

CIVILIAN JTF: THE TRANSFORMATIONAL PROTEST IN BORNO STATE

BY

DR BABA GANA KOLO

**CHIEF LECTURER CENTRE FOR
HUMANRESOURCESDEVELOPMENT**

**AFFILIATE OF
UNIVERSITY OF MAIDUGURI**

JULY 2013

ABSTRACT

Civilian JTF; the transformational protest in Borno State tried to cover that Nigeria as giant African nation experienced security problems and overcome all and therefore Bokoharam crises is not exceptional. Bokoharam sect is an idealistic fanatical group confirming Marxian position that religion is heart of the heartless sigh of the oppressed creature and opium of the people. Corruption fueled Bokoharam insurgency by influencing already existing marginalized youth created by corrupt governance over the years in the state. The CJTF is a reaction to the unwelcomed boasting and undue projection for illusionist realization of utopia shariah state Shakau. The body must be cautious in the operation to avoid killing of lawful ones. That the CJTF is a dangerous time bomb if not automatically recruited as security agents and monitored. There must be death penalty for corruption. Practice of religion must be purely private and all forms of coercion must be treated as terrorism. Preachers of any religion in Nigeria must have certificate in Sociology to be enlightened on idealism and materialism. All preachers must be check mated by security intelligent and call to order at any point of deviation to constitutional legitimacy.

Introduction

Nigeria since its creation has been experiencing one form of security problem or the other. The major examples are the civil war of late 1960s, the maitatsine destabilization of 1980s, the continued ethno-religious conflict of Plateau state in the 1999, the Boko Haram crises of the 2009 to date. In all the crises Nigeria was victory over the insurgents. In this article I would like to reveal some faces of Boko Haram as reactionary idealistic fanatical group and the inevitability of the emergence of the civilian JTF as an interim solution to the crises and its implication on the current and future security of Borno state and Nigeria at large.

BOKOHARAM AS IDEALISTIC FANATICAL GROUP

Marx said religion is an opium of the people, it is heart of the heartless, and sigh of the oppressed creature. That is indeed the obvious fact. In a religiously dominated environment everybody including protesting Marxists are coercively imprisoned and dictated to be religious or at least acting somehow religiously.

Boko Haram is a group labeled so at the peak of the 2009 riot declared by Mohammed Yusuf a young preacher who seems to be an Arabic and Islamic scholar determined to practice and implement what to his understanding the true picture of Islam. From his daily teachings or preaching with the aide of the media he to a greater extent convinced quite a number of young minds who were already in a chain of religiosity. A good proportion of Borno state youth and beyond has already been idealistically and so dogmatically chained into the component parts of Boko Haram activism. Mohammed Yusuf was too fanatical and took advantage of religious immunity to hide millions of his ignorance of science and materialism. Had he been a student of Marx, he would have balanced his idealistically dominant posture. And by implication could have seen the implications of the manner of his teaching and impossibility of actualizing the shariah state he proclaimed anywhere and particularly in Nigeria. Marx challenged every human being and particularly intellectuals to broaden their mind to testify by themselves the limitations of teachings of religions. The fundamental question Marxists asked is why do we have so many religions but only one god as believed by all worshippers? This question is always hidden and the answers are always covered and cemented. Preachers are fundamentally not asked such question by their ordinance, and such questions are

troubling questions which are not welcomed by almost all preachers and a good proportion of even the academia.

THE ROLE OF CORRUPTION IN FUELLING BOKOHARAM CRISES

Nigeria is economically buoyant African nation with annual budget of at least #5trillion today. Each republic was characterized by reports of governors, ministers, heads of organizations including almost all the presidents being indicted as corrupt in one form or the other. Embezzlement of public fund is order of the day, nepotism is all round. Even in the present dispensation, some organizations are run like monarchs. There is a college where a provost and acting registrar are brothers of same father. Employments are basically on brotherhood rather than merit.

Borno state government earns billions of naira monthly but we still lack water, electricity, medication etc, school are already closed, better graduates are not employed as teachers but only sycophants and semi-illiterate relatives of heads of establishments. There are long list of graduates who are unemployed. 80%-90% of the population live in abject poverty; sustained by hand to mouth daily episodes. The cities are overpopulated while the villages are put to rotten life. The youth in the cities are living in a state of hopelessness, that the government meant for them is already a bloc of enemy to them in all their actions. Their names are used to collect aides just to be stolen away by same administrators. This is proved by the fact that almost all governors, commissioners, local government chairmen and associates have all lived above their legitimate earnings. Many publically boast of being corrupt and feel not disgraced of being a thief amidst poverty.

These corrupt authorities are closed neighbors to every poor citizen whose blood is socked. It is this category of youth victims who were idealistically demobilized or mobilized into Bokoharam militants. It was so easy for Mohammed Yusuf to show examples very close to every displeased youth to get convinced that they are cheated by authorities which is real, and further convince the un-Marxed, poor, semi-illiterates, illiterates and poorly educated intellectuals to go by the fanatical call that are more of an error to call for the establishment of shariah where the Quran reigns. Of course Marxists also hundred percent propagate the fight against corruption and all forms of injustice anywhere in the world, it is not calling for a religious party nor partitioning of any part on

religious ground, because any religious effort for justice is emotional and therefore subject to emotional condemnation by other religious groups and therefore cannot test long living. And that is what we experiencing now in Borno state.

