

Role of Hard Drug and Government Ministers in Nigerian Insurgency: A Review

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Abstract

To level an allegation against the Buhari administration and its Chief Ministers of involvement in the promotion of insurgency is easy. But to prove it in a short study of this nature is difficult because it requires an elaborate study and perhaps one beyond the capacity of a single write up and writer. It is an ideological issue that requires a concerted ideological framework. The velocity with which insurgency over-shadowed the nation in Buhari's administration which was voted into power because of the ideological-thinking that, he was most suitable to confront the menace coming from a vast military background, as a Retired Major General in the Nigerian Army and a former Military Head of State, leaves no better room than to hold his government responsible! The attitude and disposition of his Ministers and Security Advisers right from the onset did not help his case. It appeared as if the nation was hoodwinked and taken for a ride by him when it is viewed from the background that the ethnic nationality of the Fulani which he represents has been fingered with clear evidence to be behind the insurgency. This paper which uses doctrinal method examines the roles that the Communication Minister, border areas, hard drugs and other Security Advisers in the Buhari administration had played in the sudden upsurge of terrorism and banditry in Nigeria. It finds that there is a direct relationship between insurgency and its sponsorship by the administration. To plead a case of condonation is to understate the relationship. The President's dual nationality of being maternally Nigeria and paternally Niger even aggravates or consolidates the alleged relationship. The level of unprecedented collaboration between the two countries during the reign lends much credence to the truth and the affirmative. This paper thinks that until the exit of the administration in 2023, there may be no let-up in insurgency and terrorism and that is on the assumption that the twin evils may not jeopardize the 2023 election.

Keywords: Insurgency, Buhari, Isa Pantami, Hard Drug, Government Ministers.

Introduction

This work may have to draw so much inspiration from the words of the Media Adviser to President Mohammed Buhari, Femi Adesina (as cited in Onuoha, 2021, p. 9) when he stated, 'I think in any nation at a given time it is not enough to focus on the negatives. If you want to focus on the negatives, there will be more than enough for you to see and talk' and write about. But there are always silver linings in the sky. He continues, 'It is typical of Nigerians that when those silver-lining come, (they) don't talk about them. The truth is that any country that wants to focus on the negatives will have more than enough to chew.' Let us realize that in Nigeria, there are positives in the economy, security and all spheres of life. The choice is yours!

Given the foregoing, the subject matter of accusing the Buhari administration of sponsorship of insurgency is not only negative but unobtrusive. It is primed. It is framed. It is an agenda. Agenda setting is powerful in bringing an issue that is unobtrusive to the public's eye. When an issue such as sponsorship of insurgency is primed and framed, it affects the attention the public gives to the issue and the importance it assumes before the public audience. Framing and priming it would therefore require selecting and highlighting some aspects of it and making connections amongst them in order to promote a particular interpretation that would enable a particular conclusion to be drawn.

Statement of the problem

What is going on is a culture war. Nigeria under the Buhari administration is engaged in a very deep cultural and political conflict. What the Igbo represent – too much 'bukuru' or too much western education – is what the administration detests. The government thinks that western education is 'haram' because it upsets the cultural foundation of the Islamic north rooted in the Salafist call for global jihad. A corridor of terror exists between Syria, Turkey, Egypt and Libya funneling arms and fighters to West Africa through Niger, Mali, Chad and Nigeria. Nigeria is currently their operational base through which they intend to secure sub-Saharan Africa because they have a friendly government of Buhari in power. It is on record that Boko Haram had Buhari as go-between during the administration of Goodluck Jonathan and he saw the war against the sect as a war against the north. It is in this connection that Dr. Isa Pantami's sympathy for ISIS, ISWAP, Al-Qaeda can be understood leading to his being in charge of the strategic Ministry of Communication to compromise national security for the interest of the global jihad and terrorist ideology. This indicates that the corporate being of Nigeria is subverted from the top. When the head of a fish is rotten the body is gone. There are also hints that the 2023 election will not hold and even if it holds it will not resolve the current crises because the Buhari administration is bent on hoisting a national emergency situation which might inexorably provide the National Assembly with powers to extend indefinitely its reign (Obi, 2021, p. 18 & Ojo, 2022).

