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Nigeria and Sudan: A Comparative Study of the Internal Security Threats by Herdsmen and the Janjaweed Militia – A Discourse

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Abstract: *The discourse set out to compare the internal security threats in Nigeria and Sudan and its implications, using the qualitative research orientation, where it relied extensively on secondary data for its analysis. The application of this approach, revealed that the motivations for violence arose from; the proscription of free eating of grasses and cultivated crops and ranching establishment law in some states, allegation of stolen cattle, which was found to be the weakest link, because at no time have, they reported missing herds, and the indigene/settler conflict. The settler/indigene variables were found to be the most potent cause of the herdsmen terrorism. It has cause them to rename some settlements where the original inhabitants have run away to safety. This is the major cause of the Plateau conflict. This is similar to the Darfur conflict in Sudan with the wish to exterminate the indigenous African tribes to have Darfur as a grazing ground. It recommended the display of impersonal leadership and governance two elements which are in short supply in African politics, rejigging of the security forces and abiding with federal character in the appointments of security chiefs, to enhance the apprehension and the trial of those who owned up the massacre. The discourse identified the crimes committed by herdsmen to be the same as those committed by the Janjaweed in Sudan and concluded that both the herdsmen and the Janjaweed received tacit support from the states. The tacit support of the herdsmen was displayed by the minister of defense. Consequently, the United Nations would in due course accuse the president of criminal dereliction of duty, charge him with vicarious liability and demand his prosecution at the International Tribunal at the Hague, Netherlands as was the case with Omar Al-Bashir.*

Keywords: *Nigeria, Sudan, Herdsmen, Janjaweed, Internal Security.*

INTRODUCTION

Overview: The recent upsurge in herdsmen terrorism in Nigeria have pricked the minds of scholars to question what motivated this type of internal security crisis in Nigeria because of its semblance to similar occurrence in the Islamic Republic of Sudan in the recent past. The credence of this thinking, was drawn from the semblance of the mood of the operations of these ‘non-state actors’ both in Sudan and Nigeria, and more critically on the nature of state responses to the security challenges posed by the Janjaweed, who turned Darfur into free grazing field (South West Sudan) and the Herdsmen in Nigeria who have similarly turned the farming fields in the Middle-Belt zone and other states in Nigeria into free grazing fields, which has heightened in tempo, in the last three (3) years of the All Progressive Congress (APC) government.

In both cases the states responses have been that of denial, which generate the suspicion of their complicity. Another factor which engendered the inquisitive mindset was that the Janjaweed are mostly herdsmen or

‘men on the horse or camel back who terrorized, raped, kidnapped and kill women, children and the aged in Darfur. This is the same pattern of operation by the herdsmen in Nigeria.

It would be recalled an important personality, who served the federal government at a very high level in Nigeria (Olu Falae) was abducted in his homestead and was found only when the Federal government ordered a search and rescue on him. The herdsmen in Nigeria, often lay claim that their victims, had stolen their cows, hence, they compensate with the lives of the victims. The herdsmen, in this context substitute the lives of the victims, with their presumed stolen herds of the cattle.

In Sudan, the situation is different, the indigenes of Darfur did not steal cows but complained of criminal neglect in governance, with no ‘dividend of democracy’ and resisted the government. The response was to armed Janjaweed militia to exterminate the Fur, Massalit and the Zaghawa black Sudanese and leave the territory for the Baggara minority Arab population to possess the land and use as it grazing filed.

A more critical thinking arose from the fact that the victims of these carnage in both countries, are often those of another religion other than that of the ‘non-state-actors’ the perpetrators of the heinous crime. Similarly, the zones in conflict in both countries, are often the agricultural food baskets of these countries, with very fertile land which produces food for the entire country.

The Amnesty International in its 2018 half year report, averred that one thousand, eight hundred and thirteen (1,813) people had lost their lives since January, more than double the whole of 2017 (Mamah et al., 2018) this excluded the recent carnage in Plateau state where an estimated four hundred lives mowed down in about four villages. Conversely, the United Nations often quoted figures of dead in Darfur is 70,000 in two years.

These constituted the major impetus for initiating this discourse, which is intended to interrogate and evaluate whether Nigeria out of the Herdsmen episodes and the government inactions, would go the way of Sudan? The discourse then interrogated the concepts of international security, governance, leadership, ethnic cleansing and land ownership.

