011. In an attempt to win elections by all means, Nigerian politicians usually assemble some youth gangs and used them as thugs after which they were dumped without tangible thing to sustain their lives. According to Albert (2012) “Adedibu boys in Oyo state; “Gbosa boys” in Kwara; Yan tauri and Yan banga in Kano; Yan Kalari in Gombe; Sara Suka in Bauchi” were formed and funded by the country’s politicians. At the end of elections, members of these groups were abandoned and many then devise ways to meet their needs. As a result, Nigeria is, today plagued with so many security challenges: ethno-religious crises, socio-economic agitations, indigenes/settlers conflicts, ethnic militias, poverty, illiteracy, poor infrastructure, poor health conditions, unemployment, ethnic and religious conflicts, corruption, illegal oil bunkering, cross border illegal business activities, illegal drug related activities, 419 scam, crime and criminality, political process and electioneering conflicts that has led to political assassinations, boundary disputes, cultism, armed robbery, kidnapping, and presently terrorism.

The unbridled competition for power, and the failure of successive Nigerian governments to deliver democratic dividends to the people since 1999, has also resulted in violent conflicts across the country. Good governance, especially accountability, transparency and equity that give legitimacy to government have been relegated to the background for impunity and injustice.

And so, frustration over the government’s failure to deliver basic services to the people has continued to rise. Much of the violence is said to be rooted in poverty and unemployment with about 57 percent of the population falling below the poverty line of a dollar a day.

The outbreak of conflicts and political violence in various parts of Nigeria has become so frequent that the country is now been seen by the international community as a country where insecurity thrives.

Unarguably, the country’s Security problems arise from lack of sincerity in the organization of the political process, ethnic domination, lack of sincerity by the country’s leaders, corruption in all strata of the nation’s daily life, and a lost hope for individual survival. The importance of security to economic well-being of a country and her citizens cannot be overemphasized because national security is about the stability of the social order which specifically addresses threats to a country’s sovereignty, and by extension its national development. The incapability of the nation’s national security outfit to curb this menace is a potential factor that gives every citizen of Nigeria a cause for worry. The question has been where do we go from here?

It is based on the foregoing security situation in Nigeria that motivated this researcher to embark on this research on the Nigerian state and national security.

2. Statement of Problem

The nation’s security situation since 1999 obviously has taken different dimensions. The growing rate of insecurity in Nigeria since 1999 and most especially the period between

2007-2011 has significantly affected the country's economy. From the Odi crisis of 1999, the communal conflicts in Jos in 2008, to the pressures put on the government between 2007-2011 by Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), Movement for the Sovereign State of Biafra (MOSSOB) for resource control and self determination respectively, kidnapping from south-south to the South-East, political assassinations, to the present incessant bombings in the north-eastern parts of Nigeria by Boko Haram terrorist group, among others.

The lack of improvement of the country's security apparatus in terms of motivation, discipline, materials as well as commitment of the government to address the core causes of insecurity, has in fact constituted a clog on the wheel of progress of the nation's national development and by extension the survival of democracy and achievement of desired economic growth. This is the problem that this work seeks to address.

3. Methodology

Historical research method was used in carrying out this study. A critical examination of the dramatic evolution of ethnic militant groups to the rise of a more violent Boko Haram, was analyzed using findings from both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources include written documents such as government publications, letters, correspondence, documentaries and newspapers. Moreover, this study depended on secondary sources such as books, journals, conference proceedings and internet sources which are to be explored to enrich this work.

4. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework (National Security)

Security as an essential concept is commonly associated with the alleviation of threats to cherished values, especially the survival of individuals, groups or objects in the near future. Thus, security as the name implies, involves the ability to pursue cherished political and social ambitions (William, 2008:6, and in Nwagboso, 2012:1).

Therefore, "national security... is best described as a capacity to control those domestic and foreign conditions that the public opinion of a given community believes necessary to enjoy its own self-determination or autonomy, prosperity and wellbeing."

National security therefore, becomes the requirement to maintain the survival of the state through the use of economic, diplomatic and political power. It is about how to maintain a more stable society for national progress and solidarity.

The simplest definition of national security is freedom from military threat and political coercion and was first used by the United States of America after World War II, with emphasis on military might, but now encompasses economic security, political security, energy security, environmental security, etc. Since the beginning of the nineteen century, security threats have gone beyond military to now include non-state actors, namely, narcotic cartels, activities of multinational corporations, ethnic groups seeking for recognition, boundary disputes, sea piracy, natural disasters, etc.

There has not been any single universally accepted definition of National Security since according to Romm (1993) “there are some differences on describing National as State and everything consist in a nation. The variety of definitions provides an overview of the many usages of this concept. The concept still remains ambiguous, having originated from simpler definitions which initially emphasised the freedom from military threat and political coercion to later increase in sophistication and include other forms of non-military security as suited the circumstances of the time”.