Highlighting the indices of the situation which may lead to no election in 2023, Chris Beecroft, Director, Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office, United Kingdom fingered the insurgency in the north-east, farmer-herder conflicts across Nigeria, resource control conflicts in the Niger Delta, separatist agitations in the south-east and south-west and banditry in the north-west. Fresh evidence has also surfaced in contradiction to the earlier position taken in this study that there are not strict commonalities between the various terrorist and insurgent groups to the effect that collaborations between them are evolving. Researchers studying the groups closely and negotiators with understanding of the workings of the groups believe that cohesion and co-ordination seem to be forming within Boko Haram, JAS, ISWAP, Ansaru and bandits. In a leaked letter by Governor El-Rufai to President Buhari, indicating that in 2021 over 1,192 persons lost their lives to insurgency and 645 persons did so by mid 2022, in Kaduna State alone, the Governor pointedly

informed the President that the terrorists were consolidating and forming a 'parallel government' and a 'permanent operational base' in the north-west axis of Kaduna and Niger States in the Kuduru forest in the Kuyello district of the State near the Federal capital territory of Abuja. The Governor claimed that the Ansaru sect of Boko Haram which is known to have an extremist view against democracy and secular authority had held down and aborted census enumeration activities in nine out of eleven wards in Birnin Gwari due to threats of banditry and terrorism and had enacted a law banning residents in Madobiya and Kazage villages from all forms of political activities towards the 2023 elections. He submitted further that the group had taken over adjudicatory powers in vast areas of the districts and had even imposed a fine of N1 million against resident Muazu Ibrahim of Kuyello district for selling a piece of land without the consent of the land owner (Adebayo, 2022).

Theoretical framework

Media theory

This work has drawn tremendously from media publications. It is necessary to examine the question whether the mass media use their reportage in aid of the actions of insurgents and other criminals or whether the media use their reportage as tools to stem insecurity, terrorism and other forms of crime and criminal conflicts in Nigeria. In *The Role of the Mass Media in Fight against Terrorism and Insurgency in Nigeria* Orhadahwe (2019, p. 104) submitted that terrorism takes advantage of modern technological innovation in mass communication to spread their propaganda and their actions create extreme fear among their target groups, mobilize wider public support for their cause, frustrate and disrupt the responses of government and security forces, as well as recruit more fighters, raise more funds and inspire further attacks. Terrorism is capable of writing any drama, no matter how horrible, to attract media attention (Jack & Lauren, 2017, pp. 87-89). Mass communication has offered new opportunities for people to communicate on a wider scale, while technological inventions have significantly changed the way news materials are communicated, making them accessible to a greater number of people than ever before (Aiyesimoju, 2015, pp 6-7&9).

Agenda setting theory

Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw in 1972 propounded the Agenda-Setting theory of the Mass Media. They propounded that the Mass Media sets agenda on national issues such as terrorism or insurgency in Nigeria. They believe that there is a link between what the mass media consider important and what the general public considers important. Any issue that is often reported and repeated in the mass media is considered important especially when the stories are on the front page, back page or center spread or editorial opinion. The significance which a people ascribe to news and issues, such as terrorism and insurgency, is proportional to the amount of attention given to such issues in the mass media. This leads

to the general belief that the media is the world's most powerful communication channel giving rise to the Media dependency theory.

Media dependency theory

Propounded by Ball-Roacheach and Da Fleur in 1976 the media dependency theory is to the effect that the people, the society and the world depend on the media for information and the media is unquestionable in that province. The media determines what is important and what the public should know and read (Hoffman, 2006).

Use and gratification theory

In 1974 Katz, Blumber and Gurevitch propounded the use and gratification theory which states that people selectively choose, attend to, perceive and retain media messaged on the basis of their needs. This theory believes that the media coverage shapes how people see issues. It means that the media frames how the public sees reality.