These was to identify integrated interplay of these concepts in the operation of governance of these two states and how the absence of these led to the situation of militias terrorism. The objectives of the discourse were to; (i) find out if the herdsmen terrorism in Nigeria in Taraba, Adamawa, Enugu, Benue and Plateau states, is similar to the Janjaweed constant attack of Darfur in the Republic of Sudan.

(ii) Secondly, whether the carnage in Nigeria would attract the attention of the Special Prosecutor of ICC as was the case in Sudan. (iii) Whether the seeming complicity of the Nigeria state would lead to the Nigerian President being charged for crimes against humanity, war crimes in the states where the Herdsmen had struck and near Genocide occurred, just as the Omar Al’ Bashir Sudanese President had been charged and declared wanted by the International Tribunal sitting at the Hague, the ICC.

Furthermore, what accounted for the seeming similarities in the forms of non-state -actors mode of insurgency directed at a particular area of ‘Darfur’ and the Middle-Belt states, as well as in other locations in Nigeria. What could have accounted for the seeming inability of Nigeria state to rejig its security architecture to respond to the reality on ground? What constitute the constraints to deal with the situation, when ‘operation crocodile and python dances (military operations against agitations in the state) were initiated to deal with emerging problems in the South-South and South-East zones of Nigeria respectively.

Why is ‘operation cattle dance’ not initiated for this seeming intractable internal security problems? It is instructive to note that Nigeria according to the Brookings Institute (2018), had overtaken India as the country with the largest number of poor people, yet the sixth largest exporter of crude oil in the global market. This must be the case of ‘Dutch Disease’ where a country has enormous resources, yet poor, caused by the inability to manage the resource available effectively. This could only be a case of poor leadership.

II) The Problem: The substance of the problem was all about the ‘new non-state actor’ Herdsmen militia, who are now on the prowl making two contrasting claims; upon which they kill Nigerians massively while the

state security formations become helpless. On the one hand, they often claim that their cattle have been stolen hence the 'thieves' must be killed often in their sleep.

On the other hand, they would assert that, anti-open grazing laws have been enacted by some states, which restrict their freedom to grazing fields, and obstruct their assigned grazing routes, hence they must kill Nigerians in those states as consequences. The problematic requires greater scrutiny because of its complex nature, the militia in their killing escapade, ignored the existence of laws for the reconciliation of conflicts between disputants and the judicial machinery for arbitration, mediation in the country, which would have addressed their grievances if indeed their cattle were missing.

The situation was more confounded when notice was taken of the fact that, the Kaduna State, governor (El-Rufai) claimed to have identified the perpetrators of the crime and had offered monetary payment as compensation to the value of the acclaimed pilfered herds of cattle, to the militias to stop the killings, yet, this would not deter them. Elsewhere, where they had struck such as in Nimbu-Enugu state and Ondo state, where the farm of a stateman, Chief Olu Falae, was destroyed and then they kidnapped him. In Kwara state, the farm of a former Rear Admiral Afolayan (Rtd) was also ravaged.

These are locations where cattle were never claimed to have been stolen nor anti grazing laws enacted. In all these cases, no one ever heard when the cattle were stolen, the society is often thrown into scenes of crime against humanity, where people of all ages get murdered in their sleep.

Quite interesting in these cases of herdsmen militia killings in the last three (3) years, none of them have been arrested and prosecuted by the security machinery. Where announcement of arrest had been made, no one get to hear of the prosecution not to mention sentence. They seem to be untouchables who are shielded from prosecution. Paradoxically, the few farmers who retaliated and killed few herdsmen in the Mambilla Plateau area of Adamawa state, were rushed through litigation processes and sentenced to dead. However, many corporate organizations including the umbrella body of all Christians in Nigeria, the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), and many well concerned citizens appealed for clemency on their behalf.

In contrast to the above situation, in Irigwe a village in chieftdom of Bassa local council area in Plateau state, about 215 indigenes had been killed since September 2017. The local people who were in possession of firewood, sticks and cutlasses to protect themselves against any further attack were arrested (Ahovi, 2018) and prosecuted, while those who perpetrated terrorism against them were not. Another similarity of the situation, was that in Sudan, Darfurians who attempted to defended themselves by stockpiling local arrows, were arrested and sentenced for terrorism. In Nigeria as in Sudan, the 'state responses' are often similar where it showed lack of empathy on the victims.

