

THE STATE AND BOKO HARAM INSURGENCY IN NIGERIA: THE CHALLENGE OF NATIONAL SECURITY (2009-2015)

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ABSTRACT: *In the checklist of Nigeria's security challenges, the Boko Haram insurgency stands out as the most disturbing and unsettling experience. Founded in 2002 by Mohammed Yusuf, an Orthodox Islamist proselyte, the Boko Haram sect has waged a relentless war of attrition against the Nigerian State. The group deployed improvised explosive devices, guerrilla warfare, suicide bombings, hostage taking, rape, and other heinous atrocities to undermine Nigeria's sovereignty and national security. As a corollary to this pursuit, the paper is poised to unravel and expose the underlying factors through the context of the theory of post colonial state. The overriding tendency to cease and manipulate the state apparatus by the dominant power elite structurally disarticulates and weakens the state on the one hand and sustains the Boko Haram vicious campaigns of terror on the other hand. The paper therefore recommends a total reappraisal of the nature and character of the Nigerian state on the basis of entrenching a veritable democratic culture and de-emphasizing the frantic quest for political power by competing factions of the ruling class.*

KEY WORDS: Insurgency, Boko Haram, State, Security, ruling class and sovereignty.

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is currently facing a most harrowing challenge due to audacious and destructive activities of Boko Haram insurgents. The scourge constitutes a novel and manifest major threat to Nigeria's state and national security. It is becoming more worrisome with information that the sect is affiliated to such other armed groups as Ansar Dine, Al-Qaeda of Mali in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO). Its allegiance to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL) and its association with Jama'atu Ansarul Muslimina Fi Biladis-Sudan (Ansaru) are strong indications of its external expansions and linkages. Goyei (2018, citing UNSC, 2015, Elbagir et al, 2015, Aljazeera, 2015)

As a result of this international links with global terrorist networks, Nigeria currently ranks 7th most terrorized country in the world (Olorunyomi, 2017). Since 2011, Boko Haram has subjected the Nigerian state and her citizens in the North East and other isolated parts to vicious campaign of terror, carried out through dastardly acts of cold blooded murder, arson, hostage taking, rape and sheer mayhem.

The main thrust of this paper is therefore to interrogate and deconstruct the seemingly overlooked nexus between the Nigerian state as an institution and the rapacious, deadly exploits of Boko Haram. Apart from her well known mission to proselytize a fanatical and fundamentalist version of Islam, Boko Haram is indeed fiercely determined to annihilate the Nigerian State. In fact this mission is by far more paramount because the group perceives the

state as the sole enemy and barrier to the realization of her purist Islamic agenda which the sect is pursuing with both vehemence and chilling violence. According to peter (2012) Boko Haram abhors the legitimacy of the secular Nigerian state, invariably described as ‘dagut’ (evil) and wage war against it in an effort to replace it with a purified Islamic regime. It is with this mindset that the sect’s leader Mohammed Yusuf through rabid and caustic demagoguery indoctrinated his followers to hate anything that has to do with Nigeria’s secular status. As a result, the sect targeted Churches, Mosques, Government establishments, markets, Educational Institutions, Members of the Armed Forces, Police etc ostensibly to weaken the state and eventually overthrow the system.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

The State

The concept of the state lends itself to diverse definitions and interpretations, depending on one’s perspective. The state is essentially a public or political authority producing the legal basis of its own activity. It has tools or organs of political power which include the army, the courts, prisons, police, intelligence and counter-intelligence (Bogulavsky 1978). The state remains the most viable institution which is pivotal and dedicated to ensuring the maintenance and preservation of peace and security within and beyond a country’s borders.

Kapur (2012) noted that some writers define the state as essentially a class structure, others regard it as the one Organization that transcends class and stands for the whole community. Some interpret it as a power system, others as a welfare system, some view it entirely as a legal construction, either in the old Austinian sense which made it a relationship of governors and governed. It is in this vein that Uya (1992) posited that contemporary Nigerian State is committed to democracy which is a political and constitutional arrangement in which the values of liberalism, economic development National Integration and social welfare can grow and be durably sustained.