Conceptual clarifications

Drug and crime connection

It is hard to overstate the connection between drug abuse and criminal behaviour. Boko Haram, pirates, kidnappers and other criminal masterminds use hard drugs before they carry out their murderous actions against law abiding people. In fact, investigations have revealed that hard drugs have contributed tremendously to the worsening insecurity in Nigeria (Isa, 2021, p. 16 & Agbakwuru, 2021, p. 9). In the light of this, the fight against hard drugs which was soft peddled during the Jonathan administration had been raised to the hilt since the takeover of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency by Gen. Buba Marwa (Rtd.). Although, at a point the Ondo State government of Governor Akeredolu SAN was mulling the possibility of legalizing Indian hemp cultivation and production, the State being one of those steeply enmeshed in the cultivate of the illicit crop, the policy thrust of the Buhari administration is at violent odds with drug.

The war against illicit drugs and tackling trafficking is one of the most important steps in the fight against insurgency because money laundering by traffickers and the use of illicit drugs are closely connected. Drug money can be used to fund insurgency and terrorism. A fight against drug will reduce or deny financial muscle for bandits. The Administration believes that because society rarely questions the source of illicit wealth, most drug dealers as well as addicts have ended up as role models in Nigeria and often, they find their ways into the contestation of elections and get elected into State and National legislatures to determine policy. In recent times, NDLEA has arrested 2,175 traffickers and seized 2,050,765.33 kilograms of illicit drugs and cash of N75billion. The agency has filed about 2,000 drug cases in court nationwide with 329 convictions and 1,549 cases pending the courts of law (Omonobi, 2021, p. 25).

Porous international borders

The role of Nigerian international borders in the upsurge of insurgency during the Buhari administration is phenomenal. Nigeria has international borders with Republic of Benin, Niger Republic, Chad and Cameroon. The land boundary of Nigeria with Benin is put at 770 km by Mohammed (2012, pp. 339 & 402). But it is put at 774 km by Ikelegbe (2012, pp. 436, 441, 442, 443 and 445). The boundary was determined since about 1906. Nigeria's land boundary with Niger is put at 1,500 km by Ahmad but Ikelegbe puts it at 1,600 km. It was fixed around 1912 and the second longest border area of all. It is the friendliest of all in neighborliness according to records. The land boundary between Chad and Nigeria is put at 84 km by Ahmad but Ikelegbe puts it at 96 km. It is the shortest of them all but the most volatile, frosty and crisis ridden. The Cameroonian border with Nigeria it is put at 2,000 km by Ahmad while Ikelegbe puts it at 1,800 km. It is the longest and most rugged in terms of terrain due to the Cameroonian-Mandara Mountains. It was fixed as far back as 1906 to 1913.

All the land boundaries were fixed during colonialism and were mainly through treaties between Britain and France and with the natives. France took over Cameroon from Germany as a mandate colony after the Second World War. They were therefore arbitrary boundaries and done by imposition. As the border lines were more of less arbitrary in nature, fluid and porous, they were superimposed with split related ethnic and religious groups, topographical and ecological zones placed opposite one another in all the cases: whether Yoruba ethnic group in Benin Republic, Hausa, Fulani and Kanuri in Niger Republic and Chad or the Bakasi peninsular in Cameroon.

It requires restatement that because these land boundaries were artificially imposed attempts at their protection has bred volatile conflicts of monumental proportions sometimes leading to war and land disputes. It has been argued by Ikelegbe that attempts at maintaining and retaining these border lines have resulted in pursuit of policies that have encouraged less integration and mutual co-existence than hostility and de-segregation leading to under-development of the border regions. Rather than being hubs of economic and political activities, they have turned out to be areas of the most pernicious application and enforcement of national and international laws. These have bred smuggling, mutual suspicion, hatred, violence and crime. Beginning with the Cameroonian border for instance, Nigeria had had a dispute with the Cameroon over the Bakassi peninsular that ended in a World Court judgment (at the International Court Justice) against Nigeria. In the shortest land border with Chad, the most persistent threat to national and international security has been recorded with frequent clashes in the border area over religious, political, economic and ethnic conflicts. In terms of volatility, the Chad border is the worst hit dating back to 1983 Maitasene riot.

