

**The
Journal**
...reason, truth and equity

THE POLITICS OF SECURITY

THE FIRE OF THE FORCE

MAILAFIA: BREWING CONSPIRACY

VOL 2 16 -22 AUGUST 2020



**HOW TO DEFEAT
BOKO HARAM**

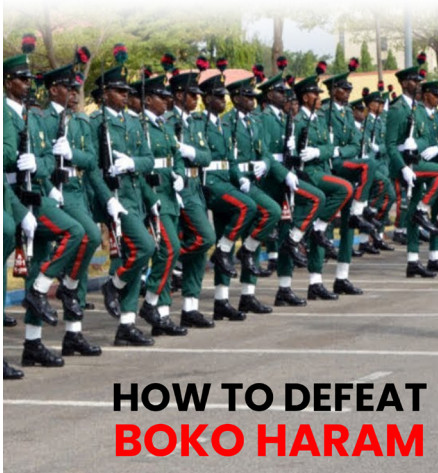
CONTENTS



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THE POLITICS OF SECURITY
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- 3. Stories Around the Globe
- 3. NIGERIA
- 4. AFRICA
- 5. THE REST OF THE WORLD

From the Editor-in-Chief

6. The Politics of Security: Between Military Ethics and Political Interests

Cover Story

- 9. How to Defeat Boko Haram
- 13. The Fire in the Force
- 16. Wildfires, Clashes and Scares
- 18. The 15 References to 'Security' in the 1999 Constitution of NIGERIA
- 23. Distrust and Apathy in the Nigerian Police

- 26. Send Me a Signal: Indifference, Conscience and Memory
- 28. Mailafia: Brewing Conspiracy

Politics

- 30. Edo Politics: Ize Iyamu Vs Obaseki

Economy

- 33. Repositioning WTO: Rooting for Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala
- 35. The ECO: Battle for the Soul of West Africa

Culture and Lifestyle

- 37. Big Brother Naija Lockdown ...The Story so Far
- 39. Elevator Babay Attempts to Mirror Nigeria's Systemic Problems, But How Well is it Done?
- 41. Trawling Youtube

Education

- 44. Covid 19: Securing the Future

Urban Development

- 46. Decluttering Nigerian Cities

Health

- 48. The Hydroxychloroquine Conundrum

International Affairs

- 51. Lebanon: A State on the Brink of Failure

Diaspora Stories

- 52. Education, Consciousness and Solidarity

Great People

- 54. Kayode Fayemi: Leadership in Action

HERstory

- 58. Ndidi Nwuneli



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STORIES AROUND THE GLOBE

NIGERIA

NIGERIAN WOMAN BAGS PH.D AT AGE 73

Florence Nwando, a 73-year-old Nigerian woman, earned her Ph.D. in Communication, Culture, and Media Studies at Howard University, USA. This achievement is a realisation of her quest for self-fulfillment and her late father's wish. Her dissertation, titled 'Igbo Collective Memory of the Nigerian- Biafra War of (1967-1970): Reclaiming Forgotten Women's Voices and Building Peace through a Gendered Lens', is a reflection of Igbo women in general, who like herself, witnessed and survived the war. She revealed that in spite of the numerous challenges she faced and her depression over the loss of both parents during the civil war, she had to forge ahead and work towards making her dreams come true.

UNIVERSITY PARTNERS WITH OIL FIRM ON TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

Professor Akpofure Rim-Rukeh, the Vice-Chancellor of The Federal University of Petroleum Resources, Effurun, Delta

State, has disclosed the intent of its partnership with Onose Deep Oil & Gas. The students are expected to gain knowledge and relevant practical skills during their 4-year programme in the university so as to increase value chain in the industry and achieve sustainable growth academically. Onose Deep Oil & Gas (ODGL) believes that opportunities in the area of crude oil refining technology transfer should be created for youths in Nigeria, as this also corroborates with the vision of The Federal University of Petroleum Resources, Effurun (FUPRE) for her students.

ONDO STATE GOVERNMENT DISTRIBUTES PPE TO HEALTH FACILITIES

In line with the vision of maintaining the protection and safety of health personnel involved in the fight against the Corona virus, the Ondo State government has given out Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to health facilities in the state, as part of its humanitarian responsive obligation to the health workers of the various 18 local government areas in the state against COVID-19.

The rapid increase in the COVID-19 cases that swept across the state, which led to public dissatisfaction and complaints by the health workers on the non-availability of PPE, has made the government rise to action by taking steps and putting in place certain measures to ensure the safety of the state's health workers.

AIR FORCE FACILITIES UNDERGO A TOUCH-UP FOR THE ARRIVAL OF SUPER TUCANO AIRCRAFT

The full fleet of A-29 Super Tucano aircraft is presently under production at the Jacksonville Facility in Florida by SNC & Embraer and is specially designed and built for a mission in Nigeria.

The A-29 Super Tucano is said to be a good and cost efficient solution for basic and advanced flight and combat training, surveillance, counter insurgency, irregular warfare scene, amongst others. The Nigerian Air Force A-29 aircraft will begin mission on modification and final testing in Colorado soon as delivery is scheduled for 2021.

US PRESIDENT FULFILLS PROMISE TO NIGERIA

Mary Bert Leonard, US Ambassador to Nigeria, handed over 200 ventilators to Dr. Osagie Ehanire, Nigerian Minister of Health, at the Abuja Premier Medical Warehouse, in fulfillment of the promise made by the US President, President Donald Trump to President Muhammadu Buhari. The 200 ventilators delivered to Nigeria came as a result of the telephone conversation between President Buhari and President Trump, which centered on the efforts put in place by the Nigerian government to fight COVID-19 Pandemic.

VISA RESTRICTIONS MAY BE IMPOSED ON AMERICANS AND OTHERS - NIGERIAN IMMIGRATION

Mohammed Babandede, Comptroller-General of the Nigerian Immigration Service, has revealed the specifications of the new visa policy released at the beginning of the year. The new visa policy is said to be response to same measures and visa policy restrictions put in place by other

countries on the Nigerian citizens. The Comptroller-General made known the right and control Nigeria has over who enters its territory or not. He said that the visa restriction is not a ban for people going for short visits, but it is a ban for those who want to take residency.

UNILAG GOVERNING COUNCIL SACKS VICE-CHANCELLOR

Professor Toyin Ogundipe, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Lagos (Unilag), has been sacked by the institution's governing council chaired by its Pro-Chancellor and Chairman, Dr. Wale Babalakin, after a meeting held at the National Universities Commission (NUC) in Abuja. The Federal Ministry of Education declared that the University Council has the power to hire and fire, even though due process must be followed.

It was reported that seven members of the governing council voted out Professor Ogundipe while four others voted against his removal. However, Dr. Dele Ashiru, Chairman of the Academic Staff Union of Universities, Unilag Chapter, in his statement, accused Babalakin of being behind the whole event.

AFRICA

ALGERIAN JOURNALIST SENTENCED TO PRISON

Khaled Daren, an Algerian freelance journalist and local correspondent for a French Media channel, TV5 Monde & Reports Without Borders (RWB), has been sentenced to 3 years imprisonment, having been accused of stirring an unarmed group and sabotaging the integrity of the nation's territory. However, this verdict has increased Khaled Daren's image among the people, as he has become a symbol of the freedom of speech and of the press in the country.

PROTEST AGAINST PRESIDENT KEITA AS MALIANS HIT THE STREET

Mali has witnessed a state of unrest as its citizens take to the street. The protest, led by Imam Mahmoud Dicko of the Rally of Patriotic Force, was against president Keita, who has been in power since the year 2013. The violent protest, which has degenerated in three days of social unrest, has claimed eleven lives. However, the effort and measures of the Economic Community of West

African States, ECOWAS, to put in place measures to stop the protest has so far proved abortive.

THE REST OF THE WORLD

BELARUS PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE ACCEPTS DEFEAT

Svetlana Tikhanovskaya, Belarus's presidential opposition candidate, has urged the citizens of Belarus to stop their protest as she neither wants violence nor the spill of blood. She asked citizens to accept President Lukashenko as the President.

The protest broke out after the announcement of the election's result which is believed to have been rigged. The results gave 80 percent of the votes to President Alexander Lukashenko and 9.9 percent to Ms. Svetlana.

CHINA EASES TRAVEL ENTRY RESTRICTIONS

China has finally eased its entry restrictions for travelers from 36 European countries all over the globe. Germany, France, UK, among many others, are countries that would be allowed entry without a need for invitation letters. However, anyone coming into the country will

undergo the COVID-19 tests and observe a 14-day quarantine in order to ensure the continual maintenance of safety of the country. China has been able to put COVID-19 under control after being greatly dealt with by the virus late last year.

JOE BIDEN APPOINTS RUNNING MATE

Joe Biden, the US Democratic Party Presidential candidate, has picked Senator Kamala Harris, a District Attorney-General for San Francisco and California, as his running mate in the forthcoming US Presidential elections in November. Kamala Harris, a California Democrat, is an American born to immigrant parents; a Jamaican born father and an Indian born mother, in Oakland, California. Ms. Harris, in her statement to the Washington Post in 2019, said that politicians should not have to fit into compartments because of their colour or background.

CANADIANS EXPRESS WORRY OVER AMERICAN VISITORS IN THEIR COUNTRY

The increasing spread of the deadly Corona virus in the US is causing much anxiety among Canadians. They fear that an increased influx of Americans into their country could bring the deadly disease to cities around the Canadian border. A great number of Canadians still want the border shut, to ensure maximum safety.

CHINA LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN AGAINST FOOD WASTE

Mr. Xi Jinping, President of China, has unveiled drastic measures to forestall food insecurity in China. The Chinese government noted that the degree at which the citizens waste food was shocking. The effect of COVID-19 and the mass flooding across Southern China has also ruined tons of produce and destroyed farms, which has led to government intervention on food wastage. It is said that the amount of food put to waste in China is enough to feed about 30 to 50 million people in a year.

As a response to this concern, the Wuhan Catering Industry Association urged restaurants to limit the number of dishes served to diners.

RECESSION HITS UK FIRST TIME IN 11 YEARS

The effect of the COVID-19 pandemic that hit the world at the beginning of the first quarter of the year has led to a massive decline in UK economy. It is said to have had a 20.4 percent decline between the first and second quarter of the year. The lockdown measures put in place, which restricted the free movements of citizens and the closure of stores and other businesses, plunged the economy into recession. However, the economy snapped back in June, as government eased restrictions on movement. Rishi Sunak, Chancellor of the Exchequer, announced that in the coming months, the economic decline would lead to more job losses, but assured the people that the economy will be resuscitated.

FLORIDA SHERIFF ORDERS EMPLOYEES TO DISCONTINUE THE USE OF FACEMASK

Sheriff Billy Woods, Marion County Sheriff in Florida, US, sent mails to his deputies ordering them not to use face masks in the office while on duty or whenever they are to come to his office. He gave the order on the basis of proper identification of individuals walking into his office and to ensure clear communication among the deputies.



THE POLITICS OF SECURITY: BETWEEN MILITARY ETHICS AND POLITICAL INTERESTS



The military is a thing and place of pride – a national pride! Watching many military parades, the men in starch-embalmed uniforms often commands from the on-looking public a temptation to join the ranks of the marching soldiers. The army, and indeed the entire military of Nigeria, have been at such commanding heights of national pride. From Independence Day parades and the Armed Forces Remembrance Day to many other ceremonial military outings of national grace, the Nigerian military has always commanded the admiration of the Nigerian populace, and of the citizens and leadership of other neighbouring and distant African countries. Surely, the West African region will not forget in a hurry the exploits of the Nigerian military in ending the wars in Sierra Leone and Liberia, and restoring peace, law and order to these countries. As a member of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the then Organisation for African Unity (OAU), Nigeria and its military forces were the beautiful bride of peacekeeping and the dream and symbol of a secure region and continent.

Essentially, what distinguishes the military from most other professions is the manner in which it conducts, and is expected to conduct, itself. This is often based on well written codes of conduct which members of the various services must strictly adhere to in order to achieve the level of discipline, focus and respect that society looks up to it for. Apart from the government which directly funds the military, these expectations cut across the circles of tax payers who like to see the military accountable and justify the degree of spending that goes into funding it. There is yet the general citizenry who want, at all times, to feel a sense of security from any external threats against their own homeland. The latter group further consists of the civil society, including human rights activists who think it is within their own purview to demand accountability from both government and the military from time to time. Beyond developing the mindset of war and preparing for it, the military also updates and upgrades its own service by conducting self-assessments on itself, and by analysing the trends of normative behaviour in local, national, and global military affairs and military history.

Besides working hard to secure the country from external aggressions, the Nigeria military, for instance, bears other responsibilities within the context of international relations, which include peacekeeping. Nigeria first volunteered UN peacekeepers to Congo (ONUC) in the period between 1960 and 1964. Ever since, Nigeria has participated actively in United Nations peacekeeping missions. In this role, she has also deployed military contingents, unarmed military observers, military staff officers, police units, police advisers and civilian experts to more than 25 UN missions. According to a peacekeeping report, Nigeria is currently one of the largest UN contributing countries with military and civilian personnel deployed in 10 UN peacekeeping operations and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

Also, Nigeria has played essential roles in other non-

UN missions in Africa. As a dominant power in West Africa, she has been the main provider of military and other resources for ECOWAS peace operations to the tune of US\$8 billion (about 3 trillion naira by today's exchange rates) in its various missions in Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, and Sierra Leone. During the peak of the Liberian and Sierra Leonean civil wars in the 1990s, Nigeria provided over 70% of ECOMOG's military and civilian personnel, as well as logistical support.

However, with contemporary Nigeria, the events of the times tend to shape a new direction of public thinking. More than at any other time, there seems to be growing efforts to politicise the nation's military as issues of national security have already been. Different social, ethnic and political groups appear to be convincing themselves that they have a say in what should happen in the Nigerian military and how issues around the insecurity in the country should pan out. Worthy of a commentary is that, the agitations across the Nigerian sociopolitical and 'ethnic' landscapes for the removal of the Service Chiefs, are well beyond the sphere of influence of any political, social or cultural group. It seems the Nigerian civilian 'volunteers', in the forms of civil rights activists, political analysts and social commentators are only doing so much to influence issues that are, for the most part, constitutionally defined and in many cases within the prerogative of presidential powers.

People who think this is a matter of fiat or political whims, as it sometimes was with a military government, should have a rethink in order to gain clearer, balanced and more objective perspectives of the issues. In Nigeria's earlier years when the country had a lesser population and minimal instances of conflicts to deal with, the country had more than enough to spend on its military. Indeed, the country was not so rich, but she prosecuted and won the Civil War to keep Nigeria together by spending money. The defense budget rose from 1.10% of the GDP in 1966 just before the war, to 5.1% of the GDP in 1967 when the war started, and reached 10.32% of the GDP in 1969 when the war had to be decisively won. By January 1970, the rebel troops knew that it was game over. The contrast is that from 2009 when the war against insurgency assumed worrying dimensions till the present day in the year 2020, Nigeria's Defense

budget has consistently remained below 0.6% of the national GDP. In fact, from 2012 to 2017, funding of the Nigerian military was on a steady decline.

The tragedy of our condition is that most Nigerians, including many of the leaders, know that there are security issues in the northeast and the northwest, but they do not know that the country is at war. At the risk of being so simplistic, it has to be reiterated that Nigeria is in a state of war! And we cannot afford to play politics with our military.

The crisis of an underfunded military significantly explains the inadequate capacity to effectively prosecute and win the war in the northeast and the northwest. The implications of the funding problem include the sheer lack of human numbers to over-run and crush the insurgents, the inadequacy of weaponry and equipment, the inadequacy of intelligence, and the inadequacy of technology to drive the processes. Against this backdrop, it is laudable that the Nigerian military has worked against many odds in helping the overwhelming majority of Nigerians to go to bed every night with their eyes shut. The irony is that every good thing that is steady becomes 'commonised.' Nigerians in the theatre of war in the Northeast and the Northwest can relate with the import of this analogy, just like Nigerians of the Biafran fame! It cannot be gainsaid therefore that the nation should be grateful to the military for the much that has been achieved, while we urge and encourage them to do much more and complete the job at hand.

The constant inability of the military's and government's critics to see and understand the dimensions at play often gives the impression of deliberate and serious attempts to politicise the issues of security. A regular strategy of distraction has been the recurring attacks on the Service Chiefs. While it is true that, in the past, most of the Service Chiefs had served only between one to three years, the country has also had cases when Service Chiefs served for more than these periods of time. Chief of Naval Staff, Commodore A.R. Kennedy, served a six-year tenure that spanned from 1958 to 1964. Vice Commodore J.E.A. Wey was Chief of Naval Staff for nine years, from 1964 and through the Civil War years to 1973. Vice Admiral M.A. Adelanwa served as CNS for


five years between 1975 and 1980. Generals David Ejor, T.Y. Danjuma and Sani Abacha were in office as Army Chiefs for between four to five years. Appointments to the offices of service chiefs, and the tenures thereof, have always been a presidential prerogative, and so it has remained in the Nigerian Constitution.

Efforts by ethnic and other interest groups to interfere in pure military business has also reflected in the recent court martial of the erstwhile General Officer Commanding 8 Division, Sokoto, and the deployment of the erstwhile Theatre Commander of Operation Lafiya Dole. The cases against them bordered on the transgression of critical civil and military codes. It is a breach of military ethos, for example, for any officer in the theatre of war to produce and circulate to the public a video of happening in the theatre, not to talk of the commander being the culprit. The military should be spared the malaise of ethnic organizations and their spokespersons seizing the media to expressing support and solidarity for their kith and kin in the face of military discipline. In spite of its own challenges and shortcomings, the Nigerian military remains the most discipline public institution in the country today, and the nation should do all it takes not to drag the military back into politics.

The President and military high command owe the nation the duty to keep focused rather than fall into the veiled trappings of politically motivated 'suggestions' and 'counsels' from social, ethnic and political interest groups who cross the boundaries of engagement to

seek to politicize the military. The military particularly must keep strictly to its professional ethos and restrain itself from being unduly tolerant to political considerations. Military operations, for example, don't have to be announced in the media before or just after commencement; catching the enemies unawares and crushing them should not be sacrificed for the convenience of the public knowing what missions the military is about to embark upon.

Yet, we cannot foreclose the point that the civil populace, as of right, should continue to demand for and insist on good governance and adequate security for every Nigerian everywhere, and to call the military to order in instances of abuse. But, while rights and accountability are being demanded of the President and the military, genuine stakeholders in the Nigerian nation should understand and keep within the limits of constructive engagement.



Dr Udu Yakubu

HOW TO DEFEAT **BOKO HARAM**



The military of any nation is not a sheer ‘outpost’ for men in uniforms looking out for distress situations to intervene in. As a composite architecture of the armed forces and all its constituting elements, the military is indeed a strategic national guardian entrusted with security matters connected with lives and property within the geographic space of a country. The Nigerian Constitution, for instance, adequately provides that ‘there shall be an Armed Force for the Federation, which shall consist of an Army, a Navy, an Air Force, and such other branches of the Armed Forces of the Federation as may be established by an Act of the National Assembly.’ Also, the Federation shall, subject to an Act of the National Assembly made in that behalf, equip and maintain the Armed Forces as may be considered adequate and effective for the purpose of defending Nigeria from external aggression; maintaining its territorial integrity and securing its borders from violation on land, sea, or air, and suppressing insurrection and acting in aid of civil authorities to restore order when called upon to do so, among other provisions.’ Indeed, the military enjoys such special privileges as the Nigerian Constitution adequately provides for, and it is so strategically significant in the scheme of things

The Nigerian military did live up to this expectation when, for the first time, it had to deal with a civil war

situation, which had lasted between 1967 and 1970. Already a crisis-torn country by 1967, on account of political tensions that preceded the time, the nation had fallen into a war when the Eastern part decided to break off from the rest of the Federation. On May 28 of that same year, the Head of State, General Yakubu Gowon, had issued a decree to further divide the four regions into twelve states, with three of them from the Eastern Region, and each to be autonomous and responsible for its own law and order. But, two days after the decree, the Eastern Region, led by its Military Governor, Colonel Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu, seceded by pronouncing itself the Republic of Biafra. Consequently, a war broke out over a wide area. But it was not for so long before federal troops overran and captured Enugu, capital of the then Eastern Region. By late 1969, federal troops appeared to have crushed the rebellion, though ethnic antagonisms remained to certain degrees.

Prosecuting the war was not without huge and frightening challenges to the Federal Government led by General Gowon. The United States of America, for instance, had barred the shipment of arms to Nigeria. Also, Britain had refused to sell required essential arms to the Federal Government. Nigeria needed arms badly to neutralise the rebels. To mitigate these critical obstacles, the Federal Government requested assistance from the

then Soviet Union. Sooner than later, its forces were reinforced by the arrival of six Czech L-26 jet planes and six outmoded MIG fighters, six MIG trainers, military supplies, and mechanics. On its part, Biafran fighters had reportedly also acquired from the Portuguese two obsolete B-26 bombers and a few helicopters. It was estimated that the Civil War had cost both sides \$140 million for the purchase of arms.

Nigeria had gone into the Civil War in 1967 with just about 5000 soldiers in its army. However, by the time the war was ending, Nigeria had well over 250,000 men in its national army, all within the space of 30 months of prosecuting a civil war for which it had no previous experience. The government embarked on mass recruitment into the military, and simply overwhelmed Biafra by the sheer number of soldiers who were in the theatre of war. There were federal boots in every available space within recovered territories.

The significant points that must be made and firmly established is that, in going to war, a nation's military requires both strategic and programmatic approaches. When the United States and Britain turned their backs on Nigeria, the Federal Government wasted no time in turning to Russia. The procurement of arms did not require any sentiments towards the so-called traditional Western allies, and government quickly showed itself capable of doing business anywhere in the world.

Nigeria's situation today is so similar to the Civil War experience, and she need waste no more time whatever in waiting for America, Britain, or any other country for that matter. She should actively explore and engage other options in terms of arms procurement. China and Russia have been more dependable allies in several contexts, and with less arrogance and strings. Nigeria should begin to actively play the game of a well articulated national self interest at this time. Beyond arms procurement, these countries also have the technological capabilities to significantly aid the task and processes of finishing the war, and it is time to begin to look in their direction.