When Benue state was burying one hundred corpses of men, women, children and the aged, the President showed no empathy, but rather was attending a wedding ceremony in Kano state at the same time. When another 300 people were murdered in Plateau state, the urgency to get there and put a stop to the incident was not crucial to him, he had to add the visit to Plateau state to the commissioning of rice seedling plant in Calabar -Cross River state before proceeding to Plateau state. In Jos -Plateau

Mr. President enjoined the victims to pray to God as there was nothing more he could do in the circumstance'. Omar Al-Bashir provided the same response when United Nations Humanitarian personnel were murdered with many Darfur natives. It would be recalled that General T.Y. Danjuma (Rtd) had during the convocation and graduation ceremony of the Taraba State University where he was the guest of honour, accused the Nigerian Military of complicity in the Herdsmen militia killings of armless civilians in Taraba state and elsewhere. The brutality and seriousness of the problem was captured by the Global Terrorism Index (GTI) group reported that; Fulani militants were the fourth deadliest terrorist group in 2014, using machine guns and attacks on villages to assault and intimidate farmers. After killing around 80 people in total from 2010 – 2013, they killed 1,229 in 2014.

Most deaths occurred in the Nigerian Middle Belt, in particular in the states of Benue, Kaduna (South), Nassarawa, Plateau and Taraba, which recorded 847 deaths...in addition to terrorist attacks, Fulani

militants were involved in non-state armed contacts with groups from Eggon, Jukun and Tiv farming communities. These conflicts resulted in 712 deaths (Global Terrorism Index, 2015, cited in Tar, 2017: 363).

When the above statistics was complemented with the current Amnesty International report of 1,813 killed by the Fulani Herdsmen in the first half of 2018 (2018 half year report), then the magnitude of the situation can be better appreciated. The above also indicated that the Global Community has designated the Herdsmen militia as a 'terrorist group', which imply that the national internal security policy should have been put in place towards addressing it just as 'operation Crocodile and Python dance' before it, was created to deal with the situation.

The non-challant attitude of the federal government, smacked suspicion of complicity as pointed out by TY Danjuma. This was the same denial put up by the Sudanese government against the suspicion of its use of the Janjaweed to terrorize Darfurians.

iii) The Principal Issues in the Problem a) The herdsmen do have an association known as Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association (MACBAN), they had averred that their murderous exercise in Taraba and Benue states respectively were as a result of Anti-Open Grazing law, which deny them the right of free grazing on farmlands.

As a result, six Benue communities were attacked on new year 2018 eve, with about 100 people murdered, up till now, no one is standing trial even when the association of the Cattle Breeders had claimed that their members carried out the crime (no arrest when the culprit are known, no prosecution and no punishment). b) Mr. Mansur Dan-Ali, the Minister of Defense, a high-ranking agent of the government explicated the incident involving the herdsmen as having been borne out of the frustration of the blockade of their grazing route.

This appear a case of support by the state to the dastard act of the herdsmen. In similar case of the state's support to the 'non-state actors-terrorists in case of Sudan, some of the Janjaweed were enlisted into the Sudanese armed forces, indicating collaboration between the Government and the militia (Omar, 2016). It could reasonably be assumed that the Herdsmen militias in Nigeria like Janjaweed in Sudan seem to be protected by the state.

iv) The Orientation of the Study: The orientation of study which the discourse adopted was the qualitative approach, which made the search exploratory in nature. This imply that it was meant to probe the underlying reasons and identify the motivations of the herdsmen to waste human lives each time they struck, without the state acting appropriately.

The approach also sought an explanda for the obvious inactions of the Nigeria state in loosening the security machinery of the state to arrest and punish the perpetrators of the crime against humanity. It relied robustly on secondary data, drawn from government pronouncements, press statements on the actors on the matter, published works on the issue where they existed.