Chad and Niger border are the major sources of insurgency threat to Nigeria. In fact, it has been acknowledged by major stakeholders in security studies that Boko haram, banditry, ISWAP, insurgents and Ansaru are all from the neighbouring countries of Niger and Chad

or they infiltrate Nigeria through their routes. Ikelegbe has argued that some of the major sources and causes of these conflicts are fishing and mineral rights in the Lake Chad region which Nigeria, Chad and Niger have direct access and which basin is reputed to be rich in mineral oil deposit of monumental value and proportion. Another source of conflict between the natives of the communities of the three countries is stock routes and patterns of transhumance of the Shuwa Arab that transect the respective ethnic communities since time out of human memory.

Okoli (2007) for example, has attested in his studies that over many years the co-existence between nomadic Fulani and or Shuwa Arabs and sedentary cultivators give rise to cattle paths and routes for the pastoralists to avoid trampling on cultivated farmlands across these international borders and routes. And that, empirical studies have shown that these are potential sources of conflicts amongst pastoralists and their hosts and communities of farmers even up to the Cameroonian border in the Mandara Mountains. Okoli's and similar studies (like Awogbode, 1993) present that most often, the leaders of nomadic Fulani on transhumance seek the permission for grazing and passage from the political and ethnic leadership of the constituted settled communities in the border areas and across the various international communities. The degree of success of these negotiations and accommodations depended on the mutual cooperation and respect of the parties but most often, the relationship degenerates into open and violent conflicts especially when religious issues comingled with them. All the time, the conflicts arose from bush burning, population pressure, cultivation of land and disputes related to land, inadequate stock routes and over grazing (Ikelegbe, 2012).

The infusion of religious rivalry into the circumstances of these conflicts signaled the beginning of insurgency in Nigeria. It has been noted that with the drying up of the lake and shrinking of its waters and the dearth of pasture in the face of increasing farming communities, ethnic animosities have overtime comingled with revival of Islamic learning in the north. The introduction of Sharia and the increasing population of non-Muslims in Muslim dominated spaces of the north and the gradual but steady ascendancy of western education and world view in the north, particularly the open preaching of Christianity and the building of large churches with huge followings and claims of economic and spiritual breakthrough, exploded the time-bomb. The explosion was not only against the Christian faith but also against the fellow members of the Islamic faith - particularly those considered to be elitist and taking increasingly to the western education way of life. The concept of Boko Haram was essentially configured against the Muslim elitist group which had been growing tremendously in the north and departing from the 'pure' or extreme Islamic world view.

Boko Haram coinage

The term Boko Haram was the coinage of the media. The group did not ascribe the name to itself. It was a Muslim Youth Organization formed in 1995 with Mallam Lawal as the

Leader. He handed over to Mohammed Yesufu when he proceeded to Saudi Arabia for further studies and has not been back since then but may have affiliated to other international groups. The group was formed in Bornu State within the Fulbe of Maiduguri area. It was critical of the elite preaching against western education as a sin or an evil and called on those who cared and who had acquired the system of education to burn their certificates (Musa, 2014, p. 152). From Musa's study, the nature and the possible causes of the formation of the sect were nothing short of mundane issues that could have informed any other religious group in history particularly in the West African sub-region. How the sect managed to morph into a deadly weapon and its weaponization by the Nigerian state can only leave much to be desired and much more to the unknown.

What is crucial however about the sect, and which is not peculiar to the sect, is that its leader was captured by the Nigerian state and was incarcerated and subsequently died in police custody and these angered the group to declare a sort of jihad against the Federal government. Newer facts continue to emerge about the group. It was claimed by Sheikh Gumi (as cited in Rukkyupdates, 2022) for instance, that its off-shoot called Ansaru Terrorists was responsible for the attack on the Kuje Prisons, Abuja in mid-2022. Gumi had further volunteered that it pays N50,000 per day to its foot-soldiers and they receive flags of religion from their leaders. And upon being handed over a flag of religion, foot-soldiers become 'pure' and could look upon fellows Muslims as trashy infidels not to even consider a non-Muslim.