In pushing hard against the current insurgency and decimating it, Nigeria needs to inundate her space with a near-ubiquitous military presence to make the needful statement against the Boko Haram fighters. Boots on the ground! Boots everywhere! This is what Nigeria needs now in every contested territory in the Northeast, the Northwest, and elsewhere.

In addition to the need for arms which can be quickly fixed through a pragmatic approach, the war against insurgency has been prolonged by the huge gaps in human power to effectively crush the insurgents. This explains why, for instance, the troops of the Nigerian Army always move on after conquering and recovering territories from the hold of the terrorists. In moving to conquer the next town or community, or in chasing after the terrorists, there has often been security gaps in the towns just recovered, and the insurgents keep finding ways of making the most out of the gaps. That was what happened in the recent case of the Boko Haram attack on Governor Babagana Zulum of Borno State. It is in this critical sense that Nigeria really needs boots and battalions everywhere in and around the theatres of war!

Currently, the Nigerian Army has a strength of about 124,000 soldiers and officers in active service, and is currently engaged in one form of intervention or the other in 30 of the 36 states of the federation. The reality of the current Nigerian experience is that the entire Nigerian military does not have the numerical strength, the human power required to effectively remain engaged in various parts of the country and at the same time effectively execute the war in the Northeast and Northwest and totally crush Boko Haram.

Conversely, the Boko Haram, has maintained an adequacy of number of fighters to engage the war. Boko Haram seems to be making more concerted efforts at reinforcing its numbers through steady recruitment of footmen and fighters in ways that an organised guerrilla would do.

For Nigeria, there should be a timeline for increasing the number of recruits into her military to 400,000 well trained active personnel within the next six to nine months. The numerical strength of the Nigerian Armed Forces should be prioritised with the objective of having a dominating presence in every local government in the entire Northeast and in parts of the Northwest and North-central. Nigeria is in a state of war. A distinctively superior military power and decisiveness of strategy will be needed to completely overwhelm and decimate the insurgency at once. Such overwhelming presence of military forces on the Nigerian landscape would mean everything for the magnitude of decimation required to completely wipe out Boko Haram from Nigeria. The military has to inundate and overwhelm the entire

regions of conflict within the country.

Since the Civil War experience, Nigeria has been a major actor in both regional and continental contexts of warfare. Nigeria is also a major provider of fighting troops to the United Nations. The country has, at different times, been in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Somalia, Mali, among other countries on the African continent, on peacekeeping missions. To these extents, with the current situation back at home with the Boko Haram, it is expected that the country will be in a strategically comfortable place to prosecute an outright extermination of the Boko Haram insurgents.

Although it had established a presence between the late 1990s and early 2000s, Boko Haram became a prominent terrorist group in the northeast of Nigeria just a little over ten years ago. A decade down the road of actively engaging this threat to Nigeria's sovereignty, there are pertinent questions that continue to beg for answers. Why is it taking the military so long to completely wipe out the bagas? The lingering combat against Boko Haram has fractured into different theatres of distractions for the military. There are now associated crimes such as banditry, kidnapping and calculated arsons sometimes deemed to be coloured by political agendas.

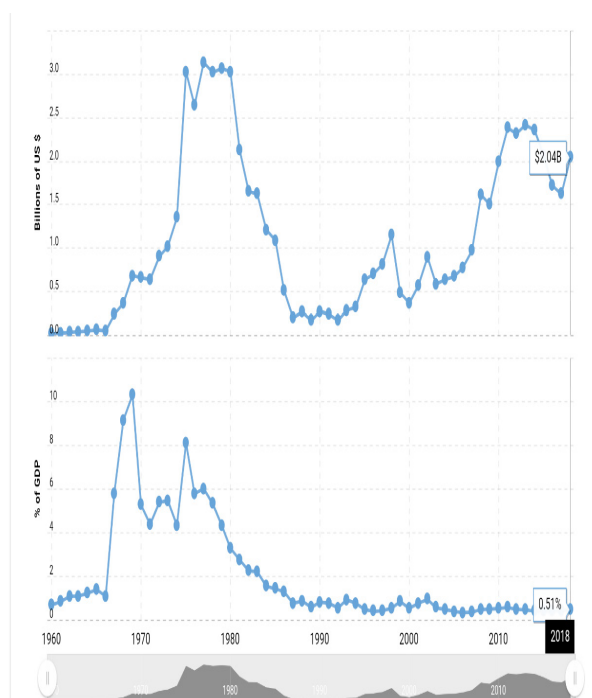
In this face of this lingering reality, questions that must be promptly asked and answered are: Who are the terrorists and who are their sponsors? What are the logistics of their arming and organising? What are the routes through which their funding is channeled? How are the monies being passed? Do parts of the monies make it through the banking system? Are there internal collaborators in the Nigerian military, the financial institutions, and political circles? The intelligence agencies in the country, including those within the military should be able to provide answers to these questions. After over ten years of fighting Boko Haram, the Federal Government cannot say it does not know.

To deal with many of these fundamental issues, the Nigerian military has before it the critical task of reviewing and re-engaging its own strengths and strategies. Military strategy, by best practice, encompasses the composite actions of reducing an adversary's physical capacity and willingness to fight, and continuing to do so until one's intentions are satisfactorily accomplished. This may be done either in wartime or in the time of peace. Military strategy also encompasses the use of direct and/or indirect forces as a threat. The ends or objectives, courses

of action, resources, and risk are properly calculated to achieve the targeted results of the military forces.

Critical to effectively prosecuting the war at hand is the issue of funding for the military. Sadly, the first trench of funding for the Nigerian military in the 2020 national budget was only made available to the Armed Forces in July 2020. Without doubt, such cannot be the story of a nation that is at war and badly needs to crush the insurgents. Investing in infrastructure development when adequate national security is lacking, is futile venture in all ramifications.

Fighting a counter-insurgency war will require a lot of resolve by the government to see the battle to a clear and logical conclusion. This resolve must show in how much the country is ready to commit to the fight in terms of funding. It is only with funding that the numerical strength of the military, and its weaponry, can be increased to the required levels. But the current financial state of the Nigerian military does not indicate the expected level of readiness. The nation's military spending and defense budget from 2012 to 2017 was on a steady decline. If Nigeria does not multiply her human power and firepower, she would continue to live with insurgency, banditry and sooner or later contend with more insurgencies from other parts of the country and the real threat of extinction.



Nigeria's Defense budget and military spending (Source: MacroTrends)



These statistics are a significant pointer to how Nigeria stands in terms of financial readiness to tackle its security challenges. Yet, in terms of weaponry and logistics, sophistication of their ammunition, the buffalo trucks and unmanned air vehicles (UAVs), as well as the various anti-aircraft weapons being deployed by the Boko Haram, attest to its firepower and level of preparedness. How did Boko Haram achieve these levels of equipping? Apparently, the links between Boko Haram and ISIS have become stronger in recent times, and this has significantly informed the degree of funding, strategising and organising by the terrorists.

Invariably, Nigerians should know that the nation is at war not just against some local miscreants-turned-insurgents, but also against some very strong foreign forces who want to pull down the country. Worse still, supposedly traditional allies – the United States, Britain, and France – have amply demonstrated that they would rather have Nigeria remain in a perpetual state of conflict than even sell arms to her to finish the bagas. Remember that the United States, or her experts, had predicted years back that Nigeria would disintegrate in 2015. There are foreign powers that continue to dread the possibility of Nigeria actualising what President Nnamdi Azikiwe had described as her ‘manifest destiny’ of becoming a

global black power.

Nigeria should therefore really take her fate in her hands. This begins with the President and Commander-in-Chief. President Muhammadu Buhari who has to give instructions and orders regarding building up the Armed Forces into an intensely dominating, highly mobile attacking force that will completely reclaim the sovereignty of Nigeria wherever it is being contested, and make the country a safe haven for every citizen. The President should tell the nation that Nigeria is at war, and where necessary, assume such emergency powers that will allow him to build a military that will completely crush the enemies, shame the detractors, and establish peace and security in every piece of land that is Nigerian.

*Udu Yakubu
Abiodun Bello*

THE FIRE IN THE FORCE



The Nigerian military is ranked 4th in Africa by Global Firepower (GFP), a world military ranking platform. The country has a military human power of 120,000 personnel, which is a total of 0.1% of a population of over two hundred million people. Yet, Nigeria has a population in which 43,000,000 people are generally considered fit for military service, and 3,454,461 reach the age for recruitment into the military on a yearly basis. Against the backdrop of a high rate of attrition in the military – people reaching retirement in their hundreds every year, men and officers being discharged for various statutory issues, men and officers being injured and hospitalised, and people dying while in service to the nation – the numerical strength of the Nigerian military is strong cause for national concern.

Macrotrends reports that the Nigerian military had major declines in budget spending from 2012 to 2017 – 12.39% between 2014 to 2015, 16.57% between 2015 and 2016, and 5.92% between 2016 to 2017. Only in 2018 was there a reversal of the situation by an increase in spending of 0.08% of the GDP. Despite the need to invest fortunes in marshalling the operations of her military in a state of war, Nigeria had actually been on an opposite trajectory for many years. Some analysts attributed the low funding of the military during the military era to the need of dictators to

disempower subordinates in the barracks, trenches and dockyard. On the heels of the 4th Republic, however, the military did not receive much of a huge improvement in funding to critically enhance its welfare, human power and firepower, such that would give the nation the measure of security and peace that she desires..

In its overview of the nation's airpower, Global Firepower states that Nigeria has only eight professional jet fighters, 44 helicopters, and 15 attack helicopters. The World Directory of Modern Military Aircraft however (WDMMA) differs from Global Firepower, stating that the Nigerian Air Force has 132 aircrafts in their varied levelled of readiness. The platform notes that Nigeria had invested more in trainers (40.2%) than in machinery like helicopters (22%), transports (18.2%), jet fighters (15.9%) and special mission (3.7%). The indication is that the Air Force has cause to focus less on special missions and more on equipping trainers on existing and functional machines. The Directory extends the outlook on the levels of readiness of the aircraft. It puts the total Nigeria Air Force crafts at 132, with only 106 of them in best of shape and functionality, while 92 to 99 aircrafts fluctuate between readiness and average maintenance. 66 Nigerian aircrafts are in poor shape and need immediate intervention.

Nigeria, according Military Factory has warfare aircrafts like the Aermachhi MB.339, Aero L-39 Albatros, Airbus Helicopters AS532 and other ranges like Mil Mi-34 (Hermit) and the PAC Super Mushshak were purchased from different countries between 1978 to 1996. However, the Nigerian Air Force has concentrated its human power on providing support (58 units) for members of the Nigerian military on the grounds, and training (53 units) for members and new entrants of the Air service. WDMMA rates the Nigeria Air Force low in the engagement of futuristic research and development (34 Units), and in its capacity to engage in Attacks (21 units). At the 2019 NAF Finance Training Workshop, Air Marshal Sadiq Abubakar, the Chief of Air Staff, told the media that Nigeria recently acquired 22 new combat aircrafts to support the many military operations in the country. He gave a 'pass mark' to the Nigeria Armed Forces in the fight against insurgency despite the strain of being underfunded by the Federal Government.

In a presentation on 'Airpower and the Nigerian Navy', Charles Dokubo, a research professor at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, had advised that 'The manpower requirement of the NAF should be increased and training enhanced. With the concept of joint operations and the engagement of the NAF in national defence, sub-regional activities and internal security duties, the current level will overstretch the present manpower holding. There would be the need for the Federal Government to increase the Ministry of Defence allocation for the NAF to redress these shortcomings. The redressing of these issues would place NAF in a position to effectively and efficiently perform its constitutional roles.'

Dokubo had raised concerns about the need to refurbish radar Alphajets and pleaded against the deployment low capacity jets to do the work of high powered Alphajets. 'Situations where Jets like the MIG-21 are grounded due to lack of available spare parts should be avoided by the purchase of new, efficient and popular aircrafts, while old ones should be remodelled by Nigerian and foreign experts who serve the nation. While the NAF must continue to train its men, it should never relent in collaborating with other members of the Nigerian forces to execute mock land and air operations for effective coordination in present and future wars. While it must be available at all times to push back external aggression, it must be flexible to deploy on the battlefield any needed change of order, while having it easy to move its aircraft

across the length and breadth of the country without any fear of unprecedented aircraft damages.'

The Nigerian Army, known as the 3rd strongest ground force in Africa, has 253 tanks, 1,789 armoured vehicles and 25 self-propelled artillery. The army also has 339 towed artillery and 36 rocket launchers. The Nigerian Army has also been considered a global partner in the United Nations and ECOMOG missions. Its peacekeeping campaigns in West Africa in the 1990s – are in line with its 'big brother' diplomatic role in Africa. It has also participated in Peace Support Operations in Africa, the Middle East and Europe. It is the fifth largest contributor of troops to the United Nations Peace Keeping Operations. Recently, however, the Nigerian government had begun disengaging from some of its foreign military commitments because of the need to give all internal and external threats the needed attention.

But how does the weaponry of the Nigerian Army fare in comparison with many other countries of the world, and more importantly in the context of the nation's war against insurgency, banditry and other conflicts in various parts of the country?

Nextier SPD had noted that the Nigeria military is stretched thin in the war on terror. It compares Nigeria's military human power figures to that of Pakistan, which is four times larger than that of Nigeria and asserts that the current human power is inadequate for the engagement of external aggression in the North East, and internal aggression in other parts of Nigeria.

The conversation on funding for the Nigerian military has always been a constant concern. The IMF and the World Bank recommend that, for nations at peace, about 1.5% of the budget should be spent on the nation's military. Unfortunately, the Nigerian government has spent less than one per cent on a Nigerian military that is prosecuting a war. Underfunding of the Nigerian military has adversely affected the war against the insurgents in the North East. Recently, the Army approved the voluntary retirement of 356 Nigerian soldiers. It willingly released them because it preferred to have fighters who believe in the cause rather than potential saboteurs.

But such development should be place in proper perspective. Many Nigerian soldiers have been on the battlefield without any respite or break. Some have

not been with their families in years and are concerned about the consequences of their perpetual absence from families who are in turn not in the best financial state. The failure to adequately rotate soldiers and officers at the battlefields is largely because there are huge gaps in human numbers. The military people are human beings with flesh and blood, and with families, like everyone else. The willing horse certainly has critical limits. To raise the bar against the fight on Boko Haram, ReliefWeb noted that the government must provide psychological support for the military. Recently, the Chief of Army Staff, Lieutenant General T. Y. Buratai stated that 'new platforms and equipment are being procured to replace old and obsolete variants of APCs, TKs and Artillery Pieces. General Buratai pointed out that 'the Nigerian Army is capable of fulfilling its set objectives and has constantly engaged in training sessions, and an expert audit of its capabilities through protracted land operation.

The Army has the ability to navigate riverine areas, jungles, deserts, and mountain terrains in order to respond to national threats. The army is also not oblivious of the evolving cyber-activities of terror groups, so it has also begun investing in its men to tackle violent non-state actors who have deployed technology to undermine the sovereignty of the state.' While there are no doubts about what the Army has achieved in several regards, including significantly degrading the threat of insurgency, the gap in human numbers remain worrisome. The Army needs to begin a massive voluntary conscription programme that will enable it become a visible domineering force in the theatres of war.

Global Firepower also indicates critical shortfalls of the Nigerian Navy in terms of equipment, especially aircraft carriers, destroyers, and frigates. This is perhaps a reason behind the huge investments on patrols by the Nigerian Navy. Sanjay Badri-Maharaj, an independent defence analyst, explained that Nigeria Navy had been affected by funding due to the fall in oil prices, which had led to the 'chronic serviceability' of its ships. The analyst commended the local content production and maintenance of ships and boats at the Naval dockyard. In 2018, the Nigerian Navy commissioned 16 New Patrol Boats. The analyst observed that the Nigerian Navy is slowly moving into being a viable force capable of performing critical missions in respect of EEZ surveillance and patrol. 'It possesses an adequate fleet of

inshore and riverine patrol craft and its growing refit and overhaul capabilities should prove adequate to the task of maintaining these vessels and augmenting them with new construction.'

In spite of its shortfalls, the Navy has made giant strides in improving the Nigerian water ways. The Nigerian Navy has stalled or destroyed the activities of more than 2,287 illegal maritime operators in the last five years, And has arrested hundreds of suspected smugglers among others. Being the forces saddled with securing the Nigerian waterways, it has not only secured Nigerian waterways but has made possible a safer gulf. The Navy has also helped dislodge maritime threats such as piracy, crude oil theft, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, hostage taking and drug trafficking. The activities of the Nigerian Navy on the internal waterways have saved Nigeria from losing more than 40 billion naira in potential resources.

The Nigerian Navy played a pivotal role in the reducing the success rate of pirate attacks from 72.86% in 2016 to 25% in 2018. Although there is room for improvement, it is clear to the pirates that the Nigerian Navy is a strong and formidable enemy. However, the Nigerian Navy continues to face capability gaps in respect of the number of major surface combatants as well as the weapon systems available to the fleet.

The Nigerian military remains a strong institution and a strong force on the continent, but that is only as far as a nation at peace is concerned. Nigeria is at war on at least two fronts – the Northeast and the Northwest. At this time, the Nigerian military needs a lot more support from the executive and legislative arms of government. The overall indication is that the Nigerian military needs a huge, critical enhancement in terms of unprecedented massive recruitments into the services, crash training of soldiers and ratings, and a massive procurement of arms and ammunitions. With these, the military should overrun the Boko Haram insurgents, bandits, and other troublemakers who are disrupting the peace of Nigeria.

Femi Morgan

WILDFIRES, CLASHES AND SCARES



Insecurity is violence that stems from infrastructural and social inequalities and inequities that births an outburst of countercultural discourses borne of protests within the nation. The oppressive silences that have reached suicidal levels cannot be ignored. The pockets of uncoordinated aspirations and the constant expression of a problematic constitution may have also contributed to structural violence that has led to uprising amongst ethnicities and interests who feel that the best way to gain the attention of the Nigerian government is to deploy guerilla warfare against the resources of the state or against the peace of the state. These are the unmistakable precursors of insecurity: dissatisfaction, oppression, absence of rule of law, misgovernance, among others.

Most profound is Professor Mark Nwagwu's analysis of the state of Nigeria from the perspective of the cells in the human body. The metaphor expresses that Nigeria is an infected body struggling to stay alive, a body that disagrees with how it intends to fight micro bacterial or viral insurgents cannot stand, and cannot live. It will take the concerted efforts of the executive,

the legislature, the judiciary and the Nigerian people to begin to contribute to the wealth and well-being of the country instead of sabotaging it with corrupt practices, ethnic hatred and religious malapropism that induce genocide. The principle of co-habitation and mutual respect must be embraced by all. Justice is an important discourse for nation-building and the large displacement of justice has led many to take laws into their own hands. Pockets of injustices coupled with the large absence of reconciliation will only make manageable quarrels evolve into grave social conditions.

There is also no doubt that leadership, the actions and inactions of leaders have a way of sending the wrong or right signals to aggrieved parties. In Kaduna, allegation between the people of the community on the one hand, and cattle rustlers and land grabbers on the other hand may never end. While the Nigerian government has deployed a military operation to the scene, it is also important that the governor show good faith in managing communication so as not to be seen as biased or a sponsor of one against the other. Kaduna is imploding because of climate concerns, native pride,

and many other political and governance issues.

The culture of distrust rages on in Nigeria—from the expansionist business of bribes and extortion entrenched by a chain of bad eggs within the Nigeria Police to the sensationalism of the media who are eager to break the news even if the news is bound to break the country into two halves. Distrust is fueled by misinformation on one hand, and the truth that the Nigerian state is going through a phase.

While the Buhari administration is trying to purge and destroy the culture of misgovernance, the virus of corruption fights back by subverting best and ethical practices in all spheres of Nigerian life. Therefore, distrust stems from the fact that the average Nigerian is suspicious of not only the government, but of his fellow Nigerian. Nigerians have gone through many years of tyranny with short sprouts of problematic democratic rule. They experience post-traumatic stress on a daily basis. The media has helped to aggravate this post-traumatic stress by bolstering unverified news and articles to the consciousness of powerless Nigerians who continue to distrust their government and its policies.

Some Nigerians believe that the war against insurgency is a business venture being sponsored by government. It is important to note that the war against Boko Haram is not a Shakespearean tragicomedy or an Animal Farm, it is about human lives, the sovereignty of a nation, the peace of a nation, the viability of a nation to attract investors and trade. It is about developing a viable economy for where the human and natural resources of a country can be fully harnessed for the good of all. No government worth its salt will sponsor terror within its territory and stretch itself to support IDP camps instead of widening the pool of efficient tax payers. No military worth its salt will delight in using landmines and grenades to destroy the landmines of its own men and officers. We should be weary of wild tales.

While we expect the military to do more to push back the Boko Haram, we are also curious that the Nigerian Army has not received ample support from the United Nations and our supposedly traditional western allies. In the time of peace in Nigeria, the UN enjoyed the support of the Nigerian army in executing peace operations in Africa, Middle East and in Europe, in fact in 26 countries. What has happened to the values of loyalty and reciprocity from the UN and its allied

forces? Meanwhile Nigeria continues to face threats not only from Boko Haram but also from the Islamic State of West Africa, ISWA, an organization that derives its terror ample support from international terror groups, the Islamic State. Given the fact that the terror networks in the Sahel has been boldened by international terror agencies as well as the porous inter-national borders, the transference of firepower and technical know-how to the terror groups seems more favourable than with Nigeria.

The Buhari government, through Alhaji Lai Mohammed, the information minister recently expressed frustration that Nigeria has not received weapons she has paid for from Western powers and other world powers have refused to sell weapons to Nigeria. Does the rest of the world have any idea that Nigeria is too big and too populated to implode into smithereens where its citizens begin to choke its neighbours as refugees? Is it a welcome agenda of these world powers to have Nigeria divide into bits and pieces that will serve their neo-colonial ideas? These are questions left unanswered.

Nigerians must therefore reach a threshold where it must look after itself, protect and defend all citizens, rehabilitate all Nigerians through the use of good governance and media retooling policies. It must drive a patriotism based on the equality and justice for all. The government has a lot of work to do in this regard, but the citizens also have to come to terms with the evolving Nigeria.