It then sought to situate 'frustration – aggression and violence' disposition of the herdsmen in context of the ban on grazing and ranching of cattle acts passed by some of the states. If that was the case, what justified the genocidal act on the Plateau and Enugu states where such laws are not in place? It then embarked on analysis of the secondary data obtained and generated the need for future quantitative study of the phenomenon.

This orientation led the discourse to look at the phenomenon from three perceptual prisms; where there are laws banning open grazing, where there are no laws and rationale why the government have not acted in either of the cases.

v) Framework of Analysis: It is the thoughtfulness of the discourse that the most appropriate prism through which the phenomenon could be understood and analyze is the application of the model of 'leadership and Governance'.

It appears, that it is the failure and the availability and application of these principles which has resulted in the crimes against unarmed civilians in a re-occurring scale in Nigeria. The Settings: All states are borne through the processes of state formation which include; conquest, welfare, economic stratification, conflict etc.

and amalgamation, which bring hitherto strange bed-fellows into the same nation with varied cultures. These diverse nations in the state are then garnished into a United States through the twin processes of state and nation building. In Nigeria as in Sudan these identical processes are at the infantile stages, hence the states in focus, like all other states in the continent of Africa remained a 'salad bowl' (unable to unite) states. The 'salad bowl' nature of these states created the dynamics of tension and conflict constantly.

This is the nature of states in Africa. It is instructive to note that there is scarcely any state that is composed of one nation. A research conducted in 1971 showed that out of 132 countries in the world at the time, only 12 (9.1 percent) met the strict criterion of one nation and one state. A survey of 172 countries with population of at least 200,000 in 2001 indicated that 53 countries (30.8 percent) had a dominant ethnic group that comprised at least 90 per cent of the population (Sodaro et al., 2008:155). This is the nature of the states everywhere with slight exception. The nature of the states in Africa ala Nigeria and Sudan are of this nature. They demand astute leadership and governance practices to enhance stability, unity and to pursue happiness which is the the highest good of man.

- a) Leadership- the art of showing group of people where to go and how to get there in order to add value to their lives require the following values; i) A leader must be learned in order to understand the dynamics of development and choose the most appropriate way to go. ii) He must have vision- (the ability to see beyond the ordinary, to see what others have not seen) and to harness the human and material resources required to take the people to where by his assessment they ought to be.

iii) Empathy- a leader should be able to put himself into the situation of the led and feel the way they do to be able to take appropriate decisions to take them out of that situation which is considered inappropriate considering the available human and material resources. iv) Impersonality – it is the ability of the leaders to keep away his preferences/culture and be able to look at issues objectively.

This lead to the capacity of the leader to ensure equity, justice and fairness in the distribution of resources. The lack of these in governance, would generate the propensity for rebellion. b) It suffices to stop here and complement leadership with governance. Governance, the processes of administering people who are in constant interactions to resolve collective problems.

It consists of three major elements; the process, organs and structure. In Nigeria, the process relates to 'federalism', organs include the exclusive, concurrent and residual lists of responsibilities, while the structure is made up of the federal, state and local government. Each have jurisdiction with the concurrent list providing for joint action of the federal and the state governments.

The management of people and resources through these structures required learned leadership at both the federal and the states or regional levels, to bring to the fore participation, responsiveness, inclusiveness, equity, fairness and justice. The possession of these capacities and qualities constitute leadership and governance which are lacking in Africa, hence it is a continent where good people go hungry, bad people run government, and chaos and anarchy are the norms (Alagiah cited in Thomson, 2010: 2).

The framework becomes apt in the explication of the problem because when leadership is gotten right, many things fall into place. Leadership as discussed would try to provide equity, fairness and justice to all without allowing personal preferences or sanguinary relationship to influence public policy and actions. This is not obtainable in Nigeria in the herdsmen terrorism.

It is the lack of leadership and proper governance that accounted for why nobody has been arrested and prosecuted even when people own up to the crimes. This is the same case in Darfur in Sudan, where the Janjaweed get away with the crimes against humanity which they commit daily in Darfur, while the herdsmen do same often in Nigeria.

This explained further in Nigeria, why the president directed the Inspector General of Police (IGP) to relocate to Benue to quell the crimes, yet he refused and the President neither disciplined him nor sack him when he became aware of such security insubordination.

vi) Nigeria and Sudan: The Parallel: The most striking similarity in the internal security challenges in these two states is that; President Buhari is a Fulani-Moslem, and the patron of Association of the Cattle Breeders known as herdsmen, the parent body of the Herdsmen which perpetrate crimes against humanity in the Middle Belt.