The State is a symbol of sublime authority. It is a fluid concept with some peculiar and defining attributes. It is both formal and detached, tends to stand above the society either as a ‘means’ or an ‘end’ in its aspirations or goal attainment. To Weber, a state is a human community that successfully claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory, while Maclver and Page assert that the state is distinguished from all other Associations by its exclusive investment with the final power of coercion... embracing the whole people in a specific territory and it has the special function to maintain social order, (Asif, 2008). The state may be likened to a kind of behemoth or leviathan which embodies the essence of the collective authority of the people within a specific environment. Geoffrey K. Roberts defines the state as a territory in which a population is governed by a set of political authorities and while successfully claims the compliance of the citizenry for its laws and is able to secure compliance by its monopolistic control of legitimate force. Gauba (2003). The state as an enduring and evolving political idea is an inevitable social construct that characterize every society. Papp (1988) argued that the state can also be understood as a geographically bounded entity, governed by a central authority that has the ability to make laws, rules and decisions within its boundaries. It is also a legal entity under international law as the fundamental decision making unit of the international legal system.

Security

One of the basic and most overriding attribute of the state in all climes is to ensure security of lives, property, values, and totality of what defines the citizen's welfare and wellbeing. Originally conceived as protection against military attack, national security is now widely understood to include non-military dimensions, including the security from terrorism, crime, economic security, energy security, environmental security, food security, cyber security etc. (en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/national-security). According to (Constitution of Nigeria 1999) one of the fundamental objectives and directive principles of state policy in Nigeria is that security and welfare of the people should be the primary purpose of government. In strategic studies, security has objective and subjective meanings. At the objective level, security measures the absence of threats to life, liberty, property and core values. At the subjective level security measures the absence of fear, anxiety, tensions or apprehension of being in danger of losing life, liberty property or core value. When taken together, security means or represents or even expresses the absence of threat and / or fear in a social system (Aja, 1999). Security is at the heart of national growth and development. In Nigeria, the military represents a critical instrument for the maintenance of national security charged with the following mandate:

- a. Defending Nigeria from external aggression
- b. Maintaining its natural integrity and securing its borders from violation on land, sea or air.
- c. Suppress insurrection and act in aid of civil authorities to restore order when called upon to do so by the president, subject to such conditions as may be prescribed by an act of the National Assembly. (Constitution of Nigeria 1999).

As a sovereign entity, Nigeria has over the years cultivated a huge security consciousness as attested to by Babangida (1991) who maintained that security agencies must be properly funded for overt and covert operations in pursuit of set national security objectives. Security is therefore a responsibility, an obligation the government owes the society as a right. Eme and Onyishi (2014 citing Dyke 1966) noted that there is no doubt that National security embodies the sovereignty of the state, the inviolability of its territorial boundaries and the right to individual and collective self-defence against internal and external threats. But the state is secure only when the aggregate of people organized under it has a consciousness of belonging to a common sovereign political community; enjoy equal political freedom, human rights, economic opportunities and when the state itself is able to ensure independence in its development. In essence, security preserves the democratic culture and individual freedom within the polity.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Our analysis of the state and national security with particular reference to Boko Haram insurgency is based on the theoretical context of the post-colonial state. One of the leading exponents of this theory is Alavi (1979,) who maintained that the state in the post-colonial society was 'over developed' for inheritance by the neocolonial structure, and therefore could not be subordinated by any of the contending three classes namely, the indigenous nationalists, their metropolitan counterparts and the landed aristocracy. He further asserted that the state in the post-colonial society is not the instrument of a single class. It is relatively autonomous and mediates between the competing interests, but still appropriates very large in the name of economic development, Alavi (1979).

