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# Humanity

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- ★ DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE
- ★ CULTURAL AND BELIEFS
- ★ CHILD'S RIGHTS ARE ACHIEVABLE TREASURES
- ★ ANTI-CORRUPTION





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of the economy, the Gowon regime was enmeshed in deep-seated corruption. By 1974, reports of unaccountable wealth of Gowon's military governors and other public office holders had become the crux of discussion in the various Nigerian dailies.

Thus, in July 1975, the Gowon administration was toppled by General Murtala Mohammed through a coup d'état.

The coup of 1975, among other things, was an attempt to end corruption in the public service. General Murtala Mohammed began by declaring his assets and asking all government officials to follow suit.

He instituted a series of probes of past leaders. The Federal Assets Investigation Panel of 1975 found ten of the twelve state military governors in the Gowon regime guilty of corruption. The guilty persons were dismissed from the military services with ignominy. They were also forced to give up ill-acquired properties considered to be in excess of their earnings.

In the same vein, the Belmore

Commission of Inquiry was established to investigate the "Cement Armada." The Commission indicted the Gowon government of inflating contracts for cement on behalf of the Ministry of Defense for private profit at a great cost to the government.

In its Report, the Commission noted that the Ministry of Defence needed only 2.9 million tons of cement at a cost of N52millionas against the 16 million metric tons of cement, it ordered, at a cost of N557 million similar commissions of inquiry were constituted by the new state governments which resulted in the immediate dismissal of several corrupt officials, many of who were in turn ordered to refund the money they had stolen.

General Murtala was assassinated after only six month sin office. He was succeeded by his Chief of Staff, General Olusegun Obasanjo, who did not show the same zeal, as his erstwhile boss, in the prosecution of wrongdoers. Obasanjo, however, ensured that the reins of government was transferred to civilians in October 1979

## From the EDITOR

Governance is simply the combination of all methods, strategies and tactics employed in making the machinery of government work. It is the business of governance to see that all the arms and tiers of government work for the common good of the people. All functions that affect all sectors of human endeavor such as health, education, and other infrastructure need to be fulfilled by the government fulfill because it is a social contract they entered into with the people through their election.

Corruption, impunity, rising insecurity among other things are issues that need to be tackled by government at all levels. Our major concern here is the ability of a government to engage in governance that is geared towards meeting the socio-economic needs of the people without being told. For democracy to yield good result, all hands must be on deck, without ethnic or religious bias, to demand from every and any government, transparency, probity and accountability. We must ensure that all institutions that fight corruption not only work, but also do so at full capacity without any hindrance.

Even child's rights which are achievable treasures have been an issue in our country. The Nigerian child has been denied virtually all the important provisions of the African Convention on Child's Rights. The Nigerian child has not been encouraged to participate in decisions affecting him/her as provided for by Article 12 of the convention. Government needs to protect its children from exploitative labor, slavery, physical and sexual abuses, neglect and discrimination of all sorts.

It is preposterous that our government does not respect the right of a child to education as provided for in Article 28[1-3] of the Convention. The Convention says that the child has the right to education, and it is the duty of the country to ensure that primary education, at least, is made available, free and compulsory too, while secondary including general and vocational education should be made available and accessible. We wish to emphasize here that it is the responsibility of government to invoke and enforce all relevant laws to put an end to this agent of underdevelopment of the Nigerian child.

Similarly, culture and religion are two issues that have played dominant roles in the way of life and governance in Nigeria. Religion dominates the roots of the culture areas of Nigeria. Little or no distinction existed between the profane and the sacred dimensions of life. Thus, all activities and instruments of governance and survival are clothed in religious ritual, language and symbolism.

We will give an overview of Nigeria's political and constitutional history and the evolution of its federal system, review of the operation of federalism in Nigeria and posits that minority rights are not protected and the challenges of ethnic and religious diversity in Nigeria and draws lessons particularly for countries in democratic transition are outlined. In this magazine, Challenges of corruption and Poor "Democratic" Leadership in the attainment of Good Governance; The Effects of putting Cultural and Religious Rights into Proper Use, Child Rights; and Rescuing Nigeria from Corruption are topics to be discussed.

Please come inside.