Continuing, he argues that “National security is a Western and indeed an American concept that was developed in the Cold War era as a response to the needs of the politics of that era which required the prevention of another global war and the attainment of the ideological aggression of the Soviet Union. In the United States for example, the emphasis was on national security, which meant the security of the whole socio-political entity, the way of life of a self-governing people, including their social, cultural, political and economic modes of organization as well as their right to existence as rational human beings”. (Romm, 1993). In the Third World, including Nigeria, it would be more appropriate to talk of state security since the concept of nation might be a misnomer.

The experience of Nigeria as a post-colonial plural state exhibits the precariousness of the state when its survival was threatened by centripetal and centrifugal tendencies. The divisive politics of the immediate post-independence period not only led to the collapse of the first democratic experiment and military rule, it was, indeed responsible for the outbreak of the Nigeria-Biafra war. The Republic was characterized by endemic intra-class conflicts amongst members of the ruling class who distributed themselves in various combinations in the existing political formations. These conflicts manifested as ethnic rivalries, suspicion, intolerance, nepotism, graft, corruption and prebendal politics. (Romm, 1993).

From the foregoing, national security encompasses the protection of the nation’s territorial integrity, the protection of national borders, maintenance of economic relations with the outside world, the preservation of the country’s nature, institution, governance and above all, equitable of distribution of the scarce resources, provision of employment, provision of infrastructure and justice, etc., that will create enabling environment for peace.

5. Theoretical Framework (Relative Deprivation Theory)

Relative Deprivation Theory was propounded by Dollard et al (1939) as part of efforts to link socio-political and economic inequalities in the society to rebellions and insurrections. The relative deprivation theory argues that “when expectation outstrips achievement regardless of the absolute levels of economic consumption or the provision of political rights, frustration is generated. Thus, the collective frustration turns to anger and violence” (Dollard et al, 1939:52, , Feierabend and Feierabend, 1966:89), quoted in Nwagboso, (2012:3).

This theory presents the idea of relative deprivation as a perceived disparity between value expectation and value capabilities. Or the lack of a need satisfaction defined as a gap between aspiration and achievement (Midlarsky, 1975).

Afinotan, and Ojakorotu, (2009:3) posited that “when there is a gap between the level of value expectation and the level of value attainment, due to lack of capability to establish a congruence between both levels, tension builds up due to the pressure of an unfulfilled aspiration or an unsatisfied urge or need. This, when not arrested in time, leads to frustration. Frustration, when it builds up, leads to the rising up of suppressed emotions of anger, which is often directed against the party considered to be the source of deprivation of satisfaction. This strong emotion finally finds an outlet through aggressive and invariably violent disposition towards the environment”.

6. Relative Deprivation Theory, The Nigerian State And National Security

Men are most inclined to aggression when subjected to sustained and unjustified frustration and this potential for collective violence varies strongly with the intensity and scope of relative deprivation among members of a group.

There is a likelihood of rebellion against the state when individuals or groups perceive that there is a significant discrepancy between what they think they deserve and what they think they will get from government. In a nutshell, people resort to violence in trying to draw government's attention to their needs and aspiration, most especially when these needs and aspirations are being suppressed or denied. This is what has led to several violent behaviours of some Nigerians who have come to believe that violence is the only way that their demands can be attended to.

The armed insurrections that were at various times carried out against the Nigeria state and the foreign oil companies by the Niger Delta militants, the armed robbery, kidnapping, crude oil theft, sea piracy, child trafficking, and presently Boko Haram insurgency are as a result of frustration being experienced by the Nigerian people in the hands of the country's leaders. The poverty level in the country, unemployment, lack of infrastructural development – electricity, roads, health facilities, educational facilities, have been as a result of government inability to provide for her people, hence, all the violent reactions against the Nigerian state.

As Afinotan, and Ojakorotu, (2009:4) argue that “one is not unmindful here of the problems and limitations of the frustration–aggression thesis, such as the fact that an aggressive response to frustration may be dependent upon the individual's level of tolerance...”

Using the Relative Deprivation theory we can trace the historical antecedence of conflicts, agitations and frequent rise of individuals and groups against the Nigerian state to so many years of economic and political deprivation against the Nigerian people by government at all levels.

Using the standpoint of the assumptions of Relative Deprivation Theory, it is evident that the abysmal failure of the Nigerian state to addressing critical challenges to development in many parts of the country, the failure by the country in her constitutional role of protecting lives and properties of the Nigerian people, may be responsible for so many security challenges bedeviling the country.