Fulani the fulbe

While Bola Ige had profiled the Fulbe as the Tutsis of Nigeria, Buhari has gone into history as the god-father of the Fulani. God-fatherism involves the Fulani 'seeking to protect and support an "oga" in order (or while trying) to acquire basic social and material goods...which are quite literally a piece of the state' (Dibua, 2012, p. 135). Huge sums of money which have been amassed from 2015 to 2023 through terrorism, ransom and security votes have found their ways into the infrastructural development of Niger republic the paternal nation-state of the President. In fact the nation of Nigeria is being milked for the watering of the arid Niger republic: railways have been built; oil refineries have been constructed with oil and gas claimed to be brought from Niger republic but piped from the Niger Delta with funds from NNPC; security vehicles have been acquired and delivered to her and military weapons have suffused the republic in the Buhari era. Niger had never had it so good. It would be so eternally grateful to Mr. Buhari that Ikechukwu (2021) had considered it more sensible to pronounce Niger Republic the 37th State of Nigeria or the 7th geopolitical zone.

As confessed by Abubakar Kawu Baraje which confession was later recanted but which confession had acquired notoriety from the outspoken views of the likes of El Rufia, Kaduna State Governor, the origin of insecurity in Nigeria can be traced to the 2015 Buhari fourth-shot at the Presidency election in which the Fulani all over of Africa particularly from the neighbouring countries of Niger, Chad, Mali, Libya, Central Africa Republic, Cameroon,

Sierra Leone, Senegal and Gambia were invited and influxed into Nigeria to rein in mayhem if Buhari failed a record fourth-time at the ballot. After the election, which Jonathan administration conceded and averted bloodbath, the Fulani became stranded and refused to retreat but began to weaponize their stay in insurgency, terrorism and banditry through the instrumentality of the same government they had been invited to install. As they had no further use in the socio-political space, they morphed into pseudo jihadist infiltrating into the ancestral forests of other ethnic nationalities with all manner of antediluvian claims such as that Nigerian was their original country and that they needed to finish the business which their forebear began but was checked by the British or that Nigeria is their new-found permanent home.

Literature review

Role of government ministers

The complicity of the Buhari's administration in the rise in insurgency is relatively easy to prove. The President has been widely reported to have said before coming into power that, 'Any attack on the Boko Haram is an attack on the north' (Ikhioya, 2021, p. 18). But if the complicity of the Buhari administration in the rise of insurgency in Nigeria becomes necessary to prove, the Isa Pantami's case becomes handy. The political party of the administration became drawn into the fray. The opposition party also dug in to use the case to discredit the administration. In explaining the party line, All Progressive Congress states, 'Our party's position is predicated on the heightening concerns in the public space and the international arena of possible compromises by the Communication Minister who has access to sensitive government documents and information in addition to data of all individuals including high profile personalities in the public and private sectors as well as the traditional and faith based circles (Yakubu, 2021, p. 9).

The Minister was suggested to have compromised the National Identity Number registration exercise to give room for the registration of aliens and invaders from Mali, Niger, Chad, Burkina Faso, Libya, and Cameroon. The United States of America was further said to have placed the Minister on a watch list for having relationship with Al Qaeda and Boko Haram. For Ladelokun (2021, p. 17) when the history of how terrorists conquered parts of northern Nigeria is written, Pantami's name will feature prominently. Not because he killed an unbeliever in that region, or blew up a worship center erected by them. No. It will definitely be for terrorism fuelled by his misleading sermons. By the first quarter of 2021, Global Rights Nigeria had already reported that 1,603 Nigerians had been killed (Ewepu, 2021, p. 9). The various groups responsible for these deaths are clearly, Boko Haram operating on the Lake Chad basin, ISWAP (Islamic State of West African Province) operating in Niger State, Islamic State for the Maghreb, Islamic State of Greater Sahara, Alqaede faction of Maghreb, Negative Fulani Herdsmen, Bandits, Eastern Security Network etc.