Suleiman Galadima

THE FIFTEEN REFERENCES TO 'SECURITY' IN THE 1999 CONSTITUTION OF NIGERIA

One of my views is that the Constitution did not ask and answer the question what is security in Nigeria in its fifteen (15) mention of security. The Constitution is the source of all laws in Nigeria. I raised this issue in the articles 'the 1999 Constitution, the Political Class and Resolving Security by We the People' and in 'Security is Amorphous in the Constitution'.

I made several claims about 'security' in Nigeria. They were borne out of my research, teaching, interaction and comparison of security inside and outside Nigeria. I have dedicated <http://www.adoyionoja.org> to canvassing issues on security. The issues raised on security are contained in the sub links 'stripping', 'buzzing in town',

'aoviews' and 'adonostra'.

The Nigerian parliament has never made any policy legislation on security stating the philosophy or nature, meaning and purpose of security in Nigeria. I have had this suspicion for almost a decade in my research on security. I had firm confirmation that my suspicion was right when I began teaching 'security' in the graduate programme and in particular on the course 'seminar on national



security policy'. Thus, the three sources of law namely the constitution, parliamentary legislation and military decree did not provide policy direction for 'security' in Nigeria.

My trademark use of quotation marks to designate this security in most of my works draw attention to security's many deficiencies. The principal deficiency is the lack of philosophy or defined nature, meaning and purpose anchored on the law. This lack of philosophy makes it impossible to hold the government to account on its declared security policy by all and sundry. This is unlike the National Security Act of 1947 in the United States and the recent National Security Law in the Peoples' Repub-

lic of China. This deficiency makes drawing up curriculum and investigating and interrogating security in scholarship impossible.

It is also within the policy deficiency that I argued that Nigeria exist to fulfill one of the objectives of the security of the United States and other countries in bilateral and multilateral relations. Bilateral and multilateral security relationships are almost always initiated at the instance of these developed countries with security philosophy. Nigeria has no security philosophy and thus policy. Nigeria is not in the position to initiate any security cooperation.

Arising from the preceding is my view that Nigeria's 'secu-

rity' is an imitation of the outward appearance or the civic side of the United States' security. Nigeria has not bothered to study the history, sociology and politics of the United States' security to enable Nigeria localise, domestic and indigenise her 'security' on the basis of its history, experience and reality (HER). The culmination of this United States history, sociology and politics is the making by the Congress of the National Security Act of 1947. The history of security began with the

pioneers founding Virginia in 1607. The rest, as they say, is history. How is the Nigerian equivalent of history, experience and reality shaping its 'security'?

My consistent reference to etymology or the origin of security as a word; the theories of knowledge weave into the word; the nature, meaning and purpose of security. These are contained in the history, sociology and politics of the United States beginning with the pioneers of 1607 and culminating in the National Security Act of 1947. Can we situate these in the 'security' in Nigeria?

My attempt to draw comparison with countries in the league of Nigeria in order to demonstrate that history,

sociology and politics is driving security in most countries and cultures. I referred to Iran, an ancient civilisation holding the banner for the Shiite, sticking it out against the machination of the United States and Israel since 1979 and desiring nuclear status to assuage its precarious position in the Middle East. It thus provides a voice for Shiite Islam; I mentioned Pakistan since its birth in the turmoil of 1947, the consistency of its rivalry with India, its frontline role in the Cold War, post-Cold War and the war on terror as well as its undeclared nuclear status representing Sunni Islam. There is Israel birthed in 1948, the only democracy in the Middle East, the strongest military power in the area, the number one ally of the United States', surrounded by enemy countries that swore to its obliteration; and pariah state. South Africa before 1994, loathed by its neighbours, haranguing the frontline countries and most other countries on the continent, seeking nuclear weapon as its isolation grew by the day. These countries fall into classes of their own determining their security. Where is Nigeria here?

This profile enabled me to come up with the theory of the three routes to security in my manuscript; Security: a Brief Encounter in Nigeria. They included in this order security route to security, governance route to security and law and order route to security. It is my view that Nigeria is not aware of the import of each of this route let alone try them in this order before settling into that which is arguably the third route.

I use my forest metaphor for security and my tree metaphor for defence. In Nigeria, the two are synonymous and thus used interchangeably. The reason is that Nigeria has yet to imbue philosophy on security. Nigeria is yet to remove itself from the military enabling environment that shaped persons and institutions for decades. To say that security is foremost is to say that it is the end-state of every human endeavour. To say that defence is a tree in the forest is to say that there are other trees in the forest. In fact, the defence tree is the least of the trees in the forest assuming every other tree takes its place in the hierarchies of trees and works satisfactorily. The defence tree is the last tree to be invoked to support the forest assuming all other trees are working. It is to imbue security with philosophy in tandem with Nigeria's history, experience and reality to begin the process of reducing and eliminating the believe that security and defence are synonymous and interchangeable.

I tried to find an interpretation for the reference to se-

curity in the 1999 Constitution. As used in the Constitution – the subject of this piece – security is name and activity. Period! This prompted my use of noun or name and verb or work in describing security as it appeared in the Constitution. It is part of asking the question: what is security? This question refers to the philosophy for security. This question refers to policy legislation that set the tone for every engagement with security. Should security just be name and work description in view of the colossal amount of resources devoted to it? Should security be the name of the executive agencies of military, intelligence and law enforcement? Should security be the work of these agencies? Surely security should mean more than this when examined in comparison with other cultures! Surely security should mean more than this when examined from the fund committed to it!

I wish to draw attention to the dent the funding of this 'security' constitutes to the country's gross domestic product. There are various ways of looking at this 'security' and the immoral resources devoted to this. They include 'security' itself whatever that means to the minders; the military (Nigeria Navy, Nigeria Air force and Nigeria Army), intelligence (Defence Intelligence Agency, National Intelligence Agency and Department of State Services), law enforcement (Nigeria Police, Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corp etc.), the Ministry of Defence, How do we account for the administrative portfolios available to the executives from the President to local government Chairpersons called security vote; the occasional and incidental appropriation when 'security challenges' become overwhelming?

These resources are not accounted for in any way because the conventional wisdom in Nigeria is that resources committed to 'security' cannot be questioned. Yet, this is not supported by the Constitution, other enabling laws and/or policy legislation. Fund for 'security' is dear to the hearts of elected officials of the executives and legislatures and their minions in the appointed and career civil servants cadres that they collectively watched development in the area.

I have developed concepts, tools and theories in the course of my teaching, researching and advocacy on security in Nigeria. Amongst these are History, Experience and Reality (HER), Military, Intelligence and Law Enforcement (MILE), Globalised Western Security Philosophy (GSWP), Studying, Thinking, Observing and Com-

paring (STOC), Follow the Money, to mention a few. These tools enable me make sense of the state of 'security' in Nigeria.

The view prevalent in my writings on 'security' is to refer to 'security' as failed, failing and Unustainable. Since 1999 and especially beginning in 2007, 'security' as I claimed unravelled and has since continued in this trajectory. This is the rationale for labeling 'security' failed, failing. There is a sense in which the failing of 'security' is orchestrated. In its current perception and practice, it makes good sense to the politicians and bureaucrats unwilling to be accountable. 'Security' is one portfolio that offers the chance to be unaccountable. 'Security' in its policy starved prevailing disposition will continue to fail because it is programmed to fail in order to fund its managers. The latter view influences my theory of 'Follow the Money'.

I have made persistent clamour to have the legislatures intervene by investigating and interrogating the failed 'security'. This is based on the assumption that not enough in the way of intervention has come from the legislatures. Most if not all previous interventions were driven by the executives. Unlike the executives, the legislatures are concerned with making/reviewing/updating/amending policies for implementation by the executives. The executives are concerned with the making of policy to a lesser extent and strategy to a greater extent. Their interventions on 'security' was driven by their part of strategy operated on the assumption that they knew this 'security'. Since their assumption failed because 'security' failed and is failing, it is time for the legislatures to think outside the box. Thinking outside the box is taking up the question of what is security, whose security, what is a security issue and how can security be achieved. This is the question that has not been asked and answered on 'security' particularly under the democracy enabling environment since 1999.

The thirteenth point is the need to differentiate 'security' under representative rule enabling environment and 'security' under military rule enabling environment. These two environments differ. Perhaps barring the willful and orchestrated failing of 'security' by entrenched interests, the impervious attention given to enabling environmental factor may also explain the failure and failing of 'security' in Nigeria. Those running this 'security' will do well to remember that Nigerians drove the military out of power in favour of elected rule.

Their reason amongst many was insecurity under military rule. Perhaps it was insecurity as understood under

that enabling environment. Perhaps it was more than just that. In driving away the military, has the present managers of the state conducted baseline survey to determine the security Nigerians voted for when they pushed the military back to the barracks? Of the executives and the legislatures, the latter is better suited to conduct this baseline.

A fair sample of this is self-evident in the way they – legislatures and executives – have handled the issue of their livelihood in the numerous legislations they have passed granting themselves the resources to support the highest standard of livelihood. I had clamoured for the making of policy legislation on security using the concept history, experience and reality (HER) and lately the theory of 'Follow the Money'. The latter back Nigerians overwhelming clamour for something close to the type of livelihood lived by the executives, legislatures and judiciaries legally and illegally since 1999 and in particular since 2015. An examination of the HER and Follow the Money theories will indicate the type of security most Nigerians opted for from 1999 which has been denied them by the insensitivity of their elected officials.

There is the need to underscore the importance of security policy legislation as the framework of every engagement with security in the country. The call for security legislation from the legislatures is because of the silence of the Constitution on security. The lack of policy stating what a security issue is and how security can be achieved consigned everyone into a blind alley. At best, 'security' in Nigeria takes its meaning from the Speech Act metaphor of Ole Weaver. In that sense it is transient. 'Security' in Nigeria is a moving target that cannot be pinned to any point for any length of time. At worst, 'security' takes its meaning from the Constitution of 1999 that implied name and work for the military, intelligence and law enforcement. Either way 'security' failed and is failing. The evidence is on the ground for everyone to see.

Resolving the policy legislation lacuna encumbering 'security' in Nigeria will open opportunity for engagement by all and sundry least of all the development of curriculum and the beginning of the teaching, researching and advocacy on security in tertiary institutions. For now, 'security' is what you make of it on the one hand and which government official or documents including the Constitution you listen to or read on the other hand. A recent instance of security legislation is the national security legislation promulgated by the Peoples' Republic of

China. The resident of Hong Kong will bear witness to its efficacy.

Can we speak of any equivalent security policy legislation in Nigeria? NONE! Can we say the Constitution's citing of security asked and answered this policy question? Let's find out from the Constitution of 1999.

There are fifteen mentions of security in the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria.

The first mention of security is in Part II entitled Powers of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Section 5 subsection 5 read thus: Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (4) of this section, 'the President, in consultation with the National Defence Council, may deploy members of the armed forces of the Federation on a limited combat duty outside Nigeria if he is satisfied that the national security (emphasis mine) is under imminent threat or danger...'

The second mention of security is Chapter II entitled Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy. Section 14 subsection 2b read thus: 'The security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government.'

The third mention of security is Chapter IV entitled Fundamental Rights. Section 39 subsections 3b read thus: 'imposing restrictions upon persons holding office under the Government of the Federation or of a State, members of the armed forces of the Federation or members of the Nigeria Police Force or other Government security services or agencies established by law.

The fourth mention of security is Chapter VI entitled The Executive. Part I Federal Executive. B. Establishment of Certain Federal Executive Bodies. Section 153 subsections 1 read thus: 1k National Security Council.

The fifth mention of security is Section 154 subsection 2 read thus: in exercising his powers to appoint a person as Chairman or member of the Council of State or the National Defence Council or the National Security Council, the President shall not be required to obtain the confirmation of the Senate.

The sixth mention of security is Chapter VIII Federal Capital Territory, Abuja and General Supplementary Provisions. Part II Miscellaneous Provisions. Section 305 subsections 3c read thus: there is actual breakdown of public order and public safety in the Federation or any part thereof to such extent as to require extraordinary

measures to restore peace and security...

The seventh mention of security is Part III Transitional Provisions and Savings. Section 315 subsections 5c read thus: the National Security Agencies Act.

The eighth mention of security is in the Second Schedule, Legislative Powers, Part I: Exclusive Legislative List. It is entitled Item 45: Police and other government security services established by law.

The ninth mention of security is in Third Schedule, C-Federal Character Commission. Item number 8;1a read thus: work out an equitable formula subject to the approval of the National Assembly for the distribution of all cadres of posts in the public service of the Federation and of the States, the armed forces of the Federation, the Nigeria Police Force and other government security agencies. The tenth mention of security is in Third Schedule, Part I, Federal Executive Bodies. It is the column entitled K – National Security Council.

The eleventh mention of security is in the Third Schedule, Part I, Federal Executive Bodies. See 25: The National Security Council shall comprise the following members- The twelfth mention of security is in the Third Schedule, Part I, Federal Executive Bodies. See 25(g): the National Security Adviser.

The thirteenth and fourteenth mentions of security are in the Third Schedule, Part I, Federal Executive Bodies. See 26: The Council shall have power to advise the President on matters relating to public security including matters relating to any organisation or agency established by law for ensuring the security of the Federation.

The fifteenth and final mention of security in the Constitution is in Fifth Schedule Part II entitled Public Officers for the Purposes of Code of conduct. Item number 9: Inspector-General of Police, Deputy Inspector-General of Police and all members of the Nigeria Police Force and other government security agencies established by law.

The fifteen (15) places with the citations of security in the 1999 Constitution should instead read DEFENCE, ARMED FORCES and/or LAW ENFORCEMENT. This will save most Nigerians from the orchestrated ideological push 'security' took in the country since the establishment of representative rule in 1999.

This is clearly because the framers of the Constitution – be it the military government in power and the non-military persons with the military mindset of security - had defence or armed forces and/or law enforcement on their mind and not security wherever they used security. They have no other idea of security beyond its name, work and other descriptive potential as it applied to the arms bearing profession. This is contrary to all that security represented in other cultures from studies. Thus, there is need to imbue and/or construct security out of Nigeria's history, experience and reality (HER) to dissuade from the pain it inflicts on most Nigerians and the benefit it confers on the few political and MILE elites in the present context.

Of the fifteen mentions of security in the 1999 Constitution, one in particular deserved to be singled out. This is because it is arguably the most prominent mention of security in the Constitution considering the caption where it is located. The caption is Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy. Chapter II Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy Section 14 subsections 2b read thus: 'the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government'. The section should instead read 'the defence and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government.'

This is arguably the reading of the minds of the framers of this Constitution. They were military people and non-military people socialised in the military mindset of the period as I noted earlier. The framers of the Constitution had in mind defence and not security and/or their use of security was in the context of noun and verb of defence and law enforcement.

The lack of philosophy to this 'security' undervalued the significance of the heading 'Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy'. What is the State Policy on 'security'?

In the context of noun or name, verb or work, with DESCRIPTION at the back of one's mind and within the caption of SECURITY, DEFENCE and LAW ENFORCEMENT, place the context in which security was used in the fifteen mentions of security in the 1999 Constitution.

In the final analysis, how does anyone hold the government to account on 'security'?

There is difference between security, defence or armed forces and law enforcement. I know law enforcement. Sections 214, 215 and 216 of the Constitution and other laws are the basis for holding the government to account on law enforcement. I know defence or armed forces. Sections 217, 218, 219 and 220 of the Constitution and other laws are the basis for holding the government to account on defence. I don't know 'security'. The Constitution is silent on security. What is the legal and/or policy legislation basis for holding the government to account on 'security'?

My model derives from real data and not abstraction. Far from it that I am a conspiracy theorist that wants to swim against the tide of the supposedly known practice of what is arguably an unknown 'security'. This practice called 'security' requires questioning against extant reality of the last twenty years and against comparative security cultures worldwide.

In the last thirteen years since the enthronement of this Republic in 1999, the combination of this 'security' and defence or military, intelligence and law enforcement has caused and is causing this country significant share of its gross domestic product if not gross national product. We expend so much and gain so little if not nothing of this 'security'. Nigerians need to have this 'security' defined by the legislatures on the basis of Nigeria's history, experience and reality (HER) in order to remove ambiguity and provide the basis of engagement by everyone.

The opening questions that constitute philosophy, policy and strategy of security need to be answered from a constitutional or policy legislation perspectives.

This is the task of Nigeria's legislatures.

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DISTRUST AND APATHY FOR THE NIGERIA POLICE



Security of lives and properties in Nigeria has become a private affair. Many streets and townships are guarded by community-funded security. In many areas located near police stations, cases of armed robbery had been reported and mostly under-reported. There is a palpable loss of confidence in Nigeria Police. Many victims of crime have complained about how police officers extort money when they make formal police reports. During the last nationwide lockdown, many communities in Lagos were thrown into fear when some organized armed bandits wreaked havoc in some homes. Calm was restored when community effort matched by those of the Nigeria Police and some members of the Nigerian army mounted some semblance of fortitude at some flashpoints in Lagos.

From the report titled “Camouflaged Cash: How ‘Security Votes’ Fuel Corruption in Nigeria” documented by Transparency International Defence and Security (TI-DS) and Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC), it is estimated that a sum of N241.8 billion

(\$670 million) is being spent annually by the federal government as ‘security votes’ in a most untransparent manner. In addition, the report revealed that while the 2018 defence budget is estimated to be some \$1.2 billion, more than \$670 million extra was being handed out annually without proper oversight.

Clearly, this explains why many police stations are poorly funded. The patrol vehicles are mostly in a state of disrepair; officers complain about funds for proper investigations of criminal acts. Meanwhile, some police stations are painted and maintained by corporate organizations - a situation which begs the question of what happens to the enormous state security funds.

Public apathy towards Nigeria Police is further boosted by the constant harassment of citizens especially young men by some security personnel purporting to be conducting routine security checks. Many Nigerians have shared stories of how members of the Special Anti-Rob-

bery Squad (SARS) have conducted unlawful arrests, intimidated, extorted and humiliated them on problematic grounds of profiling. Recently, a Nigerian model and *Jenifa's Diary* actor, Odjegba Oghenekaro Kay with the moniker Kay Ojay revealed how he was extorted by men of SARS who were stationed near Ajah, Lekki-Epe Expressway.

According to Ojay, he was on his way to Rave TV for an interview when he was accosted by the policemen who accused him of being in possession of Indian Hemp.

"I did a job for someone's TV that is *Jenifa's Diary*. The character I played was a very intelligent one. So, different media houses have been calling me for interview. Yesterday, I had an appointment with the Rave TV to talk about my journey as an actor and about the role I played in *Jenifa's Diary*."

While waiting at the bus stop for his ride, a SARS officer approached him. After exchanging greetings, he showed the officer his international passport which was the only form of identification that he was carrying.

The officer requested to see the contents of his bag and then his pockets.

"As I dipped my hand in my left pocket, he dipped his hand in my right pocket. To my greatest surprise, he brought out weed. Next, he put his hands on my waist and from my belt, he dragged me like a criminal. I didn't struggle with them and I was trying to explain myself all to no avail," he recounted.

Afterwards, three officers joined them and dragged him into their shuttle van that was parked on the other side of the road. Ojay claimed that he was slapped and dragged like a criminal before his phones were seized from him. He was later allowed to call his friend who paid N20,000 after the initial charge of N100,000 with a threat to hold him in custody for refusal to pay.

"It was a traumatic experience. They took N20,000 from me then another N4,000. Even my show which was scheduled to be live for 1pm, I couldn't meet up with the time, I got there at about 4pm and it was pre-recorded. SARS men stole from me. They stole my money and harassed me, treated me like a criminal," he bemoaned. Meanwhile, this is one of many stories. This manner of unlawful arrests had led to a social media outrage that gave birth to the #EndSARS movement. End Spe-

cial Anti-Robbery Squad (ENDSARS) is the resulting advocacy group opposing the Special Anti-Robbery Squad, demanding for Nigerian government to scrap and end the deployment of Nigeria Police Force Special Anti-Robbery Squad, popularly known as SARS.

A petition signed by 10,195 people was submitted to Nigeria's National Assembly calling for scrapping of SARS. Although there had been talks about Police reform with many non-governmental organizations engaging stakeholders in workshops to build capacity in human relations and public engagement. Some popular entertainers had been victims of police harassment: Lil Kesh, Adekunle Gold, Tjan amongst others. Others added their voice to the EndSARS movement. In a tweet, DJ Spinall spoke on how SARS arrest young people for flimsy reasons.

"Basically, SARS and most policemen instantly assume you are a fraudster if you are pushing a good car. The treatment is usually worse if you got all the boys in the car and hell comes down if you are wearing blings or shades."

Another popular actor known as Ebuka revealed that his near-death experience in the hands of the men of SARS in 2005 in his tweet.

"Can never forget November 2005, driving in Abuja with @sommmonu and @IAMOfem. Stopped by a plainclothes officer with a gun. Chased and actually being shot at for being "suspected armed robbers". Ofem still has the bullet scars on his shoulder," he revealed. Such stories are rife. But does that mean that the Nigeria Police cannot curb crime? Sadly, many police officers are ill-equipped to fight crime. They usually have low-grade if not out-moded weapons to tackle high-calibre weapons that the criminals brandish.

Interestingly, some good stories had been shared about some arrests of criminals by the Rapid Response Squad (RRS) Unit of the Nigeria Police. Formerly called Operation Sweep, it was set up by the Lagos State Police Command to respond speedily to emergencies within the state. Many states in Nigeria have since replicated this state security apparatus to reinforce effective policing. In addition, other community-based security personnel work with them to ensure that criminals and suspects are arrested.

Still, a regional security outfit known as Amotekun stirred arguments and public debates on its legality. Amotekun is an initiative of the six South-West states to establish the Western Nigeria Security Network in 2019 which was frowned upon by Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Abububar Malami. After much media attention on the legality of Amotekun, the governors of the six states were to work out the legal framework for Amotekun in their individual state house of Assembly. Recently, the Ondo State Governor has inaugurated the pioneer officers of Ondo State Security Network Agency Amotekun Corps, joining other states in this new movement towards reinforcing security at the grass-root level.