7. Niger Delta Militancy And Nigeria's National Security

Since the early 1970s, after the end of the Nigerian civil war, violence compounded by military involvement in political governance became legitimised, and the youths' social mobility and struggle for survival now require violence. Society gradually stopped recognising merit and force became a plausible avenue to the top of the social and economic strata with drug trafficking, smuggling and other perceived negative moneymaking ventures like armed robbery and pen-robbery, becoming attractive ways of getting rich quickly, (Oruwari, 2006:3).

The emergence of the Ijaw National congress, the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP), the Egbesu Boys, the Niger Delta Volunteer Force, and presently Boko Haram is seen as fallout of the inability of the political system to address felt deprivation, injustice or alienation by certain groups within the polity. Admittedly, the issue of Niger Delta region for example, affected Nigeria's revenue generation during this period and posed a very serious security challenge to the country.

The neglect of the Niger Delta region since the discovery of oil in the area in 1956, pitched the youths of the region against the Nigerian state. The people of the region believed that they have been deprived of the gain from the resources that comes from their soil. A prominent indigene of the Niger Delta region and an environmentalist Ken Saro-Wiwa became a vocal voice both local and international to fight for this injustice but was eventually killed together with 8 other environmental activists by Gen. Sani Abacha's regime on "on 10th November, 1995" (Otoghagua, 2007).

The killing of Saro-Wiwa who is an Ogoni man and others escalated the crisis in the Niger Delta region and eventual introduction of several criminal activities by the youths from the region in the area of kidnapping for ransom, oil bunkering, pipeline vandalization, etc.

Their demand for resource control gave it an international image, as it was believed that there has been an injustice against the people that has been contributing about 95% revenue to the country's pulse. It took the announcement of amnesty by President Yar'adua in 2009 to the militants for some respite to come to the region and the return of normalcy for oil companies carrying out oil exploration in the region.

Despite the present government efforts in rehabilitating the youths from the area through oversea trainings, the militants have resorted to oil bunkering to better their future at the expense of the nation's economy.

The activities by the Niger Delta youth demanding adequate compensation from the Nigerian government is as a result of the fact that Nigeria generates about 95% revenue from crude oil in the Niger Delta but a greater percentage of this is being used by Nigerian federation to develop other areas while neglecting the development of the region - no educational facilities, good access roads, adequate electricity supply and adequate care of the environmental/ water pollution, that has devastated their farm lands and waters for fish business, etc. As a result, the goal of the militants groups in the Niger Delta area have been to protect the identities and interests of the groups they represent within the Nigerian state by violent means if deemed necessary and has at most times posed threats to the continued

existence of the Nigerian state. The sheer enormity of the problems associated with the militants activities in the area and the potential for destruction, and social disruption, has given rise to such question as to what are the social realities in Nigeria that have given rise to so many criminal activities in the country and the responses by government.

Azaike (2003) notes that “the oil revenue which ought to have accrued to the Niger Delta, is used to develop other parts of the country, while goose that lays the golden egg suffers official neglect. He also argued that the principle of derivation – which was the operative formula when groundnut, cocoa, palm oil and kernel produced by the major ethnic nationalities were Nigeria’s main sources of revenue – should not have been jettisoned.

Before the discovery of oil in Oloibiri in 1956, the Niger Delta area which without doubt, is “one of the largest wet lands in the world and consists of number of ecological zones from sandy coastal ridge barriers, brackish or saline mangroves, to fresh water, permanent and seasonal swamp forests, low land, rain forests, etc., is widely traversed by creeks, rivers, streams, rivulets and canals. For generations, the rich flora and fauna of the area have been the primary source of livelihood for the people” Azaike (2003:18). Dwelling in harmony with nature, the people like other ethnic groups in Nigeria, found joy in enacting the heroic deeds of their forbearers and passed on their norms and values through a rich folklore.

All that changed with the discovery of oil in the Niger Delta, as the Nigerian state has continued to deprived them of the control of this resources, and unfortunately too, even the ones been allocated to the area from the federation account are being shared by both the officials at states and local governments’ levels and who in most cases connives with their local chiefs and politicians in this unpatriotic act, and thus denying the area the needed development. An attempt to stop this betrayal by the indigenes of the Niger Delta led by Ken Saro-Wiwa and 8 other environmental activists led to the murder of ‘Ogoni 7’ and the eventual arrest, trial and “execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and the 8 environmental activists on the 10th November, 1995 by Gen. Sani Abacha’s regime (Otoghagua, 2007).

Until recently too, there has been the unbalanced appointment into federal government offices, lack of unemployment opportunities for the people of the area, etc. Succor only came to them during the administration of Musa Yar’adua’s with the setting up of Niger Delta Ministry and eventual granting of Amnesty to the Niger Delta militants to bring peace to the area and possibly development. The demise of the late President Musa Yar’adua in 2009 paved the way for Goodluck Jonathan, an indigene from the Niger Delta area to occupy the Office of the President.