The leaderships of these groups are fluid and difficult to identify. They are like quick sand and there are no hard and fast commonalities. These have been compounded by the wide terrain of thick forests in Nigeria which are largely ungoverned and un-policed. The border space of Nigeria and Niger is about 1, 497 kilometers. It is largely porous and difficult to police (Umoru, 2021, p. 35). The Federal Government has been held responsible and blameworthy for these deaths that are happening on a daily basis because rather than allowing the long arm of the law to catch up with those fomenting the crises, the government pampers them and channels money into rehabilitating them. This singular act, according to Akintoye, the Afenifere leader, makes crime more attractive to the unemployed youths in the country (Abubakar & Ogunnaike, 2021, p. 11).

Ministerial lumping-utterances

Nigerians have not shown love for one another. Rather, they have progressively armed up to attack others or defend themselves from their fellow countrymen and their foreign collaborators who are after their lives and ancestral patrimonies. Many rogue officers have also been working in cahoots with the foreigners and local herdsmen to attack and kill Nigerians to grab their lands (Vanguard Comment, 2021, p. 18). These allegations can be elicited from statements of Military Officers and Ministers of Government in the Buhari era. Dambazau's statement, for example, that OPC and IPOB are very much the same as Boko Haram is said by Akinrefon (2021, p. 2) to be made in bad faith and has raised fundamental questions about his intentions, interests and morality as a former Chief of Army Staff and Minister of Interior. Akinrefon argues that Dambazau cannot be trusted to fight against insurgency because he had on several occasions pleaded on behalf of Boko Haram. His claim of similarity between IPOB, OPC and Boko Haram is not only derogatory but unfortunate. OPC has never been involved in any act of insurgency. It has been at the vanguard of supporting the police and providing information and intelligence that can help the police in effective grassroots security. For Dayo (2021, p. 5) IPOB may have been proscribed but it has not been found all over the nation killing and raping people. They are just saying, 'This is our territory and we want to protect it, and to have our own nation.'

Dambazau is not alone in the characterization of insurgents as all the same. 24 hours following the abduction of 23 Greenfield University of Kaduna students, bandits struck again and abducted two nurses in a health facility in Kaduna just as a traditional ruler and five others were killed in three separate attacks in Benue State communities by suspected herdsmen at Tse-Zoola village, Agan, Makurdi Local Government Area; Odugbeho in Agatu Local Government Area and Mbayer-Yandev in Guma Local Government Area of Benue State. The Minister of defence claimed that a comprehensive list of identified enemies of the country has been made and some individuals who fund Boko Haram had been arrested in Kano State and some had contacted him for intervention but he refused and wanted the due process of law to be followed. Major Gen. Magashi (as cited in Obinna et al, 2021, p. 5) claimed further that the military would not be deterred in eliminating all perceived enemies

of the nation. The defence Minister claimed also that the nation was bleeding because of self-interest and other primordial considerations underlying decisions which political, religious and ethnic leaders make. Such leaders are quick to attribute blames to groups other than theirs in order to exploit the social division and fault lines for their gains. Such groups are Boko Haram, IPOB etc which encourage their members to seek violence as a legitimate alternative.

Although Akinrefon has made concerted efforts to extricate OPC from Boko Haram, and Major Gen. Magashi has made concerted efforts to lump IPOB with Boko Haram, Fasan (2021, p. 16) seems to join in the lumping process. He argues that given their style of operations, their anti-education and probably anti-women stance, can anyone, especially those too frightened to call these terrorists by their real names, tell the difference between the bandits in north from the Boko Haram terrorists that erstwhile operated from the north-east? How are the bandits different from herdsmen that are gradually exporting their macabre trade to other parts of southern Nigeria, operating from the highways while making the forests their hideouts? The lumping process informs the position of the National Security Adviser to President Buhari, Gen. Monguno (as cited in Agbakwuru, 2021, pp. 5 & 36) who has stated the characterization in general terms as follows, 'Any individual who thinks he has any support, who thinks he can undermine this government, anybody, any person who thinks he has the cat's whiskers, or he can be rocky on the perch and lead us into a situation of unhappiness, will have himself to blame at the end of the day.' He claimed that President Buhari had given directives to the military and intelligence organizations to trail and flush out all the people that have been on the watch-list and there were quite a handful of them. 'They were to be trailed, they were to be routed out and they were to be brought to book!'