Aside from the inefficiency of the security agencies, the judiciary has also been blamed for the failure of the criminal justice system thus contributing to the state of impunity. Many criminals are emboldened by the reality that they can get away with any crime.

Unemployment has been listed amongst the leading causes of insecurity. Every year, the labour market is besieged by fresh graduates who are too large for the number of available jobs. Nepotism has shrunk the possibility of qualified candidates securing jobs on merit. Also, there is a growing population of unskilled youths who roam the streets in daytime as beggars and night time as robbers. Also, kidnapping cases had been on the rise with persons related to distinguished Nigerians targeted by kidnappers.

Radical change in value has also been recorded in many households. Nowadays, parents are indifferent to how their children make money. They as well as the society at large celebrate material success and ostentatious lifestyles at the expense of morals. Some youths have reportedly got involved in online fraud through romance and corporate scams.

Nigeria's public image on the world stage has also been marred by the incessant crises in the North-east region where terrorists' attacks abound. Many countries issue travel advisory to their nationals who intend to visit Nigeria, on the lingering security crises in Nigeria which had not been resolved, contrary to report from some government sources.

The path towards changing the narrative for Nigeria's security will pass through the streams of reorientation,

training, mentoring programmes, and international exchange programmes. It would also involve the art of improvisation and management of resources, acquisition of crime-fighting tech-devices among others. Our film industry should be tasked on producing creative content that will change the perspective of the Nigeria Police from being authoritative in their dealings with crime victims to being sensitive to public complaints.

Also, the corruption in the security votes allocation and appropriation must be matched by serious consequences for anyone found guilty. Media trial and social media-led mockery do not suffice for diligent prosecution of corrupt government officials. Without a transparent funding for the Nigeria Police and other military and paramilitary outfits, the talk on reform will remain a 'beer parlor' discussion.

Freda Onaiza
Writer and Media Consultant

SEND ME A SIGNAL INDIFFERENCE, CONSCIENCE AND MEMORY

All of life is one large signal with a thousand hands pointing to different directions. Which one you choose to travel on dictates your life's fortunes. It is all in you, not in your stars, nor in the pointing fingers themselves. They are there for all to make their choices as they may

I see life's signals as akin to biological interactions of competence and response. As Lewis Thomas would tell us, 'It is not birth, marriage, or death, but gastrulation which is truly the most important time in your life'. You start out as a single cell derived from the coupling of a sperm and an egg; this divides into two, then four, then eight and so on, and at a certain stage the emerging cells start moving and rearranging themselves into new positions; some remain on the outside while others move inwards. During this process, which we call gastrulation, a series of interactions begin between cells lying close to one another. As a result, there emerges a single cell lying on the outside which has as all its progeny the human brain. The mere existence of such a cell should be one of the great astonishments of life on earth. In gastrulation certain cells on the outside, the ectoderm, are the only ones that are competent to respond to signals, messages, from other cells that have moved inside. This is the principal event in development to form the central nervous system.

The problem of response to messages controls all of life. Consider the above example of the sperm coupling the egg, which waits for the sperm and will be waiting for a week or even less. You could write a poem on the insidious behaviour of the sperm to keep the egg waiting. But must the sperm appear simply because the egg is waiting? No. The antecedents determine the tenets of morality. The sperm will go to the egg in a voluntary sexual intercourse between married couples. You will tell me that this moral code operated in those days; that, if the boy feels like it and the girl feels like it, they can get together and let the sperm satisfy the urges of the egg and not leave the latter just waiting. Of course, I shall not get into this quagmire set up to annihilate my reasons, one by one. What is important here is the whole question of competence and response: the egg is competent to receive the message from the sperm and will respond,

in time, with a full-grown child. The boy seeing the girl finds her irresistible and nothing would stop him from consummating his sexual urges in one girl or another. He is not thinking about the cellular outcome of the ominous signals he sends to the girl. All he cares about is that message is well received and responded to. Much of human behaviour can be understood and explained by this simple example which has monumental effects we all know. Again, you will say those were the old days. Now with birth control pills and abortion on demand the biological rule of competence and response has been exuberantly modified. All is fair game.

Is it all fair game, what about HIV, what about COVID-19 infections, and other infections, are these fair games too? Is malaria fair game? Of course not, we die from these malicious infections. Malaria infects only the red cell, the erythrocyte and kills them. HIV, Human Immunodeficiency Virus has the nerve to attack the very cells that keep us protected against infections. Our protective cells destroyed immunity is compromised and we cannot deal with the continued infection. In time we die. The corona virus causing the overarching pandemic attaches to receptors in our respiratory tract, finds its way to the lungs and deals a deadly blow of severe pneumonia amongst other ailments. We lose our capacity to breathe and may die.

Of all the billions of cells in the body HIV virus infects only the immune cells. Of all the cells in the body the malaria sporozoite from the biting mosquito dashes quickly for surrounding blood cells. Now we are confronted with a most disastrous pathogen COVID-19 that we transmit one to another all without intending to hurt anyone and without even knowing what we are doing! This seems the worst kind infection we cannot readily get rid of. Yet, all these infections enter into our body because we have waiting receptors to accept them. We are fully competent to receive the message, the signal, the virus itself or the mosquito sporozoite as the case may be. Whether we like it or not our body is waiting to receive these signals. So far, we have treatment for malaria and we can escape death especially as we grow older and build up our immune defences. We can es-

cape the HIV virus completely by the behaviour choices we make. COVID-19 is, as they say, a different kettle of fish! We have no viable treatment for the disease and our behaviour patterns leave us vulnerable to infection in a variety of circumstances.

Our competence to respond to infections, however, is not the most disheartening factor in human life. As Hunter Patch Adams tells it in a 1998 movie eponymously titled 'Patch Adams' 'What's wrong with death, sir? What are we so mortally afraid of? Why can't we treat death with a certain degree of humanity and dignity, and decency, and God forbid, may be even humour. Death is not the enemy gentlemen. If we are going to fight a disease, let's fight one of the most terrible diseases of all, Indifference.'

And the Nobel Laureate, Elie Wiesel would espouse at The Clinton White House in 1999, Indifference – etymologically the word means 'no difference'. A strange and unnatural state in which the lines blur between light and darkness, dusk and dawn, crime and punishment, cruelty and compassion, good and evil.

We seem to be indifferent to our rotting conscience. It does not matter. Is this how we are? In the movie, A Streetcar Named Desire, Blanche du Bois, played by Vivien Leigh, tells us: 'Whoever you are I have always depended on the kindness of strangers'. That was how we lived as fellow Nigerians when I was growing up in Aba in present-day Abia State. If you travelled anywhere and you had nowhere to stay, all you had to do was to ask for the home of so and so whose address was such or such from your hometown and you would be directed there by one kind person or another. When you arrived at his home, you would tell them who you were, and that you had nowhere to spend the night. Invariably you would be accommodated for the next two nights at the least. We were all our brothers' keeper. Have we completely lost our kindness, our sense of belonging, or have we become our own worst enemies? There is armed robbery, there is kidnapping, there is crass terrorism. Have we lost it all? Lord, I pray not.

Signals: In 2009 before we departed for our village, Obetiti, my dear wife Helen and I wanted to visit our son Uzoma. We lost our way and were headed back to Lagos where we were sure we would find accommodation for the night. Soon, however, we happened upon

'Signals', a sign outside an Army Quarters, somewhere after the infamous Mile 2 debacle. There, standing outside the big sign was one man, and I asked him if he would please take us to Alaba Bus stop. He hopped into our car and got off at Alaba bus stop. We could then find our way to where our son lived. The Army and its signals reach one another by their signals and get to work in unity and defeat the enemy. Here we had a stranger helping strangers. You could say we were lucky; we could have been abducted or face some such evil. I ask myself with all its sophisticated signals has the army defeated Boko Haram?

I wrote my last novel I Am Kagara as a civilian uprising bringing to battle one terrorist organisation in the Niger delta against another in North-Eastern Nigeria. The worst in life is not death, it is indifference. Now the Niger Delta has come up for viewing for the amount of money that has ended up in people's pockets, who have no business really with the Delta. Where does our indifference lie? Corruption seems to sleep with us on our beds. Boko Haram crawls all over us and we scratch and scratch and the itch seems more and more itchy. We are deadly indifferent. We must stand up and fight to be humans with a conscience. We must wake up, get out of bed, have a bath and stop scratching. The signals send us their messages and surround us with acrimony: unforgivably, we show we are incompetent to respond.

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MAILAFIA: BREWING CONSPIRACY

Dr. Obadiah Mailafia, former Deputy Governor of Central Bank of Nigeria and a Presidential Aspirant of African Democratic Congress (ADC) was invited recently to give account of his public assertions concerning the Boko Haram insurgency. He claimed in an interview on Nigeria Info Abuja 95.1 FM that he had a chat with two repentant Boko Haram members who told him that: ‘One of the Northern Governors was the commander of Boko Haram in Nigeria... During this lockdown their planes were moving up and down as if there was no lockdown. They were moving ammunition, moving money, and distributing them across different parts of the country. They are already in the South, in the rainforest of the South. They are everywhere.’

This began to raise sentiments at newspaper stands and on online platforms in trickles before the Nigerian government through the Nigerian Broadcasting Code closed down the radio station for violating ethical rules and endangering the lives of Nigerians with its platform. The swift intervention is laudable. The DSS also invited Dr Malafia. They had a six-hour interrogation to front the veracity of his claims. Dr



Malafia had ascribed his pedigree and experience to his claims, ‘Don’t joke with what I am saying. I have a PhD from Oxford University. I am a Central Banker, we don’t talk nonsense. So, don’t joke with what I am saying. I have this from the possible highest authority,’ He said.

Many Nigerians feel that the Nigerian military has all it takes to exterminate unrepentant Boko Haram members who are displacing hapless Nigerians and tormenting the commonwealth with its fearsome attacks and videos. They believe the Nigeria military has the intelligence and the technical know-how to

infiltrate the Boko Haram or wrest victory from their hands forcefully. The Nigerian military had received funding from the Buhari government like it did under Presidents Obasanjo and Yaradua. The Goodluck Jonathan government invested funds to destroy Boko Haram, yet it was the distrust in the Boko Haram situation amongst other matters that made him lose the 2015 elections. Therefore, it is instructive that the fight against insurgency as well as the resolution of intra-ethnic and settler-indigene conflicts will go a long way in the verdict that history will pass on the Muhammadu Buhari government.

Malafia’s comments are grave. They can be seen as inciting and incendiary. They may incite hate

speeches and activate suspicion, discrimination and wanton killings, which could actually conflagrate into a civil war. Therefore, it is reasonable for the military to invite him, and engage him under the ample guidelines of the fundamental human rights. Mailafia testified after his visit to the DSS that he was very well and properly treated, which is good for the nation’s human rights record.

This is not the first time Dr.

Malafia had raised an alarm. He has referred to the killings in Kaduna as a ‘genocide’ of large proportions. This had gone into the vortex of forgetfulness for many Nigerians. Malafia who hails from Kaduna is also the Chief of Staff of the African Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP), the 79-nation multilateral development institution based in Brussels, Belgium. So when he raised an alarm on Boko Haram, there was a skepticism over his statements.

However, the onus is now on the military and the intelligence agencies to inform Nigerians of the truth or falsity of his claims to put paid to the assertions and

quell imaginative recreations of the fact. Will the DSS tell Nigerians what Mailafia told them, or will they allow new narratives to begin to develop from that one uncertain source? The Nigerian soldier on the field also has his ears on the ground concerning the reported politics of the Boko Haram war. Many analysts have lamented the plight of the military in terms of the required support in the ongoing war against insurgency. But it will be more disastrous if the soldiers on the front feel that they are being merely used as cannon fodder for political games. Many have raised the questions concerning the questionable ways that the Boko Haram have access to menacing firepower. Many have pondered on the intelligence network of the Boko Haram even in those areas that have faced the brunt of their presence. This shows that the Nigerian military must do more than march into battle, it must integrate a network of spies who will give it valuable information that will subjugate the Boko Haram insurgents.

Can government, the military and intelligence agencies be transparent enough to reveal to us the truths in Mailafia's allegations? If Obadiah Malafia is true, then rumours of the complicity of government and military personalities may be true? If they are not true, why was Malafia released unscathed and undisturbed after 6 hours of interrogation? After all, Malafia was not invited for tea and a friendly tete-a-tete.

Recently, President Muhammadu Buhari expressed great dismay on the long-held fight with Boko Haram insurgents. Could the Presidency be aware of some or more than it can surmount, while Malafia's statements only grazed the tip of the conspiracy?

Decluttering Nigerian Cities with a Plan

contd from pg 47

These are huge claims of purported right linkage among relevant agencies that are involved in urban planning and the people who are the end-users of the products of their interaction. What cannot be denied is the existence of urban chaos with disasters in several locations throughout the country. Buildings come down, and everybody goes on blame shopping. If an area is designated a new city, before long, everything is overrun.

Fire hydrants in communities are almost non-existent. What we find especially in the FCT is that the fire truck is accompanied by a water tanker which is also painted in the colours of the fire service to provide water even though the capacity of the water tanker cannot take much. This calls to question whose duty it is to construct or designate the location for fire hydrants. Clearly, this cannot be the objective of agencies that are working with collaboration in mind.

All these factors suggest that the authorities do not to have a clear sense of how to control our layouts. It is really an anguish that seems to have no solution in sight. It is evident that very important aspects of disaster management effort in the country including risk assessment and crowd control have been ignored in ensuring sustainable regional development.

In disaster prevention and management, attention ought to be paid to calamities by using geo-spatial technology and remote sensing mechanisms. These can centralise and visually display critical information during an emergency; they can be versatile tools in building capacity for disaster reduction and preparedness. Geo-spatial information can help in taking evidence-based decisions.

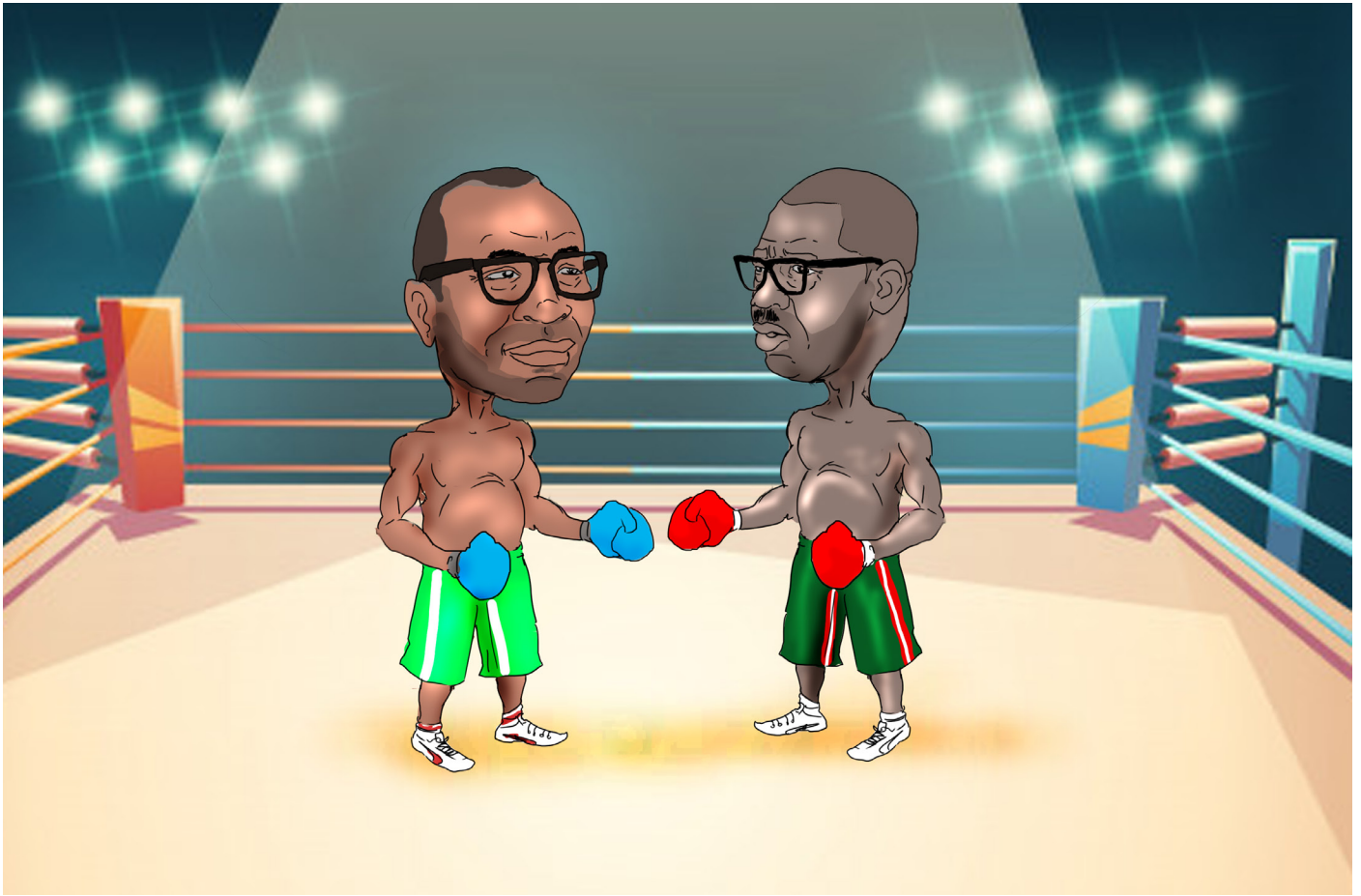
There is a feeling in certain quarters that the UN has instructed that every activity in the 17 agenda of the SDGs has to be integrated with surveying and mapping if the 2030 objective will be realised. The onus now lies on the relevant authorities to be up to the task in the attainment of such goal.

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EDO POLITICS: IZE-IYAMU VS OBASEKI



The sad occurrence of shootings at the palace of the Oba of Benin, Omo N'Oba N'Edo Uku Akpolokpolo, Oba Ewuare N'Ogidgan II on June 25, 2020, magnifies the fracas between the two main candidates for the September 19th gubernatorial elections in Edo State. Mr. Godwin Obaseki, the incumbent governor of Edo State and candidate for the People Democratic Party (PDP) is ready for the slug against 14 other candidates, including a former Chief of Staff, Pastor Osagie Ize-Iyamu, of the All Progressive Congress (APC).

The first-class monarch of Edo State, Oba Ewuare, had condemned in strongest terms the aberration committed by certain political actors in the state. Following the attacks, which has left scores wounded, property destroyed and lives lost, this pre-election tussle for the office of governor of Edo State, is also a show of might and wide political structures. It is alleged that the clash was purportedly kindled by the supporters of the leading gubernatorial candidates in the state. This is a sign that democracy in the country is still in its infancy. Statements from the camps of both Ize-Iyamu and

Obaseki direct accusations against each other, deploying such statements in a smear campaign given the fact that the Oba of Benin still rules in his full authority and regard amongst the people. However, this dastardly actions perpetuated at the King's courtyard did not deter the visiting gubernatorial candidate of the All Progressive Candidate (APC), Pastor Osagie Ize-Iyamu, in the company of the Caretaker National Chairman of APC and Governor of Yobe State, Mai Mala Buni; Executive Governor of Kano State, Abdullahi Umar Ganduje; Governor Abubakar Atiku Bagudu of Kebbi State; Deputy Senate President, Senator Obarisi Ovie Omo-Agege; Chairman APC Edo State, Col. David Imuse (rtd.) and others, to receive royal blessings from the retinue of royal fathers of the land led by the monarch himself.

It would be recalled that the sitting governor of Edo State, Mr. Godwin Obaseki, a trained financial and investment guru had a long-standing rift against Comrade Adams Oshiomole, his political godfather in the State. Obaseki had accused the former labour union

leader and former governor of Edo State of so many wrongdoings. Obaseki has hinted at his unwillingness to bow to the suzerainty of Oshiomole whose political structures remain in Edo State, but who had recently been oppressed and booted out of the APC secretariat in a 'coup-de-tat' manner from Abuja. Oshiomole in an online viral video apologised to the people of Edo State for 'misleading' them by seeking their support for Obaseki some years ago. He said that he has come to terms with Obaseki's double dealings and his corruption which was not well known to him in the past. The task before Oshiomole as the de facto chief campaigner for Pastor Ize-Iyamu is daunting. Oshiomole had smeared Ize-Iyamu with all sorts of unprintable allegations when he was on the side of Obaseki for governorship in 2016 and now has to do a lot of work to achieve a damage control for Ize-Iyamu, and debunk his own laudable endorsements that made Obaseki win. The outcome of these dirty fighting between the Edo godfather and godson had dire consequences with one losing his seat as the National Chairman of the ruling party and the other losing his gubernatorial candidature in a direct primary organised by the State chapter of the Party, leading to Obaseki's defection to the opposition in the state. It seems that Oshiomole needs to win Edo to make a statement to his internal party rivals who have ousted him from Abuja, and to have a strong negotiation position and a stake in the party in the forthcoming elections in 2023.

Both party bigwigs have raised alarm on possible violence from the other during the elections. Governor Nyesom Wike, the PDP and Governor of Rivers State had raised alarm that the APC intend to use federal might to make sure that Pastor Ize-Iyamu emerges. The APC has also engaged the media claiming that Governor Obaseki intends to use his powers of immunity to frustrate law-abiding members of the APC during the forthcoming elections process.

Engulfed in the considerable pains of the losses, it is crystal-clear that the die is cast between the supporters of both political gladiators. In the arena of the politics, the race is indeed not just for the swift but the smartest. In times as this, sound political strategies are the needed totem of victory as each of the candidates are equally up to the task of clinching the mantle of leading the state. Going through the credentials of the candidatures of Obaseki and Ize-Iyamu, their pedigree being from prestigious Edo families, the only question that readily

comes to mind is who will win the day?