In his contribution, Ake (1981) submitted that the State is the ultimate coercive power that makes exclusive claims to the legitimate use of coercive force. True to its dynamics and spirit, the post-colonial state is immersed in class struggle, instead of rising above it, thereby generating a spate of grime struggle and competition among the indigenous power elite. The post-colonial state is therefore a state that is interventionist and involved in class struggle - a state already dragged to politics and politicized (Ake, 1981). Pursuing the same logic, Onuoha (2008) observed that those who inherited the postcolonial state from the departing metropolitan bourgeoisie started ensuring their own embourgeoisement through the instrumentalities of the state. From all indications, the state is paramount and dominant in virtually all social activities. Whoever controls the state controls the nation's economy. The struggle for the control becomes very intense. Those who control the state use it for their own benefit, with total disregard to the rest of the society. Thus in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular, the state is being used as an instrument of primitive accumulation (Onuoha, 2008).

The theory of post-colonial state fully captures and aptly explains the interface between the state and Nigeria's national security profile in the face of Boko Haram insurgency. As the source and summit of power and military might, the state has the primary function of ensuring security in the country. However the Nigerian state has a character and peculiar feature which can only be understood through the application of this theoretical framework. Since the architecture of national security derives from the state, the success or otherwise of the effort to contain and defeat the Boko Haram insurgency is predicated on the apparatus of the Nigerian state. The theory unmasks the latent and volatile factors which combine to contribute to Nigeria's current level of insecurity quagmire. In other words, it brings to sharp and clear focus the poor status of Nigeria's economy- the intense struggle for control of state power and the attendant thuggery, corruption and violence. While the winner elite faction takes over all the social largess and spoils of office, the loser factions conspire with other disgruntled elements to plot destabilization acts to torpedo national security in their attempt to capture state power. This tendency sets off a vicious cycle of unpatriotic competition or struggle for the control of state power and government of the country. It is within this context that symptomatic factors like ethno-religious conflicts, primordial consideration, unemployment, youth restiveness, poverty, and other forms of social malaise are exploited by the contending members of the ruling class to water the ground for national security breaches like Boko Haram insurgency.

Early Stages of Boko Haram

The emergence of Boko-Haram insurgency in Nigeria introduced a new and unconventional dimension to the country's security challenge profile. The formative years began with a group of radical Islamist youths who worshipped at the Alhaji Mohammadu Indimi Mosque in Maiduguri. In 2002, this youth group (not yet known as Boko Haram) declared the city and the Islamic establishment to be intolerably corrupt and irredeemable. The group declared it was embarking on hijra (a withdrawal along the lines of the prophet Mohammed withdrawal from Mecca to medina). It moved from Maiduguri to a village called Kanama, Yobe State, near the border with Niger to set up a separatist community run on hard line Islamic principles. Its leader (the breakaway group) Mohammed Ali, espoused anti-state ideology and called on other Muslims to join the group and return to a life under true Islamic law, with the aim of making a more perfect society away from the corrupt establishment. (Eme and Onyishi 2014, citing Zartman and Faure, 2011).

This relocation later resulted in a violent encounter with the police in 2003 following a community dispute regarding fishing rights in a local pond during which most of the group's seventy members were killed including Mohammed Ali (Eme and Onyshi 2014). As the dust of this ill fated campaign died down, the survivors of this escapade returned to Indimi mosque in Maiduguri apparently for safety. Meanwhile, Mohammed Yusuf was getting uncomfortable with the moderate Islamic values of his mentor Sheikh Ja'afar Adam at the Indimi mosque and finally fell out with him. He founded his own mosque named after Ibn Taymiyyah the Islamic cleric born in the thirteenth century in Mesopotamia... who sought a more austere form of Islam as it existed at the time of the prophet and his ideas would have a major influence on wahabbism and salafism (Smith, 2015). Having set up his own mosque, Mohammed Yusuf began a massive programme of expansion beyond Maiduguri in Borno State, through radical preaching against western cultural education and the Nigerian establishment. He built a powerful network of contacts in Bauchi, Yobe, Adamawa and its environs. His message was strident, new and revolutionary. Yusuf began to preach two controversial and related notions: First that western education is Quranically forbidden, and second, that employment in service of the Nigerian Government was also forbidden. For this condemnation of the West, Yusuf's followers earned the nick name "Boko Haram" from locals which is loosely translated to "Western education is deceitful/forbidden. The group's original official name translates to "people committed to the propagation of the prophet's teaching and Jihad". (oxfordre.com, 2017).