## THE HUMANITY CENTRE IS CURRENTLY COMPOSED OF THE FOLLOWING GROUPS:

1. Child Help In Leadership, Democracy, Rights and Education in Nigeria (C.H.I.L.D.R.E.N.) Project.
2. Coalition Against Corrupt Leaders (CACOL)
3. Alao Aka-Bashorun Foundation for Human Rights (AAFRIGHTS)
4. Centre for Cultural and Religious Rights (CECURRE)
5. Grassroots PowerPoint (GPP)
6. Beko Rights Klub (BRK)
7. People's Action for Democracy (PAD)
8. Oyeladeniran Foundation For Community (OFCOD)

## MOTTO

"Developing Humane Humans for Rights,  
Against Corruption"

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The objective of governance in Nigeria. law and good this magazine is Equitable distribution of governance are the key to find out the resources, provision of elements that are extent democracy and qualitative education, imperative for the the rule of law has economic restructuring, existence of what Plato, influenced good of the society, freedom in his Republic, governance in Nigeria. the press and political described as an “ideal The Political Economy reforms, among other state”. Though Plato approach, based on the recommendations, are later admitted in the concept of the dialectical fundamental for the Statesment the difficulty materialism of the enthronement of of having an ideal or a society, is adopted as the functional democracy perfect state. It is framework of analysis. and the rule of law for generally believed today Our findings indicate good governance in that every state, no that in principle, Nigeria. matter how crude, democracy and the rule primitive or of law are elaborately These three concepts, authoritarian, is saddled provided in Nigeria, but namely, the rule of law, with the problems of the in practice, good democracy and good rule of law, democracy governance still eludes governance are so and good governance. the country. Corruption, interrelated that one is Democracy provides a poverty, ignorance, tempted to liken their conducive and diseases, inflation, relationship to that of stimulating environment declining productivity, Siamese twins. Their for the rule of law to maladministration, relationship is so thrive, while the rule of dictatorship, ethnicity intricately linked that, law sustains democracy. and other primordial sometimes, one wonders Good governance, on the factors, as well as where one stops and the other hand, promotes prevalent social vices are o t h e r b e g i n s . and strengthens both the road mines to good Democracy, the rule of democracy and the rule

Contd. on page 5

ascend..., 1966). The coup was a direct response to the corruption of the First Republic; and the popular support the military received for the coup showed that Nigerians were long expecting such a wind of change to bail them out from the claws of the politicians of that era.

Interestingly, despite the killings of some major First Republic politicians, there were widespread jubilations in the country.

The General Aguiyi Thomas Ironsi military government that replaced the sacked civilian regime instituted a series of commissions of inquiry to investigate the activities of some government parastatal and to probe the widespread corruption that characterized the public service sector of the deposed regime.

The report on the parastatal, especially the Nigeria Railway Corporation, Nigeria Ports Authority, and the defunct Electricity Corporation of Nigeria and Nigeria Airways, revealed that a number of ministers formed companies and used

their influence to secure contracts.

Moreover, they were found guilty of misappropriation of funds as well as disregarding laid down procedures in the award of contracts by parastatal under their Ministries.

The zeal to punish the wrong doers of the First Republic died with the Gowon coup of July 1966, which ousted the Ironsi government because the politicians in detention were freed.

This development had serious implications for the polity as the new set of rulers embarked on white elephant projects, which served as a means of looting public funds.

The ensuing development clearly showed that the military rulers were not better nor different from the ousted civilians leaders. General Yakubu Gowon ruled the country at a time Nigeria experienced an unprecedented wealth from the oil boom of the 1970s.

Apart from the mismanagement



## ANTI-CORRUPTION

economic, cultural and political development.

Historically, the origin of corruption in Nigeria predates the colonial era. According to a Colonial Government Report (CGR) of 1947, "The African's background and outlook on public morality is very different from that of the present day Briton. The African in the public service seeks to further his own financial interest." Before independence, there have been cases of official misuse of resources for personal enrichment. Over the years, Nigeria has seen its wealth withered with little to show in living conditions of the citizens.

The First Republic under the leadership of Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, the Prime Minister, and Nnamdi Azikiwe, the President, was marked by widespread corruption. Government officials looted public funds with impunity. Federal Representative and Ministers flaunted their wealth with reckless abandon.