The activities of Niger Delta militants have in the past threatened not only the economy of Nigeria, but also the country’s security. Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP), Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND), Niger Delta Volunteer Force, Egbesu Boys, etc, were arms against the Nigerian nation, agitating against perceived neglect by the country on the issue of development – structural deficiency in the region made it impossible for the indigenes to enjoy those basic necessity of life, besides environmental degradation and oil spillage that has caused water pollution in the region.

The perceived injustice by government and the multinational oil companies led to their continued agitation for resource control and the castration of the nation’s oil revenue for

years until Yar'adua's administration resolved the problem to great extent with the granting of amnesty to the militants in exchange for training of the youths through education and a promise of massive infrastructural development in the area.

The continuous destruction of oil pipelines, kidnapping, oil bunkering, intimidation and harassment of oil workers etc, even after the election of President Jonathan in 2011, has continued to create security problems to the country. But presently, peace seems to have returned to the region after the contracts worth several billions of naira for the protection of the oil installations in the region were handed over the militants. It envisaged that the just concluded National Conference would have recommended some other measures that when implemented will assuage the problems of lack of development being experienced by Niger Delta people.

8. Boko Haram Violence And Nigeria's National Security

Boko Haram, an Islamic extremist, was established in 2009 and operates in the north-eastern part of Nigeria. The group has carried out a growing number of deadly attacks that have taken several lives and destruction of millions of property since its founder, Mohammed Yusuf, died in police custody in 2009. Till date, their terrorist activities have seriously created image problem to Nigeria internationally, prompting some countries including United States of America and Britain to tag Nigeria as a terrorist country and in some cases with oversea traveling warnings to their nationals coming to the country.

The recent kidnapping of about 209 Chibok girls and several other kidnappings, their continuous bombings of motor parks, churches, mosques and even the attempt to kill the former Head of State General Muhammed Buhari laid credence to the fact that the sect is out to decimate the Nigeria federation and probably creates chaos and resentment among Nigerians. Nigeria is at a crossroads as a terrorist group Boko Haram has continued to lay siege in the North East of the country, killing thousands of people since it garnered international attention in August, 2011. The devastating effect of their violent actions recently has made the US Senator Scott Brown to introduce a bill calling for Boko Haram to be classified as a foreign terrorist organization, (FTO).

The fragile peace that has existed for most of Nigeria's history has been ruptured by the group's violent activities and has been traced to the growing inequalities between the North, where most of Nigeria's Muslim population resides, and the South, where oil, Nigeria's major revenue is being generated, creating the current conditions of discontent in Nigeria.

Boko Haram also known as Jamatul Ahlis Sunnah Lid Daawa Wal Jihad is an Islamist extremist organization whose objective has been to establish Islamic law in Nigeria, forbidding anything western education and frowning at any interaction with western world. "The group has apart from its original religious composition expanded to include Islamic terrorism and other criminal activities, prompting the Sultan of Sokoto Sa'adu Abubakar, the spiritual leader of Nigerian Muslims, to call the sect "anti-Islamic".

According to Duncan (2011), Boko Haram was responsible for at least 450 killings in Nigeria. It was also reported that they had been responsible for over 620 deaths over the

first 6 months of 2012. Since coming into existence in 2009, the jihadist terrorists have been responsible for roughly 10,000 deaths comprising mostly innocent people. One of its deadliest clashes was the sectarian violence in Nigeria in July 2009, which left over 1000 people dead.

Though, Boko Haram has not carried out its operations outside of Nigeria, but its attack on the United Nations building in Abuja, Nigeria's Federal Capital Territory demonstrates their apparent willingness to align itself with the goals and tactics of other established global terrorist organizations. Their violent activities since 2011 apart from leaving thousands of people dead had also left over 100,000 people homeless in the Northeast of Nigeria.

Worrisome is their latest onslaught which includes their attack on students in Yobe State in September 29, 2013 which claimed 40 lives, and their destruction and taking over of some villages with their flags been hoisted in the area as an Islamic state. Though, their leader Abubakar Shekau is speculated to have been killed by the federal forces late September, 2014.

It is speculated that Boko Haram has a link to Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), and has an off-shoot known as Ansaru... The group forbids anything western education and frown at any interaction with western world, moving from its original religious composition to include Islamic terrorism and other criminal activities, prompting some religious leaders including the Sultan of Sokoto Sa'adu Abubakar, the spiritual leader of Nigerian Muslims, to disown and call the sect "anti-Islamic". (Nossiter, 2009).