Yusuf's brand of Islam – the salafist version turned him into a cult figure. His community rapidly grew both in number of followers and influence. He perfectly understood the dynamics of the society and built up an organization which went beyond religious indoctrinations. He combined it with welfare programmes, poverty alleviation strategies and inspired a sense of belonging to common humanity amongst his adherents. Yusuf provided services that the government often neglected. The mosque had its own religious police, cabinet and farms. Yusuf also arranged affordable marriages for his members. Some of the young men who joined the group had previously been unemployed, underemployed or relegated to subsistence agriculture, now, as a result of the community support programmes, they were able to buy motor bikes taxis called "Okada" – (oxfordre.com,2017).

An underlying attribute of the Boko Haram founder is that he broke away from the mainstream Islam in addition to being a political nonconformist. He enjoyed mass appeal of the down trodden who flock to his mosque in droves. Even the political class within Borno State and beyond was taking more than a faint interest in his rising profile. In reality, Boko Haram was founded upon the principles of salafism advocating Sharia law. Their beliefs tended to be centered on strict adherence to wahibbism, which is an extremely strict form of Sunni Islam that sees many other forms of Islam as idolatrous. The group has denounced the members of the Sufi, and the Shiite sects as infidels (wikipedia/wiki/bokoharam). Islam has no choice but to capture state authority.

THE STATE AND BOKO-HARAM REVOLT

Yusuf took advantage of an inchoate Nigerian state apparatus, corrupt and inept leadership at all levels of society, crippling poverty in the midst of ostentatious display of wealth, and a suffocating culture of anomie among the people. The Boko-Haram proponent saw a society without hope or direction. He saw the people's alienation, fervor of discontent and hopelessness, and decided to impose his own perception of an ideal Islamic society. Boko Haram survived him because according to Smith (2015) Nigerians of all nationalities and origins have lost any faith they may once had in their government, justice system and security forces. The bright light of the country's vast potentials has been snuffed out by thieves disguised as Businessmen, Military Generals and politicians. Boko-Haram therefore emerged on the throes of a broken and shattered society – a society without order or rule of law, a people mired in the cesspool of corruption, under the choking grip of a predator state. If Nigerian State was not so debased and distorted, Mohammed Yusuf could not have groomed and nurtured his group between 2002 and 2008 under the very nose of security forces, and no attempt was made to nip it in the bud before the mayhem of 2009. The relationship between Nigerian State Security establishment and Boko-Haram sect had been cold and tensed since 2003. However, the narrative suddenly changed on June 11, 2009, when elements of Boko-Haram in a funeral procession clashed with a detachment of Nigeria police over some misunderstanding as the police tried to enforce a new traffic safety regulation for motor cyclists. The squabble degenerated to open confrontation with the police opening fire on the recalcitrant Boko-Haram members who tried to disarm them. When the dust cleared, about 70 Boko-Haram sect members sustained varying degrees of injuries.

This encounter enraged the Boko-Haram leadership who felt that the time for jihad has finally arrived and vowed to fight back. In Islam Jihad is highly revered. It is the ultimate goal of Islam. The prophet said, "The important thing is Islam (submission), and Jihad is its pinnacle" Dikki (2014). Less than a month later, Boko-Haram networks across four states of the North East coordinated a massive orgy of violence against the Nigerian state apparatus. The offensive began in Bauchi (Bauchi state) and resonated in Maiduguri (Borno State) with mortal violence in potiskum (Yobe State) and Wudil (Kano State). At the end of the uprising, causality figures stood at 1000 dead and 700 injured. This upheaval marked the beginning of a vicious cycle of violence and terror which would ultimately characterize Boko-Haram's insurgency in Nigeria. On July 30th, 2009, with military reinforcement from Jos, Plateau State, the Mosque housing Boko-Haram's leadership was surrounded and heavily bombarded. When the dust settled, the founder Yusuf was captured alive and later executed by the police in cold blood.