Like every game, the chances of luck and preparedness are very crucial. The incumbent governor of Edo State, Mr. Godwin Obaseki, was the Chief of Staff for Comrade Adams Oshiomole when he was the state governor for eight years. His political know-howness is in no doubt. Having mastered the political landscapes of the state for an uptrend of 12 years, there is no gainsaying that anyone would want to give him a benefit of the doubt to run and retain his seat for another term. Also, the power of incumbency in the game of politics cannot be underestimated no matter how unlikely it is. Aside the misunderstanding between him and his former party, Obaseki has not done badly in terms of structural developments of the state, the contributions of the state to education and technical empowerments. In fact, the Godwin Obaseki-led government is one of the most proactive state governments at present. One can give him kudos towards his sharp response to matters affecting the state including security, health, culture, media, commerce and industry. Obaseki was one of the state governors that immediately sprung to their feet when the first case of the global covid-19 pandemic was first announced, noting that the second reported index case of covid-19 was at the University of Benin Teaching Hospital. Obaseki and his team are leveraging on the assertion of Oshiomole when Obaseki contested for governorship in 2016. At that time, he was Oshiomole's beloved son in whom he was well pleased. Oshiomole said Obaseki played a pivotal role in the development of Edo State during his governorship tenure. By this, can one say that the incumbent Governor makes true the meaning of his name – Obaseki: 'the King has reached the market or the King has arrived his home'.

For Osagie Ize-Iyamu, a one-time contender for the gubernatorial seat on the platform of People Democratic Party and the current Chief of Staff to the incumbent Governor of Edo State, it is a win or win situation for him. Having defected to All Progressives Congress (APC) after he lost to his principal in the last elections in the state, it is time to seize the opportunity afforded him by the party to run, overrun and retrieve the mandate that he lost four years ago. Like Obaseki, his name typifies the current situation, Iyamu meaning (What I hold Firmly).

Osagie Ize-Iyamu was born and raised in Benin City, the son of a revered Benin High Chief, Esogban of Benin.

A Lawyer by profession, his contributions to national politics is very much as respectable as Obaseki's. Ize-Iyamu was the National Vice Chairman, South-South Zone of the defunct Action Congress of Nigeria which metamorphosed into All Progressives Congress. He was the Director General of Adams Oshiomhole's second-term Campaign Organisation and coordinator of Goodluck/Sambo Campaign Organisation. He is also known to have been in the political machinery of former governors in Edo State and has a long stretch of men and women across the nooks and crannies of Edo State who have longstanding loyalties to him. Ize-Iyamu is also leveraging on the track records of his friend and fellow party man, Comrade Adams Oshiomole who performed greatly during his governorship tenure. Oshiomole, many claim, revamped Edo State and handed the road map to the Obaseki leadership. For many who believe

in such positions, they believe that comrade Oshiomole is interested in backing anyone who will be willing to follow through with his developmental roadmap.

Like the game of soccer, the 90-minutes play will determine the winner of a particular contest between Obaseki, Ize-Iyamu or any of the gubernatorial candidates for the governorship seat of Edo State, between Iyamu – the one who holds firmly, and Obaseki – a king that has arrived home. Come September 19, 2020, the electorates of Edo State will be lining up with their voter's card, guarding their ballots to determine their fates for the next four years.

Babatunde Odubanwo
Writer, Economist, Media Person



...Alive For A Purpose

Alive For A Purpose

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Caroline Moore

Founder,
Why I Am Alive Campaign

REPOSITIONING WTO ROOTING FOR NGOZI OKONJO-IWEALA

That Dr. Mrs. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala has joined the train of eight other world financial experts to compete as the Director-General of the World Trade Organisation, WTO, is no longer news. The one-time Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister of the Economy is one woman whose monumental achievements in both corporate and public spheres are worth the unending accolades that they can get. Her list of degrees is an intimidating one, having passed through one of the most sought-after Ivy league schools in the world, Harvard University, and graduating magna cum laude in Economics 1973. She earned a Ph.D. in Regional Economics and Development from

the Massachusetts Institute of Technology having authored a thesis titled Credit Policy, Rural Financial Markets, and Nigeria's Agricultural Development as well as an International Fellowship from the American Association of University Women (AAUW). This clearly shows that she is as



qualified as other contenders to wear the big shoes of DG, WTO.

Even though it is almost hard to admit, such lofty heights, requisite experiences of international exposure are a determinate factor. Iweala has enjoyed a 25-years illustrious career at the World Bank. In fact, becoming the Managing Director, Operations from 2007-2011 is a testament to the fact that, with this development, she has proved her worth in economic development circles. As a board member of Standard Chartered Bank, Twitter, Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (GAVI) and the African Risk Capacity (ARC), her eyes and ears are on the ground on conversations and happenings in and around the dynamics of international finance and world trade modus operandi.

The World Trade Organisation (WTO) was established on January 1, 1995, signed by 123 nations on April 15, 1994 as an arbitrator and regulator for international trade as

well as intellectual property undertakings among nations of the world. Formerly known as General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), WTO is considered the biggest organisation in charge of international trade and finance. Headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, WTO is currently headed by Roberto Azevedo.

Since the race for the position of the Director-General of WTO began, different nations had indicated interest for their citizens to be a leader. Since the WTO did not prohibit any of its member-states to compete for the post, it gives an ample opportunity for any eligible candidate to

indicate their interest through the appropriate medium. Amongst the current list of contestants, there are 3 African contenders for the big job. They are Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, the former Nigerian finance minister; Amina Mohamed, the former Kenyan foreign minister and past chairperson

of the WTO General Council. She also previously served as chairperson of the WTO General Council. There is also Abdel-Hamid Mamdouh, an Egyptian lawyer, ex-WTO official. Since the founding of WTO, no African has held the post. This may explain the apparent line-up for the position.

Sentiments apart, all other two African contenders cannot be brushed aside. Clearly, if Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala is to emerge on top, she has her African brother and sister to slug it out with, before facing the other equally qualified candidates from other countries of the world.

The rule of geo-politics is another factor to consider. First world countries in other civilised climes are obviously not left out of the jostle. They want to be sure that their economic interests are secured and that the fortunes of several decades are kept intact. No one wants to be a forgotten hero with diminished fortunes. The richer and developed countries want to remain at the top while the

poorer ones want to surmount the Sisyphean manacle to ensure that they get to the top of the world economic food chain. The United States of America who had shown little or no interest in the WTO's top-man job has clearly awoken from the long hours of their catnapping. In the coming weeks, the media would be awash with plethora of reports ranging from whys and why nots to other questions and reasons for giving any consideration to a candidate being considered for the elevated position.

As a pivotal section of the WTO, Africa plays a key role. The second largest continent in the world accounts for about 35% of membership. Considering that the region has not produced any Director General since the inception of the WTO, the continent may stand a better chance of heralding the victorious song at the end of the election. Though, concerns raised by the US, Japan and the European Union (EU) about the WTO's rules as regards the 'special and differential treatment' in creating a favourable trade terms for third world countries could form another stumbling block against the emergence of a possible African Director General of the World Trade Organisation.

According to these protesting industrialised countries, the leadership of the WTO should consider the impactful trend in the rise of more developing countries and the Chinese industrial subsidies. It is clear that the Director General of WTO can wield such enormous executive powers and influence as other international organisations such as the UN and the World Bank, especially as this is a very crucial time in the existence of international trading policy formulation and implementation. There is need for a quick revamp of the working system of the WTO, perhaps seeking inspiration in another region other than countries that has led the Geneva-based organisation to problems, challenges and internal wrangling.

Iweala understands the multilateral agreements and institutions arena. With the imbroglio of the trade disputes between USA and China, the dichotomy of trading policies amongst member nations and the downward pummeling of WTO's activities. It needs the right person to take over from the incumbent DG of WTO. Iweala is a citizen of the most populated black nation on planet earth, whose economic potentials is tested through projects, treaties and projects by many countries of the world. She is a multi-award-winning finance expert, developmental economist, a global civil

servant and a consultant to different developmental projects across the world. She understands the language of the Americans and other internationalists and has the capacity to bring nations together to a boardroom that represents cooperation and healthy competitiveness. The position and outlook of her nation in the comity of nations may make or mar her strides in securing the top job. For many international partners, Nigeria's robust potentials is a plus to her integrity, experience and pedigree but Nigeria's corrupt history of financial mismanagement, high-level corruption and the rising spate of violence may mar her chances as well.

If she replicates the ideals of Dr. Akinwunmi Adesina, the current President of the African Development Bank (AfDB), the emergence of Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala will further help boost the otherwise sidelined developmental structures that could help Nigeria attain a height of economic relevance. It may bring about the needed changes that Africa desires to impress and implement the economic policies to erode the stiffening and cut-throats interest rates on borrowings from international monetary organisations. The consequences of galloping inflationary trends are unceasing cases of unemployment, poverty and lack of innovation among others.

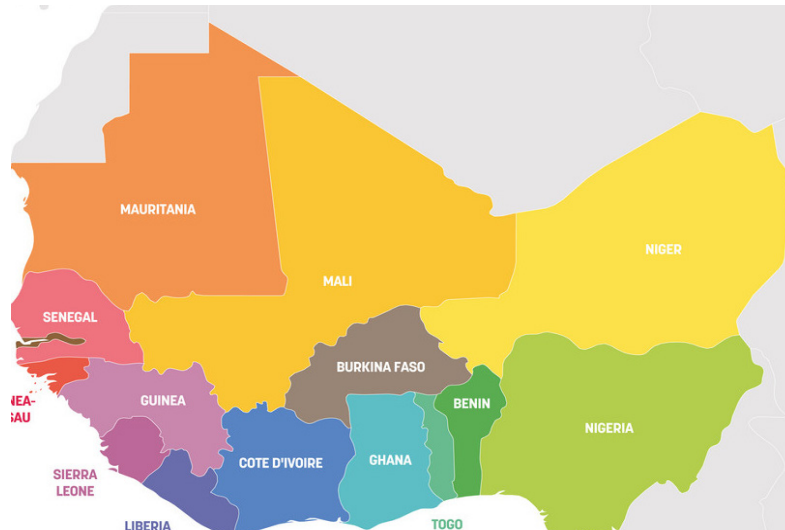
Africa must be given a chance on the world stage to create the balance of economic negotiations that will make Africa and the rest of the world thrive. This will eventually erode the 'handout' culture that has besmirched African nations into a position of 'bad borrowers' due to the different factors of socioeconomic instabilities. The rest of the world must realise that there is a shift in the cosmos of economic discourse, as countries who were once emerging economies now have a say in the stability of global economics. It will take an African, especially a Nigerian to embrace, understand and recreate the positions of inequality, support struggling economies, and engage the established modalities of the world's powerbrokers. Unfortunately, the African contestants have not decided to come together to present a common ideological front and a single persona who can respond to the evolving realities of the world in relation to Africa, and Africa in relation to the world.

Babatunde Odubanwo
Writer, Economist and Media Person

THE ECO: BATTLE FOR THE SOUL OF WEST AFRICA

Nigeria is one of the countries that drive the wheel of the continent's economic viability. Nigeria boasts of over 80% of the region's revenue and a larger share index of the market made possible by a population that guarantees a viable Return on Investment, ROI, and a robust consumption of goods from all parts of the world. The chain reaction from these inflows from abroad keeps the Nigerian Customs operatives, Maritime and Aviation professionals as well as the capital market alive and active. Ironically, this lopsided economic condition is one of the many reasons why the nation battles with the mono-product economy syndrome.

Only recently did the Federal Government initiate plans in revitalising and diversifying the economy. The FG put in place other monetary policies that will cushion



Five West African Countries, namely Nigeria, Ghana, Gambia, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea, came together in the year 2000 to agree on a West African Monetary Zone, WAMZ policy. This gave birth to an agency, the West African Monetary Institute, WAMI, in 2001.

the effect of possible lacunae in the economy. By default, the decision of the 'Giant of Africa' to protect its economy has sent strange ripples across the continent, especially its neighbours, who are beneficiaries of inter-border trade relations. When Nigeria closed its borders last year, its West African neighbours slumped into economic crisis. Nigeria, an Anglophone West African country, is in the epicenter of the West Africa's heated political and economic life. Her French-speaking West African counterparts rely on the smooth relations with the 'big brother'. Whenever Nigeria takes an economic stance on the future of the sub-region it usually leaves a room for deliberation and wide guesses.

History informs us of the sharing of Africa between Anglophone and Francophone Africa, which dates back to 1885, the Berlin Conference. At the conference, the entire African continent was shared amongst the most powerful countries at the time; USA, Britain, Germany,

Belgium, Portugal, and others. The postscript gave rise to what is known in modern times as Colonialism. Decades after, the Anglophone African countries were constantly at loggerheads with their Francophone counterparts. The need for sub-regional collaboration and economic liberation led to the establishment of Economic State of West Africa, ECOWAS in 1967. Since its establishment, ECOWAS has managed in cohabitating differences among member states, as well as establishing common tariff and border policies that will aid ease of trading and movement within the region.

The Agency, located in Ghana, was saddled with putting together the framework for the establishment of a West African Central Bank, WACB, and the launch of a single currency that will favour all signatories of the WAMZ, and allow for ease of doing business across the sub-region. The WAMZ was dominated by Anglophone West African States. On the flipside, the West African Economic Union, UEMOA or WAEMU, was dominated by the Francophone countries, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo. The 1994 UEMOA was a treaty focused on free movement, common market and taxation, the harmonisation of policies on human resources, agriculture, energy, transport, infrastructure, and customs, among others.

In 2019, the ECOWAS agreed to adopt a single currency (ECO) by the year 2020. This proposed currency unanimously accepted by WAMZ and UEMOA

members was a 'means to an end.' The Nigerian government kicked against the implementation of the ECO in February 2020, claiming that the ECOWAS members had not reconciled all the necessary criteria. This was followed by the withdrawal of all the Anglophone countries from the engagement of the ECO based on the same reason. Meanwhile, the finance ministers had in mid-January denounced the members states for trying to rename the CFA as the ECO. This has sent a different implicature to the West African Market who are largely suspicious of the French's hand behind the scene. The ECO was meant to loosen the hold of the French on the viability of the economic life of francophone West African countries. President Muhammadu Buhari he earlier warned that the ECO should be distinct and separate from the CFA, which was handed down by the French colonials. He had also expressed fears that the hurried implementation of the ECO may lead to a disintegration of cooperation amongst states similar to the European Union. Ghana has also expressed concerns on the 'pegging' of the ECO with the Euro and has subtly demanded that the currency be severed from the European market.

The Nigerian President noted, 'Nigeria advises that we proceed cautiously with the integration agenda, taking into consideration the above concerns and the lessons currently unfolding in the European Union. To that end, Nigeria will caution against any position that pushes for a fast-track approach to monetary union, while neglecting fundamentals and other pertinent issues.'

Mr. Emmanuel Macron, President of France, has however expressed positivism towards the ECO. He said that the debacle associated with the CFA, was that it banked 50% of the francophone country's foreign exchange reserves with the Bank of France. For him, this would be curtailed by the introduction of the ECO. The French helmsman stated that France will only act as "Financial Guarantors" in the new ECO currency arrangement. From all indications, it is clear that the proponents of this ECO currency plan are largely former French West African nations of the West African Monetary Union (WAMU) Signatories of UEMOA are eager to adopt the new currency.

Andrew S. Nevin, Chief Economist, Nigeria Clients and Markets Leader at Pricewaterhouse Coopers told the

African Report that although the ECO may be a step in the right direction, it may pose a threat to the economy of the sub-regional giant. Perhaps, the ECO as the West African currency would could pose a threat to the Naira, and Nigeria has decided to put its own people and economy first this time around. The de-facto currency puts the country at the risk of not achieving the single-digit inflation rate which poses threat to the inflationary trends of the country. It may lead to problems in asserting the independence of fiscal and monetary policies of participating countries. Nigeria's President tweeted in June, 'We cannot ridicule ourselves by entering a union to disintegrate, potentially no sooner than we enter it. We need to be clear and unequivocal about our position regarding the process.'

The strategic role that Nigeria plays in the scheme of things is very important to the actualisation of the ECO currency plan. With participating countries such as Ghana and other member states of ECOWAS joining the different sides, the stage is set for the ECO currency to serve as a legal lender throughout West African sub-region and a means of trading on the global scene. However, financial analysts fear that without Nigeria, the ECO will be weak in the international market. For now, it is likely that the sub-region will experience divides between its Francophone countries who may adopt the ECO, while the Anglophone countries recuse from the ECO, leading to far-reaching economic downturn. The West African Monetary Zone will also be needing the blessing of Nigeria to become a reality because of the strategic role the nation plays.

Nigeria's leadership owes it to the Nigerian peoples who are yet to recover from the enslavement of Bretton Woods policies, to protect the Nigerian economy. All leaders in the countries in West Africa also owe it to their countries to protect her interests. A proper framework that addresses the needs of the reluctant Anglophone countries can be put in place by the monetary zone in order to achieve the laudable, Pan-African agenda that may be hijacked by Western control, if not well articulated, implemented and managed.

Babatunde Odubanwo

BIG BROTHER NAIJA LOCKDOWN... THE STORY SO FAR



At the beginning of the year, it looked like things would never get back to normal. Everyone hugging their face masks tight, and social distancing and work from home were the words of the year. Fast forward to seven months into the year, and one of Nigeria's biggest reality shows in recent years is back; massive and kicking. We give you, Big Brother Naija: Lockdown.

Big Brother Naija is a franchise of the popular Big Brother show franchise, which is available to watch all over the world. It's a reality show where several people from different walks of life are put in the same house for three months, as a kind of social experiment. Big Brother (Biggie) gives them several tasks over the course of their weeks in the House and they get evicted based on viewers' votes.

At the end of the show, contestants are guaranteed to have become a household name, depending on their strategy in the house; as well as endorsement deals with various brands, the beginning to life of the rich and famous, and leverage on fame for career advancements. Let's not forget the mega prizes they win in the house, and the whopping #85 million which is this year's prize money. It almost makes you want to audition for the next edition.

What makes Big Brother Naija so interesting for a lot of watchers is the level of underhandedness, relationships, competition, strategy and fun that goes on in the Big Brother house. Contestants are actively encouraged to compete with each other, mingle freely, build relationships, and then dish the dirt on each other in a

secret diary session. We are here for it. What's not to love about catfights and silent treatments.

Big Brother Naija Lockdown is the show's fifth season after it's rebrand in 2017. It was premiered on a dedicated station on DSTV, channel 195 on the 19th of July. This year's Big Brother Naija House welcomed 20 fresh faced, eager and energetic contestants from different parts of Nigeria. Let's introduce them below:

Brighto is a 29-year-old sailor hails from Edo State. Dorathy is a 24-year-old entrepreneur from Lagos State. Erica, 26, is an actress and model from Lagos State. Kaisha is a 25-year-old entrepreneur from Sokoto. Kiddwaya, 26, is self-employed and comes from Benue State. Laycon is a 26-year-old rapper and singer from Lagos State. Lucy is a 30-year-old entrepreneur from Bayelsa. Nengi, 22, hails from Bayelsa and is an entrepreneur. Neo is a 26-year-old ride-hailing app driver from Delta State. Ozo is 27, and an entrepreneur from Imo State. Praise is a 28-year-old dancer from Enugu. Prince, 24 is a designer and interior decorator from Lagos State. Tolanibaj, 25-year-old media personality from Lagos State. Vee, originally based in London is a 23-year-old musician from Lagos State. Trikytee, 35, is a creative artist from Lagos State. Wathoni, a single mom, fashion entrepreneur and parenting blogger is 29 from Kenya. She also speaks and writes in fluent Swahili. Eric is a 24-year-old bodybuilder from Lagos State. Tochi is a 28-year-old rapper and real eState agent from Imo. Lilo, 23 is an entrepreneur and dietitian from Lagos State. And Ka3na, a 26-year-old entrepreneur from Rivers State.

As usual, the new housemates were welcomed into the house amidst fanfare and good vibes. They were given the chance to strut their stuff and connect with the audience during a brief chat with the show's host, Ebuka, before going into the house. In their first week in the house, Nengi emerged as the first Head of House (HoH).

The HoH is usually determined by a designated game; after which the winner gains immunity from the week's eviction, exclusive access to the HoH Lounge, and the liberty to choose the Deputy HoH—who also has immunity from eviction as well. The first week's competition was a quiz game based on the theme of the week "Getting to Know One Another". The HoH game is a life size board game in the Snake & Ladders fashion, its activities are decided by a dice roll with the contestant that gets the highest combined number after rolling emerging as winner.

After Nengi emerged winner, she chose Wathoni for the post of deputy HoH. The contestants were also tasked with creating their own nose masks and hand sanitizers. This gave us a chance to see them explore or showcase their creativity. Nigerians had plenty to say on social media. We also started to see friendships being forged, and situationships forming. Like the seeming love triangle involving Ozo, Nengi, and Dorathy; as well as the situationship between Neo and Vee; and the bromance between Ozo, Eric and Neo.

Head of House in the second week was Lucy, who named Prince as her deputy. She immediately set about trying to impose some discipline in the House, with her first call being for a better attitude toward cleaning and cooking. However, a fight between Tolanibaj and Ka3na over cooking habits threatened to eclipse her joy at being HoH.

We also saw a few tears in the Diary Room sessions for the week, with Ka3na mentioning that she felt like she and Lucy were a lot alike, and Ozo saying that he would rather win than find love in the house. At the end of the week, contestants said goodbye to fellow housemates, Lilo and Ka3na who were voted out in a shocking double elimination.

Everyone was shocked when the show's host, Ebuka announced that eviction power didn't rest solely in viewers' hands. He explained that all contestants, except the HoH and deputy, would be up for eviction every week, and that viewers would be able to vote their least favorite. The decision would now go over to the contestants who would have to pick one of the contestants with the least votes to leave the house. The contestants with the higher vote in this case would then leave.

When the HoH challenge for the third week rolled around, Ozo emerged winner and he picked Dorathy to be his deputy. During the week, the contestants formed two teams to play the weekly sports trivia game, and they came to a draw. They were all also crowned the winners of the Patricia challenge, where each contestant won a Patricia gold coin worth \$500.

The contestants also won a wager against Big Brother (Biggie) that saw them receive free drinks and more food in the house. Unfortunately, this euphoria didn't last long as housemates had to say goodbye to two more of their numbers, Eric and Tochi.