According to Nossiter (2009), Kano has noted in his research into Mohammed Yusuf and Boko Haram that the core principles of the group are: an emphasis on 'Hakimiyyah' (sovereignty to God's law); a belief that they are the "Saved Sect" mentioned in the Prophetic Tradition of Islam; prohibiting studying in Western educational centres of learning as they consider them to be based on non-Islamic traditions and colonialism, they thus criticised Saudi Arabia for its usage of "Western" educational methods; prohibiting working in any governmental institution or civil service role; a contorted interpretation of the edicts of scholars from the classical tradition such as Ibn Taymiyyah to support their rebellions and use of violence; post-2009 a close relationship with al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and further incorporation into the global Jihadi and Takfiri worldview. Boko Haram have thus been widely rejected and repudiated by adherents of the Salafi tradition in Nigeria (Nossiter, 2009).

In 1995, the group was said to be operating under the name Shabaab, Muslim Youth Organisation with Mallam Lawal as the leader. When Lawal left to continue his education, Mohammed Yusuf took over leadership of the group. Yusuf's leadership allegedly opened the group to political influence and popularity. Apart from founding the group in 2002 in the city of Maiduguri with the aim of establishing a Shari'a government in Borno State under then-Senator Ali Modu Sheriff, he also established a religious complex that included a mosque and a school where many poor families from across Nigeria and from neighbouring countries enrolled their children".

It has been established that the group has members not only within Nigeria, but also from across neighbouring Chad and Niger and uses only Arabic as their language.

Human Rights Watch researcher Eric Guttuschuss (2013) told IRIN News that Yusuf successfully attracted followers from unemployed youth “by speaking out against police and political corruption”

Abdulkarim Mohammed (2010), a researcher on Boko Haram, added that violent uprisings in Nigeria are ultimately due to “the fallout of frustration with corruption and the attendant social malaise of poverty and unemployment.”

Chris Kwaja, a Nigerian university lecturer and researcher, asserts that “religious dimensions of the conflict have been misconstrued as the primary driver of violence when, in fact, disenfranchisement and inequality are the root causes”. Nigeria, he points out, has laws giving regional political leaders the power to qualify people as ‘indigenes’ (original inhabitants) or not. It determines whether citizens can participate in politics, own land, obtain a job, or attend school. The system is abused widely to ensure political support and to exclude Muslims and have been denied indigene-ship certificates disproportionately often (Chris, 2011). Their first clash with government security forces led to several of their members been arrested in Bauchi sparking deadly clashes with Nigerian security forces which led to over 700 people dead. Their original fighting instruments were “fuel-laden motorcycles” and “bows with poison arrows” to attack a police station. (Nossiter, 2009).

It is believed to be funded by other Islamist groups. In February 2012, recently arrested officials revealed that “while the organisation initially relied on donations from members, its links with Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, AQIM, opened it up to more funding from groups in Saudi Arabia and the UK”. They went on to say that other sources of funding included the Al Muntada Trust Fund and the Islamic World Society. This is in addition to claims that the group also extorts money from local governments for so-called “protection money”. A spokesman of Boko Haram claimed that Kano state governor Ibrahim Shekarau and Bauchi state governor Isa Yuguda had paid them monthly. (Ogundipe, 2012).

Its means of operation seems to have overpowered the Nigeria security going by the way and manner the group bombed the Nigeria Police Headquarters in 2011 and the UN headquarters in 2011 and newspaper houses with precision, thus, making Nigerians to argue that the country’s security apparatuses need a total overhauling to meet the modern way of combating terrorism and other related criminal activities in the country. Presently, Boko Haram is the number one security threat to Nigeria as their demands and mode of operations beats anybody’s imagination.

According to Albert (2012) “the act of terrorism by members of the sect, of late, has been mind boggling. In succinct terms, the sect had killed more than 3,000 innocent Nigerians through gun and bomb attacks in less than four years, while destroying properties in the process. Besides overpowering the security agencies, it had demonstrated some sense of invincibility by the manner it penetrated the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja while attacking not only strong institutions like the Police Headquarters, the United Nations Headquarters, and recently a motor part in Nyanya in Abuja.

In addition, the sect had invaded most states in the north including Kogi, Plateau, Kano, Kaduna, Yobe, Bauchi and Gombe, among others, and most especially the invading of federal Government College, Chibok in Borno State, taking away about 276 school

children. It has been unrelenting in its war against the Nigeria state, while it continues to make impossible demands". Idowu also quoted the spokesman of the sect as saying, "we launched these attacks to prove the Nigerian security wrong and to debunk their claim that we have been weakened by the military crackdown. The Nigerian state and Christians are our enemies and we will be launching attacks on the Nigerian state and its security apparatus as well as churches until we achieve our goal of establishing an Islamic state in place of the secular state".