The President had stated before security agents, 'As a security agency, I charge you to be relentless in carrying out your statutory duties of keeping our borders safe while you ensure that criminal elements do not find Nigeria as a safe haven to hide and perpetrate their criminality.' But the security agencies do confront a different genre of enemy: the people. They state, 'our biggest problem with stopping arms smuggling is that border communities' gang up against us, kill us and burn our vehicles. They think that bandits who smuggle arms are more important to their lives than us' (Salem, 2021, p. 9). Where there is total, unequivocal support from the community to the law enforcement agencies, some of these problems obviously will diminish. They would be reported and action would be taken. But the reverse is the case. Communities would rather shield the criminals against the State and attack the State agents as their enemy (Yakubu, 2021, p.p. 14 & 16).

The motivation debate

The debate between Shehu Garba and Baba Ahmed on the crisis facing the Buhari administration best illustrates the issues to a significant extent. Acknowledging that when Buhari came into office, the strongest issue was Boko Haram, Garba goes ahead to list out

the outstanding bombings of the group before the administration took over: ThisDay Newspaper Office was bombed, United Nations Headquarters, Abuja was bombed. Police Headquarters, Abuja was bombed. Thereafter the administration came face-to-face with herders-farmers conflict at levels unprecedented. Garba volunteers, there is no kidnapper out there on the streets and the forests that is probably not sponsored by somebody, may be an arms dealer and supplier or even someone helping him to manage his money or ransom. There is even suspicion in the press that money is being paid to rescue students from their den. If this happens, the tendency is for the phenomenon to grow into an industry.

But Baba Ahmed counters. Kidnap had already become an industry. 'When you talk about 200 motor cycles, they have to be serviced, weapons have to be serviced and they have to be trained on the use of weapons. It has grown into a big industry. This acknowledges the fact that the leadership has failed to secure the citizens.' Millions of people are still living under Boko Haram. The numbers change, the towns and cities change. Today they are in the hands of Nigerian troops tomorrow they are in the hands of Boko Haram. And the reason kidnapping and banditry would escalate is because the kidnappers and bandits realize that there is a huge deficit around governance and security in Nigeria. Insurgents are in control of thousands of kilometers of forests which neither the Police nor the military can access. There is so much nepotism around the Presidency and people like Asari Dokubo of Niger Delta Republic, Nnamdi Kanu of Biafra Republic and Sunday Igboho of Odua Republic are creating genuine problems on use of seditious language, taking actions that suggest that they are attacking the foundation of national unity and territorial integrity of the Nigerian State saying they do not want to be part of the country any longer and the Presidency does not seem to understand that these are real existential problems.

The economic motivation of banditry has been clearly illustrated in the Benue, Kogi and Niger States axis where late Terwase Agwaza alias Gana once operated before he was extra-judicially killed by the Nigerian military. His elimination did not put paid to his group as it continued to operate. Chairman, Katsina-Ala Local Government Area in Benue State, Alfred Atera (as cited in Duru, 2021, p. 5) reveals, 'The bandits are loyalists of late Gana (Terwase Agwaza) who are demanding revenue from markets.' 'They do not want any market to operate because the past Local Government Chairmen were paying them revenue (return) and I came in and I stopped giving them revenue that is the problem.'

It has been argued that such returns, revenues and ransoms would be deployed into acquisition of more deadly weapons by the bandits. Payment of ransom is setting a bad precedent as it means that governments are rewarding criminals for their heinous activities. It has never been a good strategy to give returns and settle bandits directly through ransom or indirectly through award of unscrupulous security or revenue contracts as they would only and in turn use these proceeds to procure more arms to continue to attack innocent citizens. It is an indication that the security agencies empowered to secure lives and properties may indirectly be telling the nation that they are incapable of protecting the

citizens they swore to do. It is further argued that countries like United States of America and Italy etc, as a matter of policy, do not pay ransom. The US had previously threatened to prosecute private individuals who seek to do so.