Erica emerged the winner of the fourth HoH challenge, and she selected Kiddwaya as her deputy after being undecided in her choice between him and Laycon. Dorathy also tried to break free of the love triangle with Ozo and Nengi by declaring openly that she had no feelings for Ozo. We're still waiting to see what unfolds, but everyone certainly felt the sting of rejection that Laycon felt when Erica picked Kiddwaya over him. One thing that's guaranteed on Big Brother Naija is the drama; and while this year's contestants seem to be getting along just fine, it is early days yet and we'll be watching to see what juicy bits we get next.

Ameenah Oke

Culture & Lifestyle

Film Review

ELEVATOR BABY ATTEMPTS TO MIRROR NIGERIA'S SYSTEMIC PROBLEMS, BUT HOW WELL IS IT DONE?



It is commonly said that everything in the country is engineered to frustrate, and there are very few things that exist to counter that assertion. Movie-makers are faced with the options of addressing societal malaises in drama, painting a less depressing picture with comedy, or simply providing an escape by way of an alternate reality.

Niyi Akinmolayan's portfolio speaks for itself. He is credited with directing a number of commercially (if not critically) successful Nollywood films, including *The Wedding Party 2*, *Chief Daddy* and *The Set Up*. It is his production outfit, Anthill Studios, that rolls out this film which is part comedy and part social commentary, with Akay Mason acting in directorial capacity.

Elevator Baby is a 2019 film starring Timini Egbuson, Toyin Abraham, Ijeoma Aniebo, Sambasa Nzeribe and Emem Ufot. There are also appearances from veterans

Yemi Solade and Shaffy Bello, Blessing Jessica Obasi, and Instagram comedian Samuel "Broda Shaggi" Perry.

The events of the movie majorly revolve around Dare (Egbuson), an Engineering graduate who is still unemployed few years after leaving the university. He frequently mulls over the loss of his father, who was killed in an auto-crash few years earlier, and since he was in the car on the day of the accident, he is haunted by survivor's guilt. He relies on his mother (Bello) for financial support, doesn't get along with his step-father (Solade), and spends much time with his equally unemployed friends (played by Nzeribe and Ufot).

After yet another big fight with his mother over his drunken late nights, and having his lady friend (Aniebo) ignore his romantic entreaties over his 'lack

of focus', Dare decides to dust off his CV once more and go job-hunting. His search is futile for the most part, until one fateful Saturday when he's scheduled for an interview at a firm. He gets into the elevator with a semi-literate woman named Abigail (Abraham), who is well into the third trimester of her pregnancy and has come to the building for a different mission. They collide and get into a shouting match, but things take a strange turn when the building experiences a power outage, the elevator stops working, and Abigail unexpectedly goes into labour.

In 83 minutes, the film tackles a number of germane issues, including the scourge of unemployment, the attitude of employees in corporate Nigeria, and the perils of a failed system (typified by the heavy gridlock on a weekend which stood in the way of medical attention for Abigail). There is also an attempt to examine the dynamics of friendship, the concept of masculinity via the lens of trauma, and the heavy Oedipus Complex that sometimes makes it difficult for men to accept their mothers remarrying. We are also reminded that social media could be pretty viral, though the illustration thereof could have been a lot more subtle.

Toyin Abraham's acting here is head-and-shoulders above the rest, and her portrayal of the hapless, guilt-ridden Abigail is one of the more memorable performances in this film. Egbuson's role interpretation is over-the-top on many occasions, and he struggles for rhythm, but he doesn't do badly overall. Solade keeps it short and masterful, and Obasi puts in a decent shift, but it is difficult to see what relevant contribution Broda Shaggi makes to the plot.

"Elevator Baby" deserves full marks for lighting and cinematography, but the editing is not without its imperfections. There is also something about the sequence of events that raises questions of plausibility, and indeed it is difficult to emotionally connect with the story or the characters until the final twenty-three minutes. The narrative is not the most captivating, but the movie is saved by a few stellar performances, and while it clearly struggles to the finish line, at least you are guaranteed not to cringe.

Rating: 6.2/10

Jerry Chiemeke

award winning writer, culture critic and lawyer

contd from Page 51

Lebanon: A State on the Brink of Failure

This perhaps informs why Hezbollah, the Shia Islamist political, military, and social group branded a terrorist organisation by the West, that wields tangible power in Lebanon's parliament, made it clear that their group will continue to have a role in any future government,

a government of national unity, assembled from all winds of major parliamentary blocs and with the widest possible representation. They also maintained that the West's call and talk of a neutral government is deceptive and a thorough time-wasting preoccupation.

Still on its economy, fears of Lebanon turning into a failed state loom. Ishac Diwan, professor at the Ecole Normale had said in a webinar hosted by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace: 'If we continue like this, if that vacuum lasts a year or two, Lebanon becomes Somalized.' Paul Salem, president of the Middle East Institute in Washington shares similar sentiments when he said, 'There is an acute awareness among European countries and the United States that this blast might be the event that tips Lebanon into full collapse.'

Lebanon's problems are achingly obvious. When viewed through the dual lens of its politico-economic distress that it now finds itself, her once thriving economic and political structure is now doddering on the fringe of dust, a relic of a not so distant past. This economic crisis perhaps informs why Lebanese flood other countries, including so called third world countries like Nigeria, in droves seeking economic succor, a gesture which reminds one of the quote by the Kenyan born Somali poet, Warsan Shire, when she says, no one leaves home unless / home is the mouth of a shark. Nothing best describes failed systems better than the mouth of a shark, sharp vengeful mandibles ready to tear you apart, ready to have you for a meal if one should so much as wriggle or struggle or survive while in the same space.

Kelvin Kellman

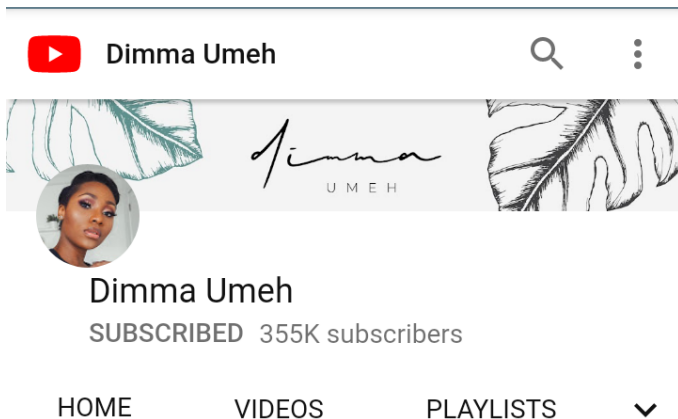
Culture & Lifestyle

TRAWLING YOUTUBE FINDING NIGERIANS ON YOUTUBE

It's no secret that YouTube is the go-to place for visual information of all kinds and on all subjects. YouTube is for sure the biggest video sharing service in the world. According to The Fact Site, there are over a billion users on this platform. This is nearly one-third of everyone on the internet. It is also the second largest search engine in the world after Google.

It is therefore no surprise that everyone that has the means, wants to showcase some talent, or has something to say, is making their way to YouTube. Nigerians are not left out. We are steadily carving our footprints in the sands of fluid internet searches, and are getting our content out there for the whole world to see. Here are some Nigerian YouTubers you should check out, if you haven't already:

1. Dimma Umeh (@DimmaUmeh)

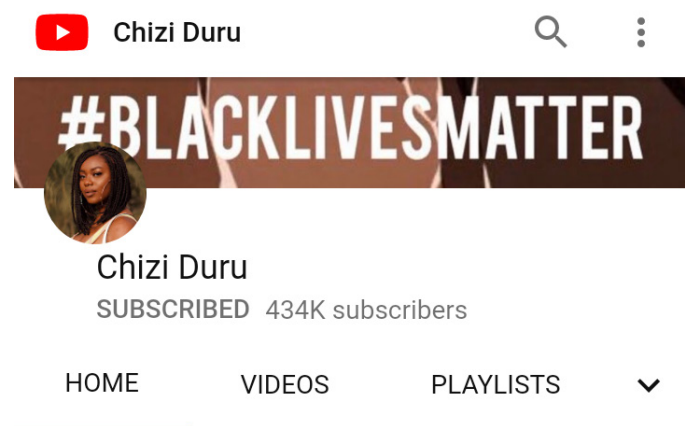


Formerly known as That Igbo Chick, Dimma is a powerhouse in the Nigerian YouTube scene. Arguably the biggest Youtuber in Nigeria, Dimma has gathered tens of thousands of followers who absolutely adore her. She is a beauty and lifestyle YouTuber whose channel is a treasure trove for those looking to start applying makeup at any level.

But her channel is more than a “how to do your makeup tutorial” channel; Dimma is funny, witty, and a proud feminist. She talks freely about the realities of life and shares insights on her life as well. If you want to know

how Nigerians actually talk, act and how smart we are? Tune in to Dimma's channel. You will have the time of your life.

2. Chizi Duru (@ChiziDuru)

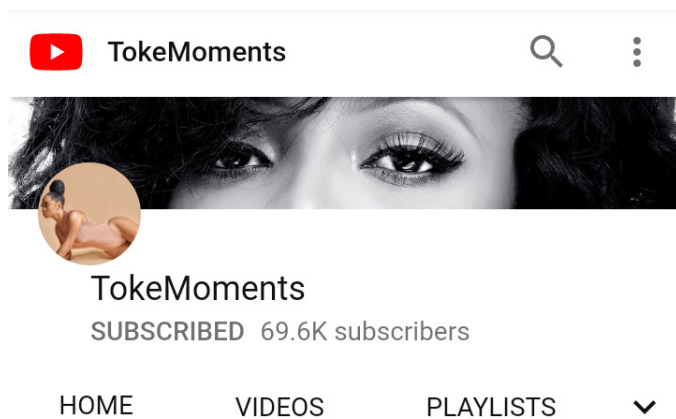


Chizi is a bag of laughs and many more. Originally a hair YouTuber, Chizi has said many times that she started her channel because she couldn't find the kinds of videos she wanted to watch; and those were videos that talked about natural hair on black girls and women. She decided to fill that void, and fast forward to four years later, she's one of the most prominent Nigerians on YouTube.

Based in New York; her videos are a mix of hair care tutorials, makeup tutorials, funny clothing haul videos, and more recently, brand and video reviews. Her use of a Nigerian accent with an American one, funny mannerisms, and effortless phrases delivered in the signature Nigerian accent will keep you going back for more every time.

Ever heard the phrase “You can't talk to me anyhow”? Yeah, that's Chizo.

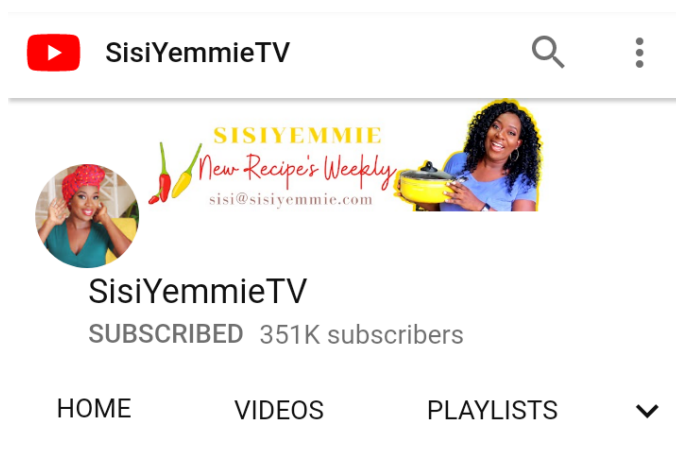
3. Toke Makinwa (@TokeMoments)



Popular Nigerian OAP and media personality, Toke Makinwa might be controversial and a bit intimidating. But she is a barrel of laughs, a bag of money and a fellow advocate for common sense. Love her or hate her, Toke serves the truth as she sees it and she does it in a funny, self-deprecating way that you just can't help but love.

Whether she's dishing relationship advice, business advice or just plain silliness, Toke is always dressed like the Baby Girl for Life. Even if it's just for her wonderful fashion, you should check out her page.

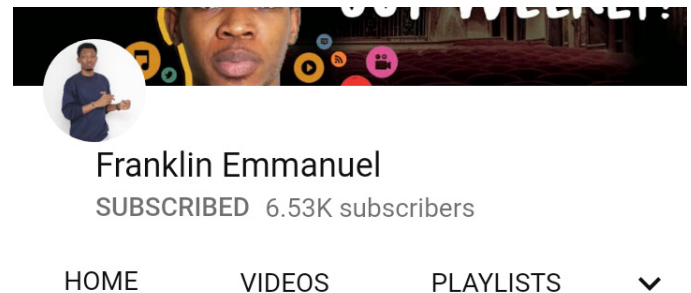
4. Yemisi Olusanya (@SisiYemmieTV)



Are you wondering what to cook tonight? Or the recipe you have is confusing and you've forgotten whether the chicken goes in first or the pepper? Never fear, Sisi Yemmie is there for you. Sisi Yemmie is probably the biggest Nigerian food YouTuber you will find. Her way of breaking down recipes from scratch to making a wonderful meal is very endearing.

Not only does she cook in her own kitchen, making it a very personalized experience; she also brings us into her world to meet her husband, children, and even the nanny. Sisi Yemmie's YouTube page is like visiting a friend and watching her make a home-cooked meal. If you haven't checked her out, do it now.

5. Franklin Emmanuel (@FranklinEmmanuel)



GETTING STARTED WITH DIGITAL MARKETING FOR BEGINNERS

Have you ever made money online? Do you dream of making money online? Then, this is the youtube page to search for. Franklin teaches his subscribers with concise explainer videos, the step-by-step approach that he uses to make money online from different ventures.

He takes it a step further by sharing best websites to use, and breaks the business of making money online down to the nitty gritty. He might not be the biggest YouTuber yet, but he is definitely someone you want to know and whose videos you want to watch.

There are many more Nigerians making us proud on the internet, and with the world going global, now is definitely the time for it. The internet is vast and accessible, it is also open to billions of viewers on the planet.

Ameenah Oke



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Education

COVID-19: SECURING THE FUTURE

Following the outbreak of the dreadful coronavirus disease (COVID-19), schools in Nigeria were not exempted from the rapid response by the Federal Government. On March 19th, 2020, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education, Sonny Echono ordered an immediate closure of tertiary institutions, secondary and primary schools, as part of measures to curb the spread of the virus.

Five months after the unprecedented closure of schools, the Federal Ministry of Education through a press statement signed by its Director for Press and Public Relations, Ben Goong announced that exit classes for Nigerian secondary schools were to resume on August 4th, 2020. The decision to reopen schools for exit classes was to enable the students have two weeks to prepare for the West African Examination Council (WAEC) examination which is scheduled to start on August 17th, 2020.

Meanwhile, the concerns raised by some parents span from the availability of test kits for students, provision of enough Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for their children, access to water and hand sanitizer for those in rural areas, adequate monitoring and assessment, security for students in insecure states, mass failure of students due to inadequate preparation – as some schools are yet to resume – among others.

To quell the fears and concerns of parents, the Nigeria Academy of Education (NAE), has advised the Government to release adequate funds directly to schools, in order to provide the needed care for students. The President, Elizabeth Eke disclosed in a statement that the training of teachers and improvement of the learning environment should precede the resumption of classes.

their children return to school or not, although with all the examinations scheduled, the temptation to follow the tide may be very strong. Those who decide to send their children to school should not be deterred from doing so over lack of funds. They should be enabled to follow through with their decision. School authorities and management should ensure that the guidelines are followed. Orientation for teachers and students, no matter how brief, is essential. Students and teachers are expected to be tested.’ She said.

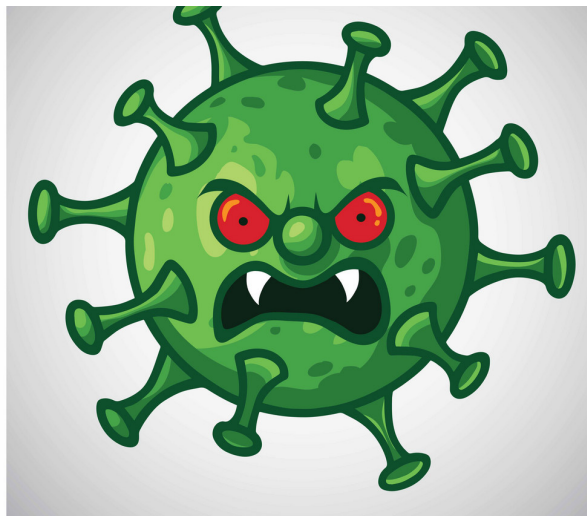
However, with over 1.5m candidates sitting for the West Africa Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) in 19,119 schools across the country, schools have been admonished to make adequate preparation ahead of the examinations. Patrick Areghan, head,

national officer of the West Africa Examination Council (WAEC) expressed that schools must provide face masks for invigilators as well as candidates and other necessary protocol should be observed.

With the six South-West states – Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Ondo, Osun and Ekiti – having agreed to reopen schools for SS3 students to participate in the WASSCE, one would imagine that all

measures have been put in place to ensure that there is a tactical approach to ensuring the safety of our future leaders. Meanwhile, a report by the media revealed that some schools in Oyo state have approached the COVID-19 guidelines with indifference as health facilities, good toilets, running water, among others, are still inaccessible.

According to the UN, the estimated number of students affected worldwide by the pandemic is over 1 billion. Despite efforts to continue learning during the crisis, including through lessons delivered via radio, television and online, many are still not being reached. Now, there is a need to critically deliver the education sector from an impending collapse by implementing several



‘Parents have the final responsibility to decide whether

sustainable strategies for continuity amid the pandemic. This can be achieved based on three fronts highlighted by the UN, which are – information, solidarity and action.

To deliver quality education for all children, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals the UN Secretary-General, António Guterres said: ‘We need investment in digital literacy and infrastructure, an evolution towards learning how to learn, a rejuvenation of life-long learning and strengthened links between formal and non-formal education. And we need to draw on flexible delivery methods, digital technologies and modernized curricula while ensuring sustained support for teachers and communities.’

As we gradually transition into the next normal, there is a need to adapt to the emerging technological systems and solutions made available to the world. The education sector is not left out. Although some stakeholders have opined that the extended closure of schools will in no way affect students’ performance in the forthcoming

examinations. Notwithstanding, there are lessons which other examinations body could glean from the current realities. Looking at the level of compliance by some schools, we need no soothsayer to tell us that there might be a fresh outbreak of the virus if a vaccine is not made available to Nigerians sooner rather than later.

Although the National Examinations Council (NECO), in a press statement signed by its Registrar/Chief Executive Officer, Professor Godswill Obioma, announced that the NECO SSCE will take place on Monday 5th October 2020 to Wednesday 18th November 2020. It is therefore pertinent to begin to explore ways of conducting examinations in Nigeria through the aid of technology without necessarily putting the lives of students at risk. The need to secure and preserve the future comes at no better time than now. The Government, private organisations and relevant stakeholders need to invest strategically in infrastructure, digital literacy and access to technological tools for students in both urban and rural communities.

Dorcas Omotayo



DECLUTTERING NIGERIAN CITIES WITH A PLAN



In the past few years, economic losses due to natural and man-made hazards such as flood, pipeline vandalism, building collapse, oil and gas explosion, have increased. Some buildings collapse with their occupants trapped in them while others are gutted by fire, leaving casualties in their wake.

No fewer than 23 persons died from the pipeline explosion in Abule Ado in Lagos, not long ago; scores were injured and well over 50 buildings were either destroyed or damaged in the blast. This was according to the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). Rev. Sister Henrietta Alokha, the Principal of the Bethlehem Girls College lost her life while trying to rescue students of the school whose buildings was engulfed by the fire.

The Lagos State Government and the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) official statements confirmed that the explosion occurred when an articulated vehicle transporting fuel got stuck while trying to enter a particular street. And in the process of getting out, it made contact with NNPC pipelines within that corridor which led to the explosion. There were reports that the articulated vehicle which usually conveyed the product, may have belonged to a gas processing plant in that area.

It is clear that a cocktail of issues does not quite conduce to the safety of persons and buildings in that environment. The same is the case in some parts of Lagos and other places in the country where pipeline fire incidents are fairly frequent and have also resulted in fatalities. Earlier this year in Kaduna state, there was an explosion that

took the life of an atomic energy expert.

Disasters of this nature pose serious challenge to the Nigerian economy with direct consequences of migration, epidemic, job loss, among others.

Part of the problem is the co-location of industrial and semi-industrial activities in residential areas in clear violation of the Right of Way guidelines. Available statistics from the Office of the Surveyor General of the Federation indicate that for any environment, the rights of way are usually stipulated. The Office draws a rundown of the designated right of way for some infrastructure across the country: for Federal Government roads, the right of way is about 45.72 metres; gas pipeline is about 12.5 metres on either side which gives 25 metres right of way; water and sewage is about 3.81 metres; high tension for 132kva is about 15 metres on either side which is 30 metres; 330kva is about 50 metres; 760kva is about 42.5 metres which gives about 85 metres right of way.

The purpose of right of way is to create access for relevant authorities in case of catastrophes so that the people as well as infrastructure can be secure. Regrettably, right of way has been sufficiently abused in many built environments in the country because urban planners have failed to enforce compliance. Structures are now put up in right of way even though the cost of destroying such structure or any loss that might be incurred, is borne by property owner. Assessing disaster sites have become problematic. Many markets are not fire-compliant, and fire service authorities find it difficult to access disaster sites to bring infernos under control.

It is instructive to state that most of the towns in the country were well planned even before the colonial times. A lot of the cities had general plans and master-plans to guide development. Records show that town planning or regional planning started at least 300 years before the arrival of the British. Before that time, the Portuguese had been to the Benin Empire and found that there was no city as better planned as Benin city in the 15th century.

In recent history, these laudable achievements have been undermined by a plethora of issues. The Federal Capital Territory (FCT) can be used as a pointer to the disorderliness that takes place in some other towns in the country. From inception though, every square inch of the 250 square.km land of the FCT was planned. The planning was supposed to be systematic; development was supposed to start from phases one, two, three, four and now phase five. But the development process was not systematic.

The movement of the seat of government from Lagos to Abuja was supposed to be systematic but it was not. It was hurriedly done. As a result, certain policies that are not supposed to be implemented are now receiving approval. That is why there are issues of squatter settlements and unauthorised developments springing up by the day. Also, the resettlement programme has not been systematic as planned because some indigenous settlements have not been moved to where they should be, with many pedestrian walkways in the Federal Capital Territory being turned into parking lots.