What is worrisome about the activities of the Islamic sect, from indications is the attention it places on attacking Christians in an attempt to convert them to Islamic religion. Since its operation got to a head, sect members had deployed suicide squads to hit churches and other places of worship by Christians. This has made it look like religious conflict but the group has also continued to kill Muslims in a massive scale beating all security checks in most of their operations. One of the spokesperson of the group once said that the attacks on Christians were meant to arrive at a point where Islam would be the ruling religion in Nigeria.

Frustrations on the side of government led to the declaration of state of emergency on 14 May 2013, by President Goodluck Jonathan in the states of Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa in a bid to fight the activities of Boko Haram. Government earlier claims that Shekau was shot and killed during fighting between the government forces and the group on 30 June, 2013 in the Sambisa forest has been countered with several Youtube videos showing Shekau in his enclave in Borno.

While majority of Nigerians believe that the Boko Haram's demands are thoughtless and hence, unachievable, watchers of the growing state of terrorism in Nigeria have been getting agitated, contending that the state of Nigeria so endowed with great resources and an enviable future, deserves not to be brought down on the altar of religion. There have been calls on Boko Haram to see reason by embracing dialogue meant to address whatever reasonable demands they may want the government of the country to meet to avoid dragging the country to religious war.

As Albert (2012) noted, "since the sect has been on the rave in Nigeria, there has been apparent mistrust, suspicion and malice among Nigerians along Christian, Muslim divides. The economies of states, local governments, towns and cities where activities of Boko Haram are prevalent have been lying prostrate. The national economy, too, is never spared from suffering from the impact of unabated acts of terrorism. The social values of Nigeria have been subverted and polluted, just as Nigeria is about slipping into the world of utter confusion, anomie and multiple crises meant to catalyse a process of disintegration. There are enough signs that Boko Haram might plunge Nigeria into another civil war, the end of which may not come as quickly as Nigerians would have envisaged".

Continuing, Albert (2012) argues that "blames had been placed on the northern intelligentsia for allowing the menace of Boko Haram to linger. Northern leaders had been accused of being complacent while the Islamic sect took control, their action having been tagged political. There have been insinuations that Boko Haram has been a product of a huge discontentment by the northern political elite against the present balance of political

power in Nigeria. The north is said to be very unhappy that a man from Bayelsa had supplanted it in power game by clinging the Presidential power in 2011 which was its exclusive preserve by means of People's Democratic Party (PDP) zoning arrangement. Some unnamed northern leaders were said to be offering the logistics for terrorism to thrive in the country, against this background".

The necessity for Boko Haram and the government of Nigeria to dialogue has continued to dominate discussions among Nigerians, yet, nothing serious seems to show that the sect is willing to dialogue with government. Hopes of getting the group to dialogue with government was raised by the then National Security Adviser Colonel Sambo Dasuki due to his perceived connections in the north, but so far Col. Sambo had not made any headway in resolving the problem prompting Mr. President to set up a committee to visit Borno for the purpose of finding solution to Boko Haram menace.

Presently and most unfortunate aspect of it is the kidnap of about 200 children from Government Secondary Scholl in Barma, Borno State, which compelled the country's leadership to invite the international community for a help in locating these innocent girls who were in their school writing their WAEC examinations. Till now, government has continued to promise of freeing those girls while battling the insurgents who have declared some part of Borno a Caliphate state.

Reports have indicated on several occasions that the insurgents possess more sophisticated weapons than the Nigeria military. This allegation was confirmed when some of the country's military men flee to Cameroun after been overpowered by the sect group during an exchange of artillery and gun fire.

9. The Niger Delta and Boko Haram Insurgency

For so many years, the issue of the neglect of the Niger Delta region by the Nigerian government dominated discussion within and outside the country. Niger Delta produces oil that is today generate about 95% of the country's national revenue, but yet, development of infrastructure like water, roads, health facilities, electricity etc, is nothing to write home about. After so many years of lost hope the youths from the region became restive, forming different militant outfits to vandalize oil pipelines, kidnap for ransom, engage in illegal oil deals, etc., to better their own personal lots, besides, fighting for resource control. During this period, these situations threatened the nation's security and economic downturn for the country, as oil production went all time low and a cut in oil revenue. (Afinotan, 2009)

The first major struggle by the Niger Delta people to better the lives of the citizens of the region was led by Isaac Adaka Boro. Born September 10, 1938 in Oloibiri, Bayelsa State, Nigeria, his believe that the people of Niger delta deserve a fairer share of proceeds of the oil wealth and a greater Niger Delta autonomy, resource control and self determination led to his formation of the Niger Delta Volunteer Force, an armed militia with members consisting mainly of his fellow Ijaw ethnic group. Their declaration of the Niger Delta region as republic on February 23, 1966 led to clash between the group and the federal government forces for twelve days before succumbing to the superior fire power of federal forces.