The crime is often against indigenous non-Muslims population. While Hassan Omar Al-Bashir is an Arab-Moslem, who utilizes the Janjaweed -Arab militias to attack the indigenous non-Muslim of Darfur consisting of negroes of Fur, Massalit and Zaghawa and the minority Arab Baggara tribe. This gave the semblance of religious genocide.

One of the alleged grouses of the Herdsmen is that the stoppage of free grazing in the open fields law by some states would obstruct their freedom of free grazing, hence they embarked on the spade of killings in State that have restricted their freedom (Benue and Taraba states) respectively. In similar vein, the Janjaweed in connivance with the minority Arab tribe- the Baggara which settled in Darfur, Western Sudan, joined their Arab majority to decimate Darfur in order to take over the land and use as grazing fields.

The crime committed by both Herdsmen and Janjaweed are the same, it includes; occupying land of those whom they have killed in cold blood, and crime against humanity by killing unarmed civilians. In Nigeria the quantity of those killed by the herdsmen, has become countless. President Omar Al-Bashir on the other hand, admitted in a Television interview with Al Jazeera Television English service in June 2008, that no more than 10,000 had died in Darfur (Frost, 2008) as at then. The current number today is better imagined.

President Buhari on his own had incredulously compared the number of the Taraba and Benue deaths and said more had died in comparison in Zamfara incident. He had advised residents to 'try and accommodate their neighbors' only for him to turn later to say that he suspected that the killers in Benue may have drifted in from Libya (Azu, 2018). This was showing his unconcerned nature on a serious issue which affected human lives.

In Sudan, when the Furs, Maasalits and Zaghawa people run for safety, the Janjaweed occupy their farms and communities. In Plateau state, reports in the National dailies, has it that the Berom villages were being occupied and rechristened by the herdsmen with their local names.

vii) The Analysis: We are here concerned with the identification of detailed elements that acted individually or in combination to give the herdsmen justifications to decimate human lives at the rate that they are doing.

In Nigeria the locations where the herdsmen have attacked do not have the tribesmen of the herders as indigenes, the communities often attack are mostly Christian in religion and farmers by occupation. The phenomenon would certainly affect agricultural outputs and eventually affect the success of the government agricultural output. Thus, this seemed to be religious warfare on the one-hand.

Geographically the area in contest are often fertile land. Conversely, Darfur the South-West area is a very fertile land. It consists of four ethnic groups, the majority being the Fur, Massalit and Zaghawa who are non-Arab population of Darfur. It is the Baggara minority who is in alliance with the Janjaweed terrorists with the aim of exterminating the others for Baggara to own the land on another.

While it is a truism that climate change has caused desertification, which has affected grazing in the north. It is also true that almost all the dams are located in Northern part of Nigeria. It is the view of this discourse that these numerous dams and water from Lake Chad, should be use to water Sambisa forest and other arid land space so as to produce the necessary vegetation for the cattle to feed on. This would reduce the spade of killing of innocent souls.

One of the most critical rationale which accounted for the response of the Nigeria state being anything but urgent seem to be because the security architecture of Nigeria from the President, through the Chief of Army Staff, the Police, Directorate of State Service (Secret Police), Nigeria Intelligent Agency, Airforce, Custom Service and sundry services are all headed by kinsmen of the herdsmen.

This is a gross violation of one of the Administrative Law of the state, which is federal character (Section 217(3) of the 1999 Constitution as Amended. Their inability to be impersonal by reasons of the sanguinary

ties of the security heads in Nigeria account for the reason why no one has been arrested and prosecuted of crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing, forceful eviction and taking over the lands of their victims.

Cultural perspective ensures that people of the same culture, have almost the same perception and meaning of a phenomenon. Consequently, even when the people own up to committing the crime, and the public pronounced that there would be more to come, the security heads do not perceive the act as a crime and do not order arrest nor prevention or prosecution.