Nevertheless the FCT has a good document that is supposed to guide the coordination of the activities in the city and also serve as a model for sub-national entities. But the FCT lacks up to date maps to work on. Therefore, it's difficult to have current planning, and if there is planning at all, there are always issues of inadequate funding, and lack of equipment. There is also the absence training and retraining programmes to retain manpower and to implement the FCT plans. If an environment is not mapped, it cannot be well managed. It is said that the Department of Development Control, the organ statutorily responsible for enforcement of development, also has limited capacity to carry out enforcement through the FCT.

Authorities have disclosed that the last time the FCT had a base map was in the 90s. It is hoped that the current effort by the Director of Survey and Mapping in the FCT to get an up to date base map will be successful.

With that, the city can monitor implementation, its settlements and plans.

Sometimes, there are areas designated for residential, light industries, heavy industries, among others. But you find that even within the residential areas, there are factories which put a lot of pressure on the limited utilities and facilities which have been provided based on a given population.

That is why there is epileptic power supply. It is the reason why pipes provided for sewers are clogged; people resort to boreholes because public water supply has been converted to industrial use.

There are low density, medium density and high density areas but people change these land uses at will. In the FCT for instance, streets like Adetokunbo Ademola, Ladoke Akintola, Aminu Kano Crescent; Usman and Gana streets in Maitama, are purely low density areas but they have been converted into other uses hence the heavy traffic build-ups that are noticed in some of these areas.

In some saner climes, if a garden is to be converted into other uses, consent of neighbours will be sought, and if they don't approve, you don't convert. In Nigeria, there are enough plans and laws but they suffer enforcement glitches partly because some enforcement agencies are compromised. Many times when underground cables are dug, they disrupt water and energy supply, among others, and officials look the other way. The underground engineering cadastral maps for water, that show connection points in the FCT are largely disregarded.

Authorities have made efforts to disabuse the minds of people about the existence of silos mentality among the different professional bodies. For instance, the Surveyor General's office wrote a memo to the Federal Executive Council (FEC) in 2005. One of the conclusions of the Council was the approval of the office as an Extra-Ministerial Department which empowers it to have units in water resources, works and housing, transportation, environment, and other human activities and development purposes. This is in addition to the monthly Technical Coordination Committee meetings chaired by the executive secretary of the FCDA, and attended by stakeholders in technical departments for planning, engineering, survey and mapping, land, fire service, water board, among others.

Contd on page 29

THE HYDROXYCHLOROQUINE CONUNDRUM

The world has been gripped in the throes of a terrible pandemic for months now, and one thing that has made the pandemic even more terrible is the unavailability of definite cure for it. Just when scientists, researchers, and other health experts think they may have found a possible cure, results from other studies come up to debunk their claims. Perhaps, one of the most controversial drugs that has attracted attention worldwide is chloroquine and its close derivative, hydroxychloroquine. While some studies have lauded the effectiveness of hydroxychloroquine in treating COVID-19, some others seem to be hell-bent on rejecting the efficacy of the drug. Where does truth begin and where does fantasy end for hydroxychloroquine.

The first case of the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) caused by the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) was identified in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. 118,000 cases in 114 countries later, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the disease a pandemic on March 11, 2020. At about the same time a heated search for a cure was on, and a number of drugs were being

recommended for managing identified COVID-19 cases. The recommended drugs include Remdesivir, Lopinavir/ritonavir, and Hydroxychloroquine.

Having identified these drugs, the next step for most researchers and the WHO was to determine if any, of the drugs would work to cure people of or prevent people from contracting COVID-19. WHO launched the 'Solidarity Trial' on March 18, 2020, an international clinical trial taking place in more than 60 countries. The information on WHO's website noted, 'The Solidarity Trial compares options against standard of care, to assess their relative effectiveness against COVID-19. By enrolling patients in multiple countries, the Solidarity

Trial aims to rapidly discover whether any of the drugs slow disease progression or improve survival.'

A similar trial touted as the 'largest randomised controlled trial of potential COVID-19 treatments in the world' was rolled out in the United Kingdom on the 3rd of April 2020. The trial code-named RECOVERY, short for Randomised Evaluation of Covid-19 therapy, consisted of about 11,000 patients from 175 NHS hospitals in the UK. These two trials notwithstanding, there were other independent trials being conducted in different hospitals/clinics/laboratories across the world.



We'll come back to the WHO, RECOVERY, and other trials later. First, a quick detour that will explain how hydroxychloroquine came to be included in the discussion for a COVID-19 cure.

Chloroquine and its less toxic metabolite, hydroxychloroquine, have been historically used in the treatment of malaria, rheumatoid arthritis, and lupus erythematosus among other diseases. In 2005, a study by Vincent et al. found Chloroquine to be effective in the treatment of SARS-CoV, also a coronavirus (SARS was discovered

in Guangdong, China, in 2002). So when COVID-19 was discovered, it was easy for researchers to consider the possibility of hydroxychloroquine being effective against the virus. This assumption was further strengthened by American President Donald Trump's statement in March, backing the use of hydroxychloroquine for COVID-19 treatment. Trump's action was based on a study carried out by French researcher, Professor Didier Raoult, who claimed a 100% recovery rate for patients treated with a combination of hydroxychloroquine and azithromycin. This contributed to the US's Food and Drug Administration's decision to issue an Emergency Use Authorisation (EUA) for hydroxychloroquine and chloroquine in the management of COVID-19 in March.

The above set the stage for an all-out barrage of discoveries and retractions, accusations and counter-accusations, studies and counter-studies that have divided key players into two teams: Pro-hydroxychloroquine and anti-hydroxychloroquine, with little room for being on the fence.

One of the first study results about the use of hydroxychloroquine in treating COVID-19 was the one by Wei Tang et al., who concluded that hydroxychloroquine was ineffective and even harmful in the management of COVID-19.

Perhaps one of the most popular results was the one published on May 22nd by the British Medical Journal, The Lancet, which claimed hydroxychloroquine was ineffective against COVID-19 and caused a higher mortality rate among administered patients. According to the researchers, 'We were unable to confirm a benefit of hydroxychloroquine or chloroquine, when used alone or with a macrolide, on in-hospital outcomes for COVID-19. Each of these drug regimens was associated with decreased in-hospital survival and an increased frequency of ventricular arrhythmias when used for treatment of COVID-19.' The study was later retracted after severe backlash from peer reviewers, but this was after it influenced the WHO to temporarily suspend the hydroxychloroquine arm of its 'Solidarity Trial' on May 25th. The trial resumed on the 3rd of June.

Two days after the WHO resumed the hydroxychloroquine arm of its 'Solidarity Trial', the UK's RECOVERY Trial team published the results of their findings on hydroxychloroquine. Alas, it was another death knell for the drug and its possible efficacy against COVID-19. According to Martin Landray, Professor of Medicine and Epidemiology at the Nuffield Department of Population Health, University of Oxford, and Deputy Chief Investigator, "There has been huge speculation and uncertainty about the role of hydroxychloroquine as a treatment for COVID-19, but an absence of reliable information from large randomised trials. Today's preliminary results from the RECOVERY trial are quite clear – hydroxychloroquine does not reduce the risk of death among hospitalised patients with this new disease. This result should change medical practice worldwide and demonstrates the importance of large, randomised trials to inform decisions about both the efficacy and the safety of treatments."

Not long after the RECOVERY result was published, the WHO discontinued the hydroxychloroquine arm of its 'Solidarity Trial'. The WHO based their decision to discontinue the study on the recommendations from the International Steering Committee formulated of the Solidarity Trial. According to them, 'These interim trial results show that hydroxychloroquine and lopinavir/ritonavir produce little or no reduction in the mortality of hospitalised COVID-19 patients when compared to standard of care. Solidarity trial investigators will interrupt the trials with immediate effect.'

The results above and from other studies not quoted here led to a massive boycott of hydroxychloroquine in some countries and quarters. The American Food and Drug Administration in June revoked the Emergency Use Authorisation for hydroxychloroquine they had previously issued. France was not left behind, as they also ordered a stoppage in the use of hydroxychloroquine to treat COVID-19.

The evidence-based verdicts above notwithstanding, there is still massive support for the use of hydroxychloroquine from the pro-hydroxychloroquine team and also evidence-based fact for the purported effectiveness of the drug in treating COVID-19.

A very vocal member of team hydroxychloroquine is none other than President Donald Trump. President Trump's initial support for the drug was established earlier in this piece, and his stand has made him the subject of several criticisms and backlash from the media. In May, Trump informed the American Press that he was taking hydroxychloroquine, perhaps to put his money where his mouth is. There have been insinuations that Trump's support for the drug is not all altruistic, and that he probably stands to be financially compensated if the drug is accepted.

Another popular pro-hydroxychloroquiner is Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro. Bolsonaro has for months eulogised the efficacy of hydroxychloroquine and also used the drug when he contracted COVID-19 in July. Bolsonaro has faced his own share of criticisms and accusations over his unpopular stand, but like his American counterpart he remains unwavering in his belief.

Asides anecdotal support for the use of hydroxychloroquine in treating COVID-19, there is research and other practical evidence to back this claim.



An analysis published in July by the Henry Ford Health System, an American non-profit organisation, showed that hydroxychloroquine helped reduce the death rate in hospitalised COVID-19 patients. Dr Steven Kalkanis, CEO, Henry Ford Medical Group and Senior Vice President and Chief Academic Officer of Henry Ford Health System said, “Our analysis shows that using hydroxychloroquine helped save lives. As doctors and scientists, we look to the data for insight. And the data here is clear that there was benefit to using the drug as a treatment for sick, hospitalized patients.”

Another research showing the usefulness of hydroxychloroquine as a cure for COVID-19 is the one by French Professor Didier Raoult et al. cited earlier in this piece. It must be mentioned that Raoult has faced stiff backlash over his findings, with people questioning its accuracy or otherwise.

Some other countries like Cuba, India, Senegal, have claimed hydroxychloroquine works as cure and preventative measures against COVID-19.

But is hydroxychloroquine truly ineffective or is there is more to the stiff opposition? Hydroxychloroquine is a relatively cheap drug, and accessing it is quite easy. Could it be that in a race for who will earn more if an expensive drug is touted as being effective in the treatment for COVID-19, researchers, doctors and other stakeholders are playing poker with the truth? This may have remained largely in the realm of conjecture, but a recent

video by Cameroonian-American doctor, Dr Stella Immanuel, seems to lend credence to this assertion.

In the video which has since been taken down, Dr Immanuel claimed to have cured over 350 COVID-19 patients using a combination of hydroxychloroquine, zithromax and zinc. Dr Immanuel went further to cast aspersions on the researchers who say hydroxychloroquine is not effective in treating COVID-19. Many individuals and bodies have of course come out to debunk Dr Immanuel’s claims, but it is still not clear who exactly to believe at this point?

The giant of Africa is still running clinical trials on hydroxychloroquine. Preliminary trials in Lagos State have found a promising drug that will serve as a preventive measure. The Nigerian Centre for Disease Control has cautioned against the use of hydroxychloroquine in the management of COVID-19, pending definitive results from these studies,. Mr Doyin Okupe, a former presidential aide, shared his experience with hydroxychloroquine in May. Mr Okupe contracted COVID-19 in April and said he used a combination of hydroxychloroquine, azithromycin and vitamin C.

While scientists, researchers, and other health professionals worldwide continue in their quest to find a cure for COVID-19, it is recommended that they all give room for every country to try out what works best for them.

Oriyomi Adebare

LEBANON: A STATE ON THE BRINK OF FAILURE

While grappling with the dreary realities of Covid-19 that has halted economies and humbled superpowers, Lebanon, it seems, has in the proverbial sense, skirted off from frying pan to fire following the tragic blast in Beirut on the 4th of August, 2020. Initial speculations alluded it to be a terrorist attack, some quarters suspected it to be an Israel affair owing to the unresolved tensions between both countries. But, in due course, reports, after thorough investigations, and especially after both Israel and Senior Hezbollah officials debunked such floating claims, pointed to compromised ammonium salts that had been stored for years in a warehouse sited in the building, alongside others, which the explosion brought to rubbles. Like most tragedies of non-human involvement – like natural disasters, or perhaps in this case a secondary human involvement, we attribute such negative debilitating force to providence, the hand of god if we may – the survivors are left to bear their grief without hope of retribution, or justice, or whatever it is we cling to as recourse for misery.

Believed to be one of the most powerful non-nuclear explosions



in history, the bang, according to experts, was a seismic event of magnitude 3.3 that was felt in surrounding countries like Turkey, Syria, Israel, Cyprus, and certain parts of Europe. So far, it has been estimated that there have been at least over 171 deaths and 6000 injured, and property to the tune of \$10-15 billion damaged, rendering over three hundred thousand people homeless. As of recent findings, it is still not known what caused the fire that triggered the cache of ammonium salt into the full-blown disaster that it ended up creating.

Prior to the blast, the economy of Lebanon was in bad shape, in shambles really; an occurrence attributed to a deep rot, corruption, and mismanagement in the system. The Government, now resigned under pressure, had defaulted on debts and poverty had risen past fifty

percent, so much so that in the spring of Covid-19, the government struggled to pay medical staff and personnel.

Naturally, as with ill happenings of such standing, the world rallies in solidarity. Israel to their credit, despite having no diplomatic ties with Lebanon, offered aid through their UN channel – an offer which was repudiated by the Lebanese government. The West as accustomed, have expressed interest in helping with aid and relief, but they have maintained that such interventions will be given directly to the Lebanese people, and that their benevolence come with strings attached: that

major reforms in the character of proper democracy must take place before billions of dollars get introduced into the hands of the citizenry. U.S. Undersecretary of State, David Hale, said Washington is ready to support a Lebanese government that “reflects and responds to the will of the people and genuinely commits to and acts for real change”, while the French president, Emmanuel Macron, in a call with the Iranian president admonished that regional powers

should cease from interfering or accelerating political strains in Lebanon as it transits into a new government. And on Twitter he said, ‘I have spoken to US President Donald Trump about the situation in the Eastern Mediterranean, Libya and Lebanon. We share the same views. Peace and security in the region is our common interest, which we will uphold.’

It is to this end that Iran accused the West of taking advantage of the political vulnerability of the Lebanese state to dictate policy – insinuating a strategy by the West to install their puppet to absolutely wield the reins of control.

contd on Page 40

EDUCATION, CONSCIOUSNESS, AND SOLIDARITY

REMINISCENCES OF MY DIASPORA EXPERIENCE

I first journeyed out of the shores of Nigeria on the 3rd of August 2012, to pursue my master's degrees in Ecology in Norway. Yes, Norway! My choice of Norway was due to serendipity and a curiosity to go somewhere a bit different from where most Nigerians like to go. I knew Norway was cold, but could not imagine exactly how cold, since we do not have winter season in Nigeria. At any rate, I did arrive in Norway in the Fall of 2012 and was greeted at Oslo Central Station by a Norwegian student who had volunteered to help me settle-in to my new environment. It was my first significant encounter with a Caucasian, and I was impressed by his humility and kindness. We ended up chatting for a while and I lost track of time so much that I missed my first train. I had to wait for another 30 minutes or so for the next one. In that moment, I learned my first lesson abroad- always be punctual! I quickly realized I was now in a different society where the rules of success are quite different, and time is of great value.

After some 40 minutes train ride from Oslo, I eventually arrived at Aas, where I would be living for the next 2 years. As if the beauty



and wonder of the high-speed trains I had seen in Oslo were not enough, I was inspired by the orderliness and preparedness of the student housing office in Aas. On my arrival, I received my room keys and surprisingly at the time, a key to my mailbox. Whao! A mailbox to myself alone. So, even on my first day in Norway, I was beginning to get a sense of how underdeveloped my country is. While I had seen these things in movies and read about them, it took living those experiences to fully comprehend the damage that has been wrought on Nigeria. One is even more enraged in knowing that Nigeria was not always such a challenged country, that there was a time, not quite long ago, when Nigerians were proud of their home and could hold their own in global circles due to the quality of education available at home and the country's good reputation.

It was this stark and inescapable contrast between my new environment and my home country that led to being curious about why things are the way they are and what could be done about it. I must say that I received a great education in Norway without paying a nickel in tuition. I also had full health insurance coverage above an equivalent of about 36,000 naira. Which meant if I had any illness, I would be only be liable for an equivalent of 36,000 naira and the rest would be paid by the Norwegian government. I could not believe such benefits could be extended to a foreign student who bore no allegiance to the country.

My examination of the Norwegian system clearly indicated a few things that make things work in Norway. First, is strong participation in politics among the rank and file of Norwegians. I recall my Norwegian housemate missing classes to help campaign for the Green party in a faraway part of the country. And she was not alone, it was common to see students and young adults participate in politics and drive the debate in Norwegian society. This is

not as much the case back home, where we still have seventy- and eighty- year olds firmly in control of the fate of our society. Second is a general acknowledgement that society works well when there is a minimum standard of living for all. I once asked my Norwegian housemate who the richest man in Norway is. And she shrugged to say that most Norwegians do not care to think about those kinds of questions, since everyone has a decent life at least. But she did tell me it is Olav Thon, owner of the famous Thon hotels where some of my International student friends did menial jobs like house cleaning to survive.

The disparities in living standards among International students from developed and developing countries further aroused my consciousness and I began to read



materials and watch YouTube videos discussing philosophy and political economy in a global context. I was particularly drawn to talks and interviews given by the great American linguist and philosopher- Noam Chomsky. It was from Chomsky I learned about Anarchism and how constraints on freedom are mostly man-made. I believe his description of Anarchism, as a way of seeing the world in which all forms of authority, domination, hierarchy must justify themselves, to be apt. And if they cannot justify themselves, they are illegitimate and should be dismantled. In other words, power structures are not self-justifying, and the burden of proof is on them to justify themselves.

My experience interacting with fellow Africans and others from developing countries also aroused my curiosity on the race question. I can relate to this better now in light of what could be described as a summer of discontent, with the recent Black Lives Matter protests being staged all across the world. I did not realize I was black until I left home to study and live in a predominantly white society. That experience is inescapable for every man of color. In some way or fashion, and at some point, you will feel prejudiced or even discriminated against on account of the color of your skin. I understand this is

the current fate of most Africans, which I believe can be altered by rebuilding our societies across Africa and the developing world at large.

I have raised several crucial topics in the preceding paragraphs, each of which I intend to explore deeper in subsequent dispatches. The process of recollecting and writing this essay has been very refreshing and gratifying in realizing how far I have come since leaving the shores of Nigeria some eight years ago. I consider writing on my diaspora experience as a way of contributing to the intellectual debate on the way forward for Nigeria and how my interpretation of world events could influence young adults back home, whom I do believe are the hope for the future.

Damilola Eytayo is an insight data analyst and an ex-banker who recently bagged his Ph.D in Plant Biology, specializing in Forest Ecology in Ohio University, USA.

KAYODE FAYEMI: LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

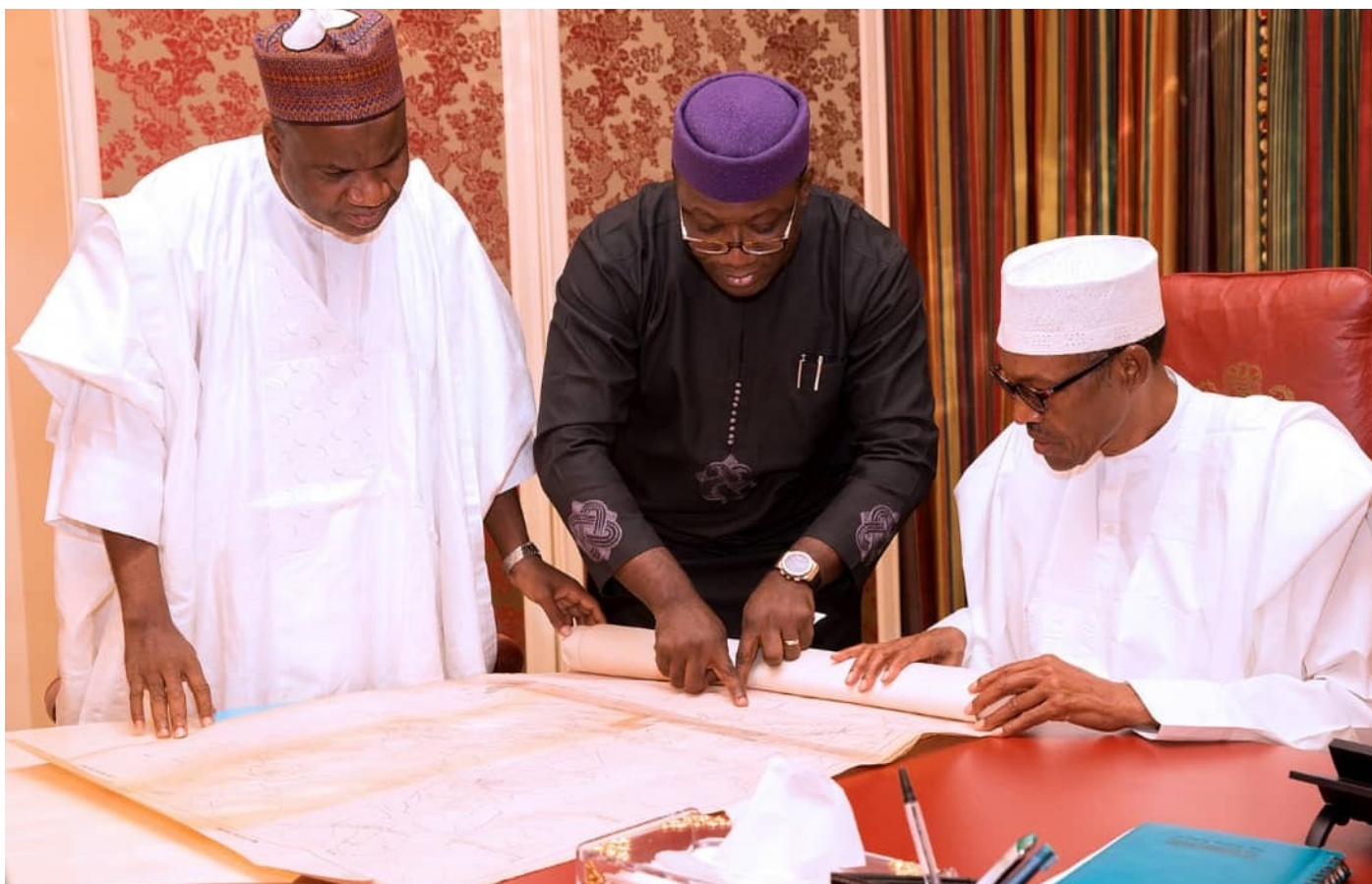


Kayode Fayemi, the Governor of Ekiti State, is a renowned academic, author, leader and politician. He needs no introduction in the political sphere of democracy, especially in the South-Western parts of Nigeria, because of his contribution to the ‘guerrilla war’ against tyranny and military dictatorship, which he supported in no small measure as an international voice against the General Sani Abacha government.