As a result, Isaac Adaka Boro and his compatriots were jailed for treason, but were subsequently granted amnesty by the Yakubu Gowon regime on the eve of the Nigerian civil war in May 1967. He later enlisted in the Nigerian Army and was commissioned as a major and subsequently fought on the side of the Federal Government during the civil war but was killed under mysterious circumstances in active service in 1968 at Okrika in Rivers State.

During this struggle “most of the youths were so frustrated with the general neglect that they were ready for any action led by an outstanding leader to gain liberty We were clenched in tyrannical chains and led through a dark alley of perpetual political and social deprivation. Strangers in our own country! Inevitably, therefore, the day would have to come for us to fight for our long-denied right to self-determination”. He complained at the economic and material neglect of the Niger Delta.

His armed conflict started on February 23, 1966 when his “three divisions moved out from their Touton Ban camp with Bora, Onwonaru and manliness as their divisional commanders. Before going into battle the troops were given a rallying call:

“Today is a great day, not only in your lives, but also in the history of the Niger Delta. Perhaps, it will be the greatest day for a very long time. This is not because we are going to bring the heavens down, but because we are going to demonstrate to the world what and how we feel about oppression.... Remember your 70 year old grandmother who still farms to eat, remember also your poverty stricken people and then, remember too, your petroleum which is being pumped out daily from your veins, and then fight for your freedom”.. (Afinotan, 2009)

The NDVF men attacked a police station at Yenagoa, raided the armoury and kidnapped some officers including the police officer in command of the station. They also blew up oil pipelines, engaged the police in a gunfight and declared the Niger Delta an independent republic. The revolt was suppressed and Bora, Owonaru and manliness were put on trial on a 9 count charge of treason at Port Harcourt Assizes before Judge Phil Ebosie. Boro was found guilty.

Boro came into prominence in 1966 when he proclaimed an independent Niger Delta Peoples' Republic with a flag and an emergency constitution. He paraded himself as the General Officer Commanding the Niger Delta Volunteer Force (DVS) and leader of the Liberation Government.

The activist and his followers also allegedly attacked a police station, blew up the federal armoury and took rifles and ammunition. They also reportedly blew up oil pipelines and engaged the police in a gun battle leading to the arrest and detention of two of his followers, Samuel Timipre Owonaru and Nottingham Dick.

His agitation led to formation of other militants groups like - Movement for the Survival of Ogoni people (MOSOP), the Egbesu Boys, and several other militants groups that evolved to agitate for the resource control in the region.

And an attempt by Gen. Abacha's regime in 1995 to silence the Niger Delta people from agitating for a better life for their people and by extension resource control led to the killing of Ken Saro-wiwa and eight other Ogoni citizens and eventual escalation of

the Niger Delta crisis, until amnesty was granted to the militants by Musa Yar'adua's administration in 2009.

Similarly too, the attitude of politicians after every election towards the youths whom they have continuously used to win elections is believed to be the cause of the Boko Haram insurgency in the north-east region of Nigeria. For example, the former Borno State Governor Alhaji Mordhi Sherif was alleged to have funded members of the Boko Haram preparatory to his governorship campaign, but eventually abandoned them after being sworn in as the governor of Borno State.

The group was founded by Mohammed Yusuf in 2002 after the frustration on the side of government to integrate members of the group either through employment or training on skill acquisition.

The group which is believed to have a link outside the shores of Nigeria became deadly in retaliation after the arrest and killing of their leader, Mohammed Yusuf in 2009 by the Nigerian Police Force. The sect has carried out terrorist attacks against the Nigeria's Police Headquarters in June 16, 2011, and the UN Headquarters in August 26, 2011, properties of private organizations in Nigeria, churches, schools, individuals including the spiritual head of the Muslims in Nigeria Sultan of Sokoto Muhammed Sa'ad Abubakar, besides others deadly acts of terrorism and throwing in so many questions including whether the country's security have the capability to secure the country its citizens and their properties, in addition to policing her external borders. As we can see shortly, the Nigeria politicians have made it impossible for elections/political processes to work properly in the country leading to so many political crises in the country which has continued to jeopardize democratic growth in Nigeria.

10. The Challenge of Ethno-Religious Issues And Nigeria's National Security

Ethnicity and religious crises have since the end of the cold war become one of the major threats to global peace. Ethno/religious crisis arises as a result of various groups fighting for recognition especially through participation in election and electoral processes so as to have access to power and by extension natural resources of their respective countries.

Religion or religious differences have continued to be one issue that seems to have defied all security solutions in Nigeria. Apart from been a multi diverse society, Nigeria also boost of different religions - Christianity, Islamic and traditional religions etc., and their differences in faith and preaching has continued to create religious crises in the country.