Withdraw state security vote

A lot of people perceive that there is nepotism in Buhari's appointments and that a certain people dominate the security apparatus when a security team meets, a larger percentage of Nigerians whom they are going to speak about their welfare and security is absent and unrepresented. But, 'when we voted Buhari, we paid our ransom. Therefore, for bandits to be asking us for ransom means that his government has failed. Nepotism has reflected in the treatment of bandits in the north and agitators in the south such that it is argued by Okoli et al that it is not good to use carrot and stick policy for bandits in the north and use brutal force against agitators in the south (Okoli et al, 2021, p. 5). All too often, corruption, lack of political will and negligence to effectively investigate and prosecute violent crimes also create a climate that is conducive to a cycle of violence since there is no evidence of willingness on the part of the state to take effective action to sanction such crimes (Olaniyan, 2021, p. 18).

Violence, abductions and corruption intersect where law enforcement agencies are corrupt and, in most cases, complicit in gross violations of human rights. In fact, government's apparent unwillingness to design and implement credible policies to prevent and combat violence and crimes and to promote the rule of law is the cause of insecurity in Nigeria. Furthermore, the people no longer trust their government. Government's inability to crush security threats despite prophesying to do so, has fuelled suspicion in several quarters that either people in government or their allies are behind the carnage or as stated many years ago by late Military Head of State, General Sanni Abacha, that whenever crisis, revolt, insurrection or campaign lasts beyond 48 hours, government is behind it (Eze, 2021, p. 18). Both the Federal and State governments spend over \$670 million (N242 billion) yearly as 'security votes' but the President and the 36 Governors have rebuffed attempts by civil society groups seeking information on how the funds are spent and to prevent misuse and embezzlement of public funds in the name of security votes (Olaniyan, 2021, p. 18). State governors are given huge allocations in security votes meanwhile the entire country is sinking under the weight of criminal activities. Everyday diehard fundamentalists and insurgents run riot maiming, killing, kidnapping Nigerians and destroying their properties and grabbing their ancestral lands. But instead of dealing decisively with them when arrested, they are granted amnesty under the guise of reforming them. Compensating criminals and abandoning victims is sabotaging the peace of the country (Ikhioya, 2021, p. 18).

Conclusion

It was Berliner and Biddle (1995, p. xii), in their famous work, that stated that it is never easy to accuse powerful people of deceit especially when in government. The thrust of this paper is actually to demonstrate that there was deceit behind every policy direction of the Buhari administration especially with its relationship with insurgency and the fight against it in Nigeria from 2015 to 2023. The deceit is clear from his 'body language' and utterances before his assumption of office and while in power, the utterances of his Ministers and members of his political party. Whether this paper has been able to prove the deceit is beside the issue. The fact on ground does not exonerate the administration from complicity of involvement in insurgency neither can there be a court where the allegation can be made out to the hilt.

A people elect a government it deserves. Nigerians elected the Buhari administration through the ballot. It is their responsibility to change it in the next circle of election but before the time comes, the allegation that it is neck-deep in sponsorship of insurgency in the country remains standing. It would be well after the regime that evidence may come to disprove the allegation because in democracy, a leader is made, not born. He is expected to justify his leadership by his personal attributes and by his works for the good of the people. A leader is not born and it is not the responsibility of the people to justify their worthiness to follow a leader by the extremity of their obedience and subservience (Okpadokun, 2021).

Recommendation

- A nation of sheep begets a government of wolves. The people should vote out the Buhari administration in 2023.
- Current legal development should witness a rise in legal regimes aimed at punishing and stemming payment of ransom.
- Ransom should be diverted into the purchase of arms and security gadgets and prompt payment of salaries while the State deploys more security agents to vulnerable areas like schools, markets and religious centre.
- Intensification of citizen's intelligence gathering and cordial relationship between them and security agencies should be encouraged while modern technological devices to track down terrorists and common criminals ought to be provided to the agencies which should prosecute culprits to the hilt to deter others.
- Fight and campaign against drug should be intensified.
- Ministerial utterances should be temperate.

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