Fayemi took his pro-democratic activism up a notch when he launched the first ever secret citizen radio against the government. This aligned with and placed his student journalism-activism experience on a larger scale. With the collaboration and intellectual support of his friends in the United Kingdom who constituted a relentless diaspora and diplomatic force, the reign of General Sani Abacha was made utterly uncomfortable. Among other things, Dr. Fayemi is also a strategist who holds degrees in History and International Relations from the University of Lagos, and Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife. He proceeded to earn a doctorate in

War Studies from King’s College, University of London. He is also a Fellow at the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Ibadan. A proficient policy expert and thinker, Fayemi has developed policy development interests in Natural Resource Governance, Democratisation, Constitutionalism, Security Sector Governance, Civil-Military Relations and Regionalism in the Global Context. He has also lectured in countries in Africa, Europe and the Americas.

According to the CASA Foundation for International Development, Kayode Fayemi was the main technical adviser to Nigeria’s Human Rights Violations Investigation Commission (Oputa Panel), which investigated past military abuses and currently serves on the Presidential Implementation Committees on Security Sector Reform, NEPAD and the Millennium Development Goals. He was technical expert to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) on small arms and light weapons and United Nations Economic Commission of Africa on governance issues. He is also



a member, Africa Policy Advisory Panel of the British Government. At other times, he has served as a consultant to the OECD on Security Sector Reform and chaired the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative's Committee of Experts on developing guiding principles and mechanisms of constitution making in Commonwealth Africa.' Fayemi, according to WorldCat, has 25 works in 56 publications in his fields of interest, popular among which are 'Nigeria: Crisis of Nationhood.

Comrade Kayode Fayemi would have thought that the years of political 'warfare' which undid the wellbeing of his people were over when democracy was installed into government and governance structures of the country. But electoral malpractices forestalled his dream of becoming the governor of Ekiti State in 2005. As a governorship candidate of the Action Congress, he had to fight in the courts to regain his electoral rights that were rigged. It took another timeline of five years to displace the legal barricades and to be justified winner of the elections. Fayemi has brought to bear his portfolios of intellectual interest in his role as adviser to multilateral and development agencies.

The first four years of Governor Kayode Fayemi saw great transformation in the State. He started the first social welfare package for the elderly, engaged the free ed-

ucation ideals of Obafemi Awolowo, for the poor, and provided every secondary school pupil with laptops in order to keep them acquainted with information technology skills.

Ekiti State witnessed a great turnout during the West African Examination Council exams because of Fayemi's vast investment in the state. He also gave numerous scholarships to Ekiti State students and sponsored education and culture programmes such as the Ake Book and Arts Festival.

As Minister of Mines and Steel Development under the Muhammadu Buhari government, Kayode Fayemi created and sponsored agendas to reposition the Nigerian mining sector in order to create jobs for the teeming Nigerian youths and to diversify the economy of the country. He was also Chairman of the Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI), a position which gave him the opportunity to engage best mining industry practices and brainstorm on the problems of the industry alongside practitioners, players and entrepreneurs in the industry. In the time frame of his ministerial role, Dr. Kayode Fayemi did not only understudy the terrain afresh, but he also implemented some of the policy ideas from his National Resource Governance research and policy background. He put in place a



roadmap with set objectives for the revamping of the viable mining sector. He also worked on the establishment of a regulation body to curb excess and illegal mining, and to equip mining cooperatives so as to maximise the human and technical potentials of members of the mining cooperatives.

As Minister of Mines, Fayemi had expressed to the Oxford Business Group the opinion that his ministry was enhancing activities as outlined in the road map in terms of regulatory certainty, incentives for investment, infrastructural development and geological data generation, while reorganising and formalising small-scale mining. In this capacity, he also led his Ministry to resolve many legacy litigations around assets such as steel and aluminium plants.

The government, during his time as minister, had increased funding to the sector, and an intervention fund of roughly \$100m was equally made available. This was an unprecedented allocation which had helped the Ministry under Fayemi to focus on exploration activities and access to finance for projects that have the opportunity to cross over from exploration to production. According to him, 'We also benefit from the mining investment fund we have in partnership with the Nigeria Sovereign

Investment Authority, which provides opportunities and access for junior-level mining professionals, helping them to develop the full value chain from geological prospects to production and processing. Recently, there was also the discovery of a large deposit of nickel by an Australian company in Kaduna State, and we are increasing our efforts on processing for asphalt construction.'

In recent times, Fayemi has been one party man who is interested in shaping the party structure for a formidable outing for the election year. His contributions to the party have received some criticism but have been regaled with praise by many APC governors in the Governors Forum. He has also had to grapple with the backlog of teacher's benefits in a state whose economic fortunes remains an experiment, due to the faux-federalism that is practised in Nigeria. Ekiti State and many others rely heavily on the revenue from the federal government to attend to both daily and interventionist governance of the state. The Governor had to negotiate with the teachers and continues to do so with the public teachers, public doctors and the civil servants in order to make sure that they do not down tools.

Undeterred by the problems confronting the state,



overnor Kayode Fayemi has approved a new educational policy in the state. The policy guarantees the teaching of Information and Communications Technology in Ekiti state. The entire policy reflects the consistency of vision and values for the education sector from his first governorship years. The standardisation of the education policy of Ekiti State with human capital development, infrastructure, awareness and communication, governance, finance and monitoring and evaluation as thematic areas, shows the futuristic paradigms that the Governor has for his people. He has also intensified efforts to build vocational capacities of indigent Ekiti people so that they can also become self-sufficient.

In June 2020, the Ekiti State Government commissioned a mobile laboratory to help curb the deadly COVID-19. The molecular laboratory installed at the Ekiti State Teaching Hospital, Ado-Ekiti. In May, the governor signed an MOU with Oodua InfraCo LTD to activate a 606KM broadband Infrastructure that will benefit and engender an IT complaint Ekiti people. In March, the Government of Ekiti State partnered with a Dutch firm, and has partnered with Dangote Group,

Stallion Group and Promasidor to revitalise the state that once used to be one of Nigeria's agricultural sources. In January, the Ekiti State Government partnered with Momdia Group, a Dubai-based telecoms firm for the entrenchment of a new mobile child health service. Since the government of Kayode Fayemi assumed office, there has not been a day of rest.

The Governor is quick to realise that there is so much that can be done without relying on the revenue of the Federal Government. He has shown that the best way to make governance work is to reach out to partners under a transparent and forthright leadership. For Fayemi, there will always be challenges for leadership in volatile African states but it will take communication and service delivery to disrupt the years of distrust that have permeated the consciousness of the Ekiti people and Nigeria as a whole.

NDIDI NWUNELI

FOUNDER LEAP AFRICA; CO-FOUNDER, AACE FOODS; AND DIRECTOR SAHEL CAPITAL.

Ndidi Nwuneli, MFR, has over fourteen years of experience in international development. Following her early years as a management consultant with McKinsey & Co., Nwuneli returned to Nigeria to fulfil her passion of promoting entrepreneurship and leadership development. She served as the pioneer Executive Director of the FATE Foundation, and then established LEAP Africa, which provides leadership, ethics and management training and conducts leadership research, and NIA, which empowers female university students to achieve their highest potential in life. Nwuneli is a graduate of the Harvard Business School and the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, USA and serves on numerous boards.

A commitment to excellence

We lived on the University of Nigeria Enugu Campus for the most formative years of my life. During this time, I attended the University Primary School and then Federal Government College Enugu, before Nigeria in 1991, to enrol at The Clarkson School. My parents instilled very strong within us from very early ages.

They revealed to us the importance of always for and achieving the best. Phrases such as ‘90% is not good enough’, ‘Does the person who got an A have two heads?’ were often heard in our home. They taught us the value of education and encouraged us to read widely, write poems, journals and biographies, and to develop our talents. My mother created a learning environment for us at home,





supplementing our formal education with numerous activities, which she developed and executed. In addition, our parents were extremely involved in our education and professional pursuits. They remained cheerleaders and champions for us, always pushing us to apply to the best schools, the most reputable organizations and to excel in those environments.

This commitment to excellence has and continues to inspire and challenge us to be the best in everything we set out to do! A heart for service My parents exposed my siblings and I to the concepts of patriotism and service from very young ages. Despite their Ivy League education, they both chose to devote their lives to teaching in the Nigerian higher educational system, fighting against all odds to ensure some level of excellence in their respective departments. During the dark Abacha years, when many Nigerian professors fled abroad, my parents stuck it out, going for many months without salaries. In addition, holidays at our home were devoted to giving to others, and trips to the Motherless Babies home and other charity organizations formed a critical part of our socialization.

The value of hard work and Integrity

My and father often you told us that a measure of an individual's worth was not based on his riches, but on the depth and quality of friendships that he or she had. Both parents modelled the ethical behaviour that they expected from us, rejecting opportunities to 'reap where they did not sow', and choosing to live honourably! In addition, pocket money was not a part of my childhood. Instead, my mother encouraged me from 12 years old to work – first as a 'gardener' for our neighbour, where I watered her flowers every evening, and as a librarian for the Niger Wives Library. The little money that I earned from these positions taught me the value of money, and how to live 'within my means,' an invaluable lesson given that in the non-profit sector, I have had to manage funds scrupulously to achieve results.

Pride in our Heritage

Our friends and colleagues marvel at the fact that despite our interracial heritage, my siblings and I speak Igbo fluently, all four girls married Igbo men from Anambra State and that we continue to engage in local, regional and international efforts to uplift our people. These results did not happen by chance. Our parents introduced us to

the Igbo language, exposed us to every aspect of our rich history and culture and ensured that we spent significant time with our grandmother and other relatives in Awka. Throughout their struggles in the country, they remained positive about Nigeria's future, and continued to encourage us to come home and contribute to its growth and development.

Treading the Narrow Non-profit Path

I never actually planned to work in the non-profit sector, at least not at such an early age. My plan was to establish a successful career in corporate America and then return to Nigeria to give back and serve. This was the path that was extolled in my undergraduate years at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania and at Harvard Business School– LEARN, EARN & THEN SERVE. However, God had different plans for me, which unfolded through a series of miraculous events. First, in April 1995, during my final year in University, I received a courier package from ARM, one of Nigeria's leading asset management firms, inviting me to work with them for the summer. ARM and I cannot clearly trace how they found about me, because I had never submitted a CV to ARM and would not have ordinarily contemplated a job in Nigeria during the dark Abacha years.

When I returned to the United States and joined McKinsey & Company, a leading international management consulting firm, I was fortunate to get staffed on a few projects with non-profit clients. I enjoyed these projects immensely, and felt a deep sense of satisfaction from contributing to the lives of others, as opposed to merely growing shareholder value. McKinsey offered to cover a portion of the cost of my MBA from the Harvard Business School, with the understanding that I would return to the firm.

While at Harvard, I chose to devote a portion of my elective study to entrepreneurship and non-profit management and volunteered with the Centre for Women & Enterprise in Boston. In addition, I turned down attractive offers with consumer goods companies, and chose instead to spend the summer between my 1st and 2nd year of Business School in the West Bank, working with the Centre for Middle East Competitive Strategy. This internship also proved to be a defining one. First, it exposed me to resilient Palestinian entrepreneurs who despite greater odds than many face on the African continent, were excelling. It also challenged me to consider what difference I could make

in my own country. As a result, upon graduating from the Harvard Business School, I spent the summer of 1999 serving as a consultant for the Ford Foundation office of West Africa, where I supported two of their micro finance grantees–COWAN and FADU. This experience crystallized my desire to establish a non-profit in Nigeria, and also enabled me to work with Dr. Adhiambo Odaga, who was then a program officer at the Ford Foundation, and has become my mentor, and remains one of my greatest role models to this day. After my stint with Ford, I returned to McKinsey's Chicago office in October 1999 to fulfil my obligation, but Nigeria remained on my mind. A telephone call in early 2000 from Mr. Fola Adeola, the founder of Guaranty Trust Bank, in which he offered me a few positions in the private sector, and then mentioned an opportunity to help establish the FATE Foundation–created the perfect opportunity to serve.

Despite all opposing counsel, I took out a loan to repay my debt to McKinsey and returned to Nigeria in May 2000, a few months after my 25th birthday. FATE Foundation's mandate was to create wealth in Nigeria, by training, mentoring and supporting unemployed youth to become successful entrepreneurs who could create jobs for themselves and others. Through tremendous hard work, and the terrific support of a visionary founder – Fola Adeola, a dedicated board, funders, volunteers, and mentors, FATE was able to launch its School of Entrepreneurship, a Mentoring Program and a range of other services, in July 2000. Unfortunately, my tenure at FATE was short lived, as I was compelled to return to the United States in January 2002, because my new husband and long-time friend–Udemezuo Nwuneli decided to pursue his MBA at Harvard. While in the United States, I established FATE USA and continued to support FATE's efforts. It is important to note that FATE Foundation continues to thrive under the dynamic leadership of its chair, board and current executive director. Additional information about this pioneering organization can be found at www.fatefoundation.com.

Why crawl when we can LEAP? LEAP Africa was born during a family vacation in Guatemala in March 2002. As I toured the country with my husband, I asked myself a question – 'why is this country, one of the poorest countries in South America light years ahead of the average African nation?' Propelled by my anger



about the state of affairs on the African continent, and the realization that many of our so called “leaders” were not addressing the challenges confronting the continent, I felt a clear call from God to establish an organization that would inspire, empower and equip a new cadre of leaders in Africa. Leadership, Effectiveness, Accountability & Professionalism (LEAP) is committed to inculcating effective leadership attributes and principles in to the mind-set of every African. At LEAP, we describe a leader as an individual who has a vision and galvanizes others to join him/ her to achieve that vision, which is focused on achieving positive change in society. The truth is that if more Africans chose to act like true leaders, the poverty, health and other challenges that we face would be addressed.

Our activities are hinged on the belief that if we can change the way our people think, then we can shape the way they act and live. From its inception, through the support of a dynamic board and dedicated team, LEAP launched innovative programs that were practical and relevant for the Nigerian context. More specifically, the organization provides leadership and life skills, ethics and management training programs for the youth, social entrepreneurs, business owners and the public sector. It also provides one-on-one coaching services, conducts leadership research and organizes the Annual Nigerian Youth Leadership Awards. In addition, LEAP has championed the Nigeria 2025 Scenario project, in collaboration with the African Leadership Institute, and serves as the Nigerian partners for YALI West

Africa. The organization has also published a number of pioneering books including: *Defying the Odds: Case Studies of Nigerian Companies that have Survived Generations*, and *Get on Board: A Practical Guide to Building a Board of Directors in Nigeria*. In 2008, it launched *Rage for Change: A practical guide for young Nigerians who want to make a difference*, and *Building a Culture of Ethics* in 2009. To date, LEAP has launched its programs in nine Nigerian cities, including Abuja, Awka, Benin, Enugu, Kano, Ibadan, Lagos, Port Harcourt and Onitsha. In addition, it has provided short courses for entrepreneurs and youth in Ghana, Kenya and South Africa. Through these programs, LEAP has supported over 3,000 participants through its core programs, and over 30,000 through its participation in leadership and management training workshops across Africa.

These participants have in turn instituted over 350 change projects within their companies and communities to impact the lives of others. In 2008, we introduced our curriculum to the public education system in three Nigerian States, by training teachers to deliver leadership, ethics and civics training to their students, and then providing them with funds to commence change projects in their communities. Our hope is that this curriculum will be adopted across the nation. Our vision is two-fold: 1) that by 2025, the alumni of LEAP’s Youth Leadership Program will be recognized as dynamic, principled and public and non-profit sectors, spearheading Africa’s ascent in to the

international arena; and 2) by 2052, 60% of businesses established by the alumni of LEAP Africa's Business Leadership Program would be thriving in the second or third generation. LEAP's journey and success to date is definitely because of its partnerships. We have been blessed by an exceptional and devoted Board of Directors, close advocates and mentors, and excellent, committed funders including the Ford Foundation, Nokia, the International Youth Foundation, the UK Global Opportunities Fund and others. Please visit www.leapafrika.org for additional information about LEAP Africa.

Through my work with LEAP, I have become even more convinced that the solution to Africa's problems lies in our hands. The sooner we recognize that we have everything that it takes to transform our own lives, and that we all have a sphere of influence and can lead positive change in our communities, the closer we will be to the true concept of leadership.

Most Fulfilling Achievements

My most fulfilling achievement to date is my two beautiful children. They are truly God's greatest gift to me. Being a mother of two terrific children trumps every other experience that I have had in life. It is probably

the most difficult task that I have ever embarked on, but definitely the most rewarding and fulfilling. Beyond this, I honestly believe that being part of shaping people's lives and helping them unleash a vision or passion that they never believed they could, gives me the greatest joy. When I read about one of my participants in the press or speak to them on the telephone and hear all about their accomplishments, I feel honoured that God allowed me to play a very small part in igniting their fire.

NIA: Life, Strength and Wealth

I conceived the idea for NIA during the Association for Women's Right in Development's (AWID) conference in Mexico in October 2002. Following the viewing of a documentary titled: 'Wishing for Seven Sons & One Daughter', and the debate that ensued about the relevance of this documentary in the Nigerian context, I had a sleepless night. I reflected on the situation in South eastern Nigeria in particular – where for many young women, marriage still represents their greatest form of security. This priority quickly shifts, after marriage, to the birth of sons, to secure their stake within the family structure. NIA means purpose in Swahili, but stands for three powerful Igbo words: Ndu–life, Ike– strength, Akunuba–wealth. The organization recognizes that university years are a defining period in the lives of most



women. As a result, it is committed to reaching out to these women through open dialogues, career counselling and leadership. It involves training and empowering them to lead full and meaningful lives. Since May 2003, NIA has provided leadership training programs, counselling, mentoring and support programs for young women from four Nigerian universities in South eastern Nigeria. Started with an innovation grant from the Association for Women's Right in Development(AWID), and supported with funding from the Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA) and the Global Fund for Women, the organization has expanded its service offerings to include a Big Sisters program, focused on young women in secondary schools, a political awareness and participation program and the 'Say No to Sexual Harassment' program. NIA is based in Enugu, Nigeria and is run by my mother, Prof. Rina Okonkwo, who is now fondly called "Mama NIA", by over 300 young women who the organisation has training and mentored. Visit www.nia-nigeria.org for additional information about NIA.

The Future

2007, In December I formally stepped down from day-to-day management of LEAP Africa. Today, I simply serve on the organization's board and as a volunteer. As a proud African woman, who has written and taught countless entrepreneurs about succession planning, I am truly delighted to have formally handed over the leadership of LEAP to two terrific women—Mosun Layode, our Executive Director and Ngozi Obigwe – our Chief Operating Officer. Both of these women have been an important part of LEAP's history, and I am thrilled that they are leading LEAP into a bright future. Our work is not done! In fact, we have only scratched the surface of Africa's leadership challenge. However, I am more convinced today than I was 6 years ago, that in our lifetime, LEAP in partnership with a range of other individuals and organizations will inspire, empower and equip a new generation of principled, disciplined and creative leaders who will transform Nigeria, West Africa and indeed the entire continent. Beyond LEAP, I currently devote the bulk of my time to managing a small consulting firm called AACE, which promotes private sector development in Africa by building successful companies and sustainable communities. It provides strategic advice and implementation support to entrepreneurs, corporations, governments, non-governmental organizations and development agencies. I work across West Africa, and I am currently managing

projects in Liberia, Nigeria and Senegal.

I continue to juggle these responsibilities with my role as a wife, mother, sister, daughter and friend. In terms of the future—I am simply letting God dream for me. However, He has laid two burdens in my heart: a) the need for a strong and vibrant African private sector with companies that can create jobs, grow our economies and compete globally—and b) the urgent need for a TRUE "African Union". I hope to contribute towards the emergence of both in my lifetime.

In 2010, Sahel Capital was selected as a fund manager for Fund for Agricultural Finance in Africa (FAFIN), a \$100 funding programme for SMEs. Sahel Capital had been a strategic advisory and consulting firm for clients in Nigeria, Benin Republic, Mali, Senegal, Ghana, and Liberia. It has also provided technical support on the continent for international agencies like the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, USAID/Africa LEAD, ECOWAS, DFID, Oxfam International, TechnoServe/ Humanity United, Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa, IFDC, and the Ford Foundation. In 2020, Ms Ndididi Nwuneli founded Nourishing Africa, a hub for Africa's Agribusiness Entrepreneurs hoping to transform the Agriculture economy in the continent. AACE has since been described by African business experts as a catalyst for the African Agribusiness and food landscape.

Nwuneli continues to soar in her many pursuits. She has received awards, recognitions, and accolades in her work as a passionate non-profit leader, entrepreneur and change agent. In 2002, She was selected as the Global Leader of Tomorrow by the World Economic Forum, Davos, Switzerland. She was honoured by the President of Nigeria as a Member of the Federal Republic, MFR, in 2004. She bagged the Excellence Award from Anambra State in 2011. She was named on the 20 Youngest Power Women in Africa in 2011. In 2013, She won the Harvard Business School Nigeria BusinessClub 2013 Leading Social Entrepreneur Award, and was honoured by the Global Fund for Women as well. Nwuneli is a board member of the Rockefeller Foundation, LEAP Africa, AACE Foods, Fairfax Africa, Godrej Group, DSM Sustainability advisory board, Nigerian Breweries and African Philanthropy Forum among others.

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