Having been roundly outgunned by the Nigerian security forces, the Boko-Haram retreated and went underground, ostensibly to reorganize and re-strategize. In his analysis of the aftermath of the security forces crack down on Boko-Haram, Copeland (2013) argued that following the July 2009 massacre and death of Yusuf, and hundreds of other Boko-Haram's members, the group underwent a period of transformation. The suppression of the uprising by the security forces, which included dozens of extra judicial killings, fueled local sentiments against the central government resulting in an increase in Boko-Haram's ranks. Yusuf's former deputy, Abubakar Shekau assumed leadership and organized a series of deadly attacks that expanded Boko Haram's theatre of operations from the North East states of Bauchi, Borno, Yobe and Kano to 14 of Nigeria's 36 states including the Federal Capital Territory of Abuja. Boko-Haram resurfaced about a year later in 2010 to unleashed well coordinated assassinations of perceived enemies in Maiduguri, Borno state and carried out huge jail break in Bauchi where about 700

Boko-Haram members were freed (en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boko_Haram). Due to the sophistication of the new offensive by Boko-Haram, the Nigerian state security apparatus betrayed a measure of inadequate preparation and presence to cope with the sect's onslaught. The Nigerian State at this stage finally came to terms with the new reality that the country was technically at war with a vicious militant terror group. Boko-Haram further raised the tempo of violence in 2011 with Bomb blasts few hours after Goodluck Jonathan was sworn in as Nigeria's president. Record has it that 15 people died with 55 injured. The next month of June saw Boko-Haram bombing the Police Headquarters complex housing the office of the Inspector General of Police in Abuja. It was a most shocking and breath taking bravado. The balance of power began to tilt in favour of Boko-Haram. The Nigerian state and its war machine seemed both confused and confounded. It was losing ground in this equation of terror.

In August of the same year, Boko-Haram captured international news headlines and global attention when it carried out an unprecedented suicide bombing of United Nations building in Abuja with massive collateral damages. By December 2011, Boko-Haram conducted series of attacks in Damaturu, Yobe State which resulted in the death of over 1000 persons. On Christmas day, the sect also attacked several Christian churches with bombs and gun fire. A lot of deaths were recorded. The sequence of events could have informed the US Africa Command (AFRICOM) Commander, General Carter F Ham in Sept 2011, to list Boko Haram as one of the three African Terrorist Groups. The others are Alshaabab of Somalia and Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb across the Sahel region. Alao and Atere (2012 citing Mojeed Musikilu, Eric Schmith 2011).

In the face of these terrorist attacks and mayhem, the Nigerian military failed to either contain the insurgency or degrade the sect. The Federal Government established the Joint Task Force Operation Restore Order and the Counter Insurgency Campaign to weaken and defeat Boko-Haram insurgency about the same period. It is however sad to acknowledge that Nigerian initiative failed to produce the desired results. The Boko-Haram sect continued to prosecute her violent campaign against the Nigerian State and boasted "that we want to reiterate that we are warriors who are carrying out Jihad (Holy War) in Nigeria and our struggle is based on the tradition of the Holy prophet. We would never accept any system of government apart from the one stipulated by Islam because that is the only way that Muslims could be liberated" (Suleiman, 2011). It is in pursuit of this agenda that the sect under the leadership of Shekau claimed responsibility for series of bomb attacks in Kano which recorded a causality figure of about 185 lives. At this stage, Boko-Haram has transformed itself into a huge security threat and scare, an embarrassment to the country's leadership and state security forces. There was no doubt that Nigeria's North East has become a massive killing field. The sect was making inroad into Nigeria's territories, annexing Local Government Areas and foisting their caliphate flags. To stem this tide of crippling insurgency, the president, Goodluck Jonathan in 2013, declared an emergency in the flash point states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe. Despite this proclamation, the situation got worse with the state obviously incapable to contain, degrade or defeat the rampaging force of Boko-Haram. In the midst of this debacle, the sect again executed effortlessly and without a hint of opposition by Nigerian state the abduction of 276 girls from Chibok town. This set off a global alarm and consternation.