THE CIVILIAN JTF AS A PROTEST AGAINST BOKOHARAM

President Goodluck Jonathan was in Borno state some months back particularly to assess the level of insecurity in the state. When he was arriving there was total closure of the towns for security purpose. There was public call for amnesty for the Bokoharam insurgents just like it happened in the case of Niger Delta. Jonathan dismissed that that amnesty could not be the solution, as amnesty designed and implemented in the Niger Delta itself is problematic. Every developmental Borno citizen was slapped by this dismissal, but the situation worsened and so declared state of emergency in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states in May 2013.

Troops were sent to cover strategic Bokoharam dominant locations. The hideouts for the insurgents were extensively destroyed, but unfortunately the incumbent leader of the sect Abubakar Shekau was at large. This is highly disgraceful and it appears a deliberate tactics to extend military occupation and bulleting in the problem areas. Shekau is not a spirit and so cannot avoid detection by multiple intelligent security operatives of Nigeria and overseas.

It was this military failure that coerced the inevitable procreation of the new anti-bokoharam group called the Civilian JTF. Of course the alien soldiers cannot know all the Bokoharam members in the state and so the sweeping requires an indigenous intervention though thoroughly challenging. Going by the history of the continuity of the Bokoharam insurgency in the state there used to be defectors from the Bokoharam group, who felt it was necessary in the interest of everybody and particularly the common man to see a ceasefire of the sectarian since it was very clear that the primary goal cannot be achieved. On several occasions such defectors are disclaimed by Abubakar Shekau. This embarrassment threatened many to react in different ways to view the activities of the sect as questionable in terms of sincerity of the effort to move toward realization of the shariah state proposed.

In June the Civilian JTF emerged, and volunteered to assist the Special and Joint Task Force for anti- terrorism in the declared state of emergency. There is no doubt hundreds of people have been killed with the aide of the CJTF and Maiduguri city has been renormalized, many of the Bokoharam members who feared the wrath of the CJTF have run out of Maiduguri and out of the major towns of the state to villages and quite a number have travelled neighboring countries.

The Civilian JTF is a necessary transformational protestants in Borno state to bring an end to Bokoharam insurgents. Nevertheless, the body should be very careful in tracing to the Bokoharam members in the sanitization exercise. The body must have a proof and a convincing proof that X, Y, Z are actual members of Bokoharam before they should approach for apprehension. It should not be by guessing or impression. Before any one should be killed there must be an appropriate screening with vigorous testimony that such is a Bokoharam; evidence of his participation in the riot as well as his possession of weapons must be testified before any action. This is to avoid victimizing lawful citizens.

WHAT IS THE PROSPECT OF CIVILIAN JTF?

The Civilian JTF is a backup of the special Task Force against terrorism in the state. They seem to be courageous anti-terrorist group fighting a gang of opposition who possessed sophisticated weapons of mass destruction. The safety of the Civilian JTF defends on the elimination of all the Bokoharam insurgents around. Any Bokoharam insurgent that survive this operation is a potential enemy of any member of CJTF. It is very dangerous and immoral to skip any Bokoharam insurgent at this point in time. This is because the Bokoharam have exhausted all options of reconciliation ranging from amnesty and negotiation the federal government offered. It is unfortunate for Shekau to insist after all those pleading for withdrawal by all concerned.

As elsewhere I recommended for the granting of amnesty to the withdrawn Bokoharam members, it is also in order in the interest of safety and complete security of the CJTF to automatically employ them as security agents, the police, prison, soldiers, guards at the state and local government levels. Any failure on the side of automatic recruitment of this body will mean another formation of time bomb which will soon get exploded. Nigeria should not risk it again.

RECOMMENDATION

1. There must be a triangular fight against corruption. Nobody should live above his legitimate earnings. And excess must be confiscated. And there must be a death penalty for corruption.
2. Practice of religions must be purely private exercise. Constitutional freedom of worship must be adhered to. People can decide not to be religious. Any coercive act for religiosity should be treated as terrorism.
3. It should be compulsory for every preacher to have a certificate in Sociology before he should be allowed to preach, so that he should not claim ignorance of idealism and materialism, and the enshrined freedom of citizens to attach themselves to any of these philosophies.
4. Every preacher of any religion must be accompanied by intelligent officers of security operations and called to order at any point of deviation to constitutional legitimacy.

REFERENCES

- Kolo, B. G (2012) A Sociological Focus on Some Issues in Development (Ancen Nigeria Company, Maiduguri).
- Odekunle, F (1986) Nigeria: Corruption in Development (Ibadan University press).
- Sa'ad, A. N (1988) In Search of Justice for Nigeria; A Critical Analysis of formal and informal justice in Gongola state (Ph.D thesis University of Sussex).