The understanding by members of each religious group has gone a long way in fuelling religious crisis in the country with its negative impact on the nation's practice of secularism.

Apart from the present Boko Haram insurgency, there has been violence over the years between the two major religions in Nigeria - Christians and Muslims. It has in the past resulted in the death and displacement of thousands of people in the northern region of the country.

Such the two major religious crises "took place in Maiduguri, Bauchi, Potiskum, Wudil in 2009 with about 1000 deaths, while that of Jos in 2010 claimed 992 lives". (Anyadike 2013)

From 1999 till date, so many lives have been lost in the name of religion. Since the introduction of Islamic law the sharia in the eleven northern states of Nigeria, sectarian clashes between Muslims and Christians have resulted in several deaths, and the burning of so many churches, with “more than 30,000 Christians” been displaced from their homes especially from Kano State. A “Danish cartoon’s ridiculing of the Muslim Prophet Mohammed resulted in attacks and reprisals that killed dozens and injured or displaced thousands in the north and south...” Another simultaneous attacks on churches in northern Nigeria claimed several lives in December 25, 2011. Reuter’s report which was confirmed by a NEMA local coordinator indicates that “at least 37 people died and 57 others were injured in an attack at St. Theresa Catholic Church in Madalla, a satellite town of Abuja located 40 km (25 ml) from the city center”. Also, reports by USA Today (Dele 2011), New York Times (Adam 2011), BBC News (Martin 2011) all reported the explosions that rocked Mountain of Fire and Miracles Church in Jos in December 25, 2011 leaving one Police officer dead .While two explosions at Gadaka and Damaturu, Yobe State north eastern Nigeria killed at least three people”.

Unfortunately, the Nigerian government has not brought the perpetrators of these acts to book, leaving those behind these dastardly acts to continue in their acts of snuffing out lives of innocent people almost on daily basis.

Frustration arising from government failure to deliver basic services to her people has been traced to this religious and ethnic menace which has remained lingering for years now and serious threats to Nigerian security.

As quoted in ICG (International Crisis Group) 2014 “Much of the violence is said to be rooted in poverty and unemployment—about 57 percent of the population now falls below the poverty line of a dollar a day”.

In a similar vein, ethnic crisis is another major problem that has created insecurity in Nigeria and has for many years threatened the country’s unity. This has been as a result of each ethnic group fighting to subdue the other for the purposes of grabbing power and partaking in the sharing of Nigeria resources.

From Nnoli (1982:176) views, it has become “an image of a struggle among the various ethnic groups for a division of national resources. It has become a tradition that an average Nigerian, especially the poor believes that unless his or her ethnic brothers or sisters are in government offices the chances of them having access to the nation’s resources meant for developmental purposes are very slim”.

As a result, there have been several ethnic clashes in Nigeria – the clashes between cattle rearers in Shagamu and the ethnic clashes in Idi-Araba Lagos and Kano States respectively, Aguleri-Umuleri boundary dispute in Anambra State, to the Ife-Modakeke land ownership dispute in the then Oyo State, the Odi crisis of 1999 in Bayelsa State, the communal violence in Jos in 2000, Zango-Kataf and Niger Delta crises, etc.

11. Recommendations

Having examined the security problems bedeviling Nigeria starting from 1950s, the study is of the view that if the following recommendations are implemented, the country will nip these security challenges in the bud.

Government should endeavour to examine the major problems of ethnic, religious and socio-economic and political crises bedeviling Nigeria, considering that these issues have continuously been traced to the country's insecurity.

The study hopes that the recommendations of the just concluded 2014 National Conference which took place in Abuja be implemented to make people's constitution that will take care of all conflicting areas that have continued to create insecurity in the country.

Most importantly, government should release all recommendations concerning all the major crises in Nigeria and thereafter punish those behind these crises no matter those behind it. Until such people are exposed and punished, no meaningful security problem can be achieved.

Lastly, the study is recommending that further research be carried out to determine why people especially in the northern area of the country can afford to participate in suicide mission even knowing the consequences of death that goes with it.

12. Conclusion

The contemporary Nigeria security situation has made it imperative that government at all levels should be proactive in getting to the root cause of the security challenges in Nigeria.

The only remedy to this ugly situation is when the Nigerian president insist on providing adequate security equipments and incentives to encourage the country's security agencies in carrying out their duties diligently, courageously and without sentiments, in addition to discouraging the Nigerian politicians from using religion and ethnicity in pursuing their parochial interests which they have taken to be above that of national interest.

The federal government who is in control of all the security apparatus in Nigeria should endeavour to bring to book the perpetrators of various religious, ethnic and other violent related activities.

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