BOKO HARAM AND THE PRIMACY OF WEAK STATE SYNDROME

Extant literature on Boko-Haram is awash with factors that led to Boko-Haram insurgency in Nigeria. The identified multiplicity of factors range from ethno-religious conflicts, poverty, unemployment, lack of social amenities to poor leadership, corruption, poor infrastructure and a lot more. This paper submits that all the above identified factors are all symptomatic of a weak state. It is only when a state is weak, distorted, captured by the dominant ruling class and manipulated for class driven and selfish interests that factors listed above will begin to manifest. Adebayo (2014) observed that Nigeria was ranked 14th in the list of most failed states in the world out of 177 countries considered in the ranking by the Fund For Peace (FFP) – an American independent, non-profit research and education organization.

The implication of this ranking at the 14th position means that Nigeria is not yet a failed or more appropriately a fragile state, but rather a weak state with potentials to fail if the negative trend is not reversed. Essentially weak states have low or stagnant economic growth and weak governing institutions. They are unable to implement policies or maintain autonomy due to corruption or conflicts. Weak states are distinguished from failed states by degree (Tyagi, 2012). The Nigerian condition was equally mirrored using parameters of fragile states. Fasan (2018) while reviewing a document on “Escaping the fragility Trap” juxtaposed the Nigerian experience against the background of the six symptoms of fragility. The document provides that fragile state has the following characteristics:

1. A security threat from organized non-state violence.
2. The government lacks legitimacy in the eyes of many citizens.
3. The state has weak capacity for essential functions.
4. The environment for private investments is unattractive
5. The economy is exposed to shocks with little resilience.
6. Deep divisions in the society.

Although Nigeria is yet to be categorized as a fragile state, the indicators listed above, essentially captured and defined the prevailing situation in Nigeria. The report further stated that “lack of security lies at the heart of fragility: fragile states are ill-equipped to respond effectively to security threats. Citizens are therefore exposed to personal risks from violence” (AfricaatLSE/2018). The Nigerian state by its nature and historical evolution is predisposed to weakness. When a state is unable or incapable of using the organs of established governmental institutions to build a thriving economy, entrench democratic principles and culture, provide employment, healthcare facilities, cultivate ethno-religious harmony and peaceful coexistence, under the pillar of effective security, that state is not only weak, but on the threshold of failure. Boko Haram is basically a logical outcome of the multiple contradictions of a weak state: a situation of cause and effect. The weak state syndrome as the cause and Boko Haram insurgency as the effect. The perspective is central to Holsti’s weak state thesis. Weak states display a low or absence of vertical legitimacy, in that substantial portions of the society fail to display any loyalty to the rulers. The Boko Haram phenomenon constitutes essentially the fallout of frustration with corruption and the attendant social malaise of poverty, and unemployment among the teeming population. Eneke and Ojukwu (2017).

In the course of struggle for power, the competing factions of the ruling class equally suffer from frustration. At the height of Boko Haram Insurgency, President Goodluck Jonathan lamented that a number of people collude with Boko Haram insurgents, giving them financial