Consequent upon this, it become difficult for any of these agencies to proceed to arrest their kith and kins when heinous crimes are committed. This is what played out in Benue state when the President half-heartedly directed the IGP to relocate and remain there until the incident was brought under control. The Inspector General Police (IGP) disobeyed, yet the President did nothing to him and the problem continued.

The reason is, the Inspector General Police (IGP) has sanguinary ties with the herdsmen. He cannot arrest his relations. The lack of the capacity to be impersonal in the discharge of the job means the massacre would continue. This also accounted for the contradictory statement, that you do not practice Federal Character with security issues and appointment, even when it is constitutionally provided.

This cultural perception has implication for security, it is an indication that all Nigerians are in danger of violation of their rights to life. In the course of this discourse, we extrapolated the Plateau massacre to the issue of indigene/settler problem and adduced the fact that there is no anti-grazing law in Plateau yet they killed. Plateau state is not indigenous to the Herdsmen, yet they want to be considered indigenes. This is the problem rather than stolen cattle. Lastly, both the Nigerian and Sudanese leaders have not demonstrated an understanding of governance in multinational state and have not shown robust leadership in both circumstances.

The qualities of leadership as discussed herein, are all absent in the personages acting the roles in both polities, hence the robust similarities in the circumstances.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Nigeria and Sudan may not be contiguous, but the internal insecurity situation occasioned by the Herdsmen and the Janjaweed militias have received tacit support from their respective states to exterminate a section of their population and take over their possessions, land.

The discourse has illustrated that the banning of free feeding of cattle in the field irrespective of the land having been cultivated by some states is not the only motive for the massacre carried out by the Herdsmen. The killings were going on long before the law was introduced and it has taken place in states that do not have the law in place. In Plateau State, it is indigene/settler conflict rather than stolen cattle conflict.

Furthermore, the discourse had to look for other extant reasons which revealed that the entire security architecture of the nation is in the hands of the kith and kins of the Herdsmen, hence their impetus in committing heinous crime and getting away with it even when they publicly own it up. In Sudan, Darfur were faced by nearly the same situation Nigerians and specifically the Middle Belt have found themselves today.

The United Nations Secretary General sent a mission of Inquiry to affirm the situation and cause the relevant arm of the United Nations to direct the Special Prosecutor to raise charges against Hassan Omar Al-Bashir. He was charged at the ICC for five count charges thus; Murder article 7(1)(g), extermination of the people of Darfur 7(1)(b), rape article 7(1)(g).

On war crimes; directing attack against the civilian population which are none combatant in the hostilities charged under article 8(2)(e)(1). Genocide (ICC-02/05-07/09). This led the discourse to inquired, does the actions of the Herdsmen and their parent body Miyetti Allah constitute crime against humanity, war crimes and genocide? The responses seem to be in the affirmative.

Does the seeming reluctance of the security agencies engender negligence and complicity? This seem to be in the affirmative. It is possible that the president is mortified in the circumstance by not causing the state to perform the number one duty of all states which is the security of lives and property? This again was in the affirmative.

These indicated that in due course, the President may earn the same status as the president of Sudan as conferred by the ICC, if he continues to look the other way while Nigerians continue to get killed. The recommendations: The Nigeria leaders should show the way and demonstrate impersonality in leadership and put the security machinery to work.

By implication cause to be arrested those who committed and owned up to the crime. The fundamental foundation of democratic nations is the operation of the rule of law, Nigeria is no exception. Everyone must be made to take advantage of the legal process if one's cow is allegedly stolen; the legal processes of redress should be followed for peace to be restored. All those displaced by these acts must be rehabilitated by the state and their property rebuilt and starter pack in term of finance should be provided for them to begin their lives. The numerous dams and lake chad should be rehabilitated and the water reticulated to raise pastures for the Herdsmen.

The foreign Herdsmen (if any) should respect the international boundaries. Those who have taken laws into their hands must be dealt with according to the law which is not happening now in Nigeria nor in Sudan. Finally, state police should be the possible way-out, to enhance internal security for both the herdsmen, indigenous people and the farmers.

This should be created through the provision of the constitution and all appropriate legislation. This is the way to enhance justice for the victims of the crime, prosecution of the perpetrators of the crimes, anything shot of this, the government has to appear before the International Tribunal (ICC) for the world system to provide justice. This is because we all have inalienable rights which must be upheld by all Governments.

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