In fact, it appeared there were

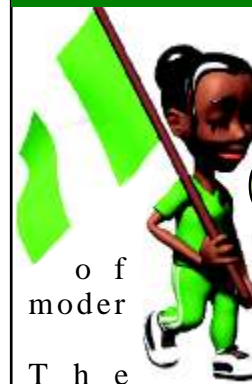
no men of good character in the political leadership of the First Republic. Politically, the thinking of the First Republic Nigerian leadership class was based on politics for material gain; making money and living well.

The situation described above, among other factors, provided the pretext for a group of young middle-rank army officers to sack the Nigerian First Republic politicians from power through a coup d'état on 15 January 1966 on the ground of corruption.

The editorial of the Daily Times Newspaper of January 16, 1966 argued thus: With the transfer of authority of the Federal Government to the Armed Forces, we reached a turning point in our national life. The old order has changed, yielding place to a new one.

... For a long time, instead of settling down to minister to people's needs, the politicians were busy performing series of seven day wonders as if the act of government was some circus show... still we groped along as citizens watched politicians scorn the base by which they did

Contd. from page 4



## DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

of modern law in every society.

The glaring gap in knowledge is that the rule of law, democracy and good governance may be provided in principle in a state, but in practice it is a different ball game. The objective of this magazine, therefore, is to x-ray this triumvirate relationship in Nigeria, as well as find out whether the constitutional provisions are in tandem with the realities in the country.

There is no consensus among scholars on the exact definition of democracy. The Athenians of the ancient Greece defined democracy as the government of the people by the people for the people. This simply means the government people freely put up to serve them without any discrimination on the basis of social status. Euripides, a Greek philosopher long before Plato, shared the above view when he described a democratic state as one governed by people's representatives and for the many who have neither property nor birth. Plato, another Greek

philosopher, had a similar view of democracy when he defined a democratic state in his book, the Republic, as a state governed by the philosopher kings, who neither marry nor have personal property, but live together in the barracks (that is, equivalent to government house today) and enunciate policies for the general welfare of the people. However, Plato, in his second and third books, the Statesman and the Laws, respectively modified his definition when he defined democracy as the government of the people in which law is supreme, ruler and subjects' alike being subject to it.

For Rousseau, democracy is the government of the people for the general will of the people. To provide the general will of the people, government must give liberty under the law, must create a system of public education by which children are accustomed to regard their individuality only in its relation to the body of the state, Rousseau argues.

In what he described as democratic centralism, Lenin defines democracy as the government of the peasants and the proliferates, which subordinates the minority to the majority through a strong party structure that cedes its decision making power to higher party bodies.



Under this democratic centralism, argues Lenin, no opposition, criticisms and demand for personal liberty are brooked from the people. Despite the seemingly divergent views on democracy, there are some basic principles that are common to them. These include supremacy of the law, equality of all citizens before the law, personal liberty, general will of the people, equitable distribution of resources in the society and equal opportunity for all citizens, among others.

## DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE



October 1, 1960 the post independent government of Nigeria adopted a democratic rule, which was interrupted by military interregnum from 1966 through 1979. The country was returned to civil rule in 1979, which lasted till December 31, 1983 when the military struck again and sacked major democratic structures and institutions. Democratic rule was restored in the country on May 29, 1999, and, since then democracy has been on experimentation in Nigeria. It has been argued that the return of the country to electoral democracy in 1999 has not made any significant impact on the economy and general wellbeing of the people because of the manipulating nature and character of the national elite.

The rule of law presupposes the supremacy of law in the state. This means that law, and nothing else, counts in the society, as everything, everybody is subject to the same law. Both the ruler and the ruled, or the

For the purpose of this magazine, democracy is the government put in place by the people, which upholds the spirit of social contract between the state and the people, ensures equitable distribution of the state resources and equal opportunity for all its citizens, and whose operations are based on the rule of law.

On attainment of independence on

becomes difficult for it to act positively to the benefit of the state and its citizens.

This has been the situation the Nigerian state has found herself since independence. The political leadership class, in its quest to secure or retain power, suppress opposition, and have access to unlimited funds for personal use, have sacrificed positive leadership on the altar of corruption.

Indeed, from the first generation of political leadership class through the successive military and civilian generation of political leaders, Nigerian political leadership had grown continually in corrupt practices.

Political corruption has become a cancerous phenomenon that pervades the Nigerian state unrestrained.

Over the years, we have seen the development of a vast system of institutionalized political corruption most times emanating from the very top and pervading all governmental institutions with perverse influence on the entire society.

It would be an exercise in futility going into the details of the intricate political interplay