assistance. A number of those involved are in the decision making divisions of government, a number of those involved are in the law making division of government, at the same time, some of them are in the judiciary. A number of them are as well in the armed forces, the law enforcement forces and Agencies (Akinfala, et al 2014). This comment by the President of a country, is tantamount to abdication of office because by implication Boko Haram was running an alternate government using the instruments of Nigerian state. The president then sacked the Inspector General of Police, National Security Adviser and the Defence Minister for not doing enough to tackle the Boko-Haram problem (Akinfala, Akinbode, and Kerman, 2014). Along the same line, the newly appointed National Security Adviser also lamented that as a nation, Nigeria was not prepared for this new level of terrorism, so when it happened, there is a lot of devastation (Agbo, 2011). In essence, the Guardians of Nigerian state Machinery in unison declared the country a weak state at the mercy of Boko-Haram insurgency. It would be stressed that the state is not an island by itself. It is constantly engaged in the fusion and fission of social activities. As already noted, the Nigerian state is a victim of intense power struggle between and among the different faction and fractions of the ruling class, either through the process of military coup d'états or massively rigged elections. As a consequence, arbitrariness, lack of moderating political institutions and the narrow social base of the post-colonial state lead to a general lack of faith in it by the people. Therefore the state exhibits a very low level of legitimacy. Low legitimacy further denudes the confidence of disadvantaged groups in the capacity of the state to protect their interest. Nor are dominant groups less distrustful of the state (Ibeanu and Mba, 2014). The ruling class in the words of Ake (1981) is the social class which by virtue of its control of the means of production is able to command a preponderance of social and economic goods and power. The tendency of this class to deploy the state in the struggle for her economic emancipation limits the capacity of Nigerian state to ensure national security, good governance and indeed engenders corruption. Arguing in the same vein, Ake (1981) observed that the massive intervention of the state in the economic sphere and the use of political power as the means of appropriation distorts the role of the state in Africa.

The implication of this development is that members of the ruling class either prey on the state or turns it into a predator against perceived opponents. This explains the reasons behind human rights abuses and extra judicial killings by the police and soldiers. The Nigerian state has been captured and rendered weak. The cumulative effects of this weakness is epitomized by crushing poverty, unemployment, ethno-religious crises, poor leadership, electoral violence, banditry and other social vices which ultimately culminated in the Boko Haram insurgency. To further weaken the state, politician and other high profile persons create personal units of armed thugs for protection and other illegal activities. At times these armed thugs are used for assassination of political foes. The armed thugs are usually protected by the state owned security personnel. Occasionally they turn out in Nigeria Police Force uniforms or military camouflage to cause mayhem like killings, kidnapping or electoral fraud. It is no wonder that undercover reports suggested that the former governor of Borno State Ali Modu Sheriff used Boko Haram sect in 2003 in the build up to his election as the governor of the state..... the sect leader Muhammed Yusuf enjoyed a close relationship with the Borno state government under Ali Modu Sheriff. It was alleged that Yusuf actually nominated a member of Sheriff's Cabinet (Mbah, 2014). The emasculation of the state in Nigeria is not a new phenomenon. The political Bureau Report (1987) noted that the Nigerian state failed woefully to resolve the inherent contradictions in the post-colonial political economy. There was a stark absence of national values of social justice, equity and legitimacy. Living standards of the people fell, and with it went the loyalty of the masses to the Nigerian state. Not only did the civilian republic collapse, but the economy and

the state faced an acute crisis of disintegration. The struggle to keep the country together emptied itself in the 30 months civil war.

CONCLUSION

Nigeria's post-colonial socio-economic formation and political experience culminated in the emergence of a weak state institution. Disarticulation and contradiction of the state and its organs of power and coercion led to disintegration of the nexus of national security architecture. Other features of under-developed economies like unemployment, corruption, excessive display of wealth or conspicuous consumption patterns, mal-administration and winner takes all syndromes are reflections of the weak status of Nigerian State.

Recommendations

The paper recommends a reassessment of the role of the state within the context of the struggle for power and dominance by members of the ruling class. A deliberate policy of restructuring the Nigerian federation to give vent to relative regional or geopolitical autonomy, in the areas of development and fiscal autonomy or resource control. The paper believes that if Nigeria will rise up to its manifest destiny of a regional great power, through fundamental economic restructuring and political re-engineering, she would be in a position to degrade and defeat Boko Haram and ensure national security for her teaming 170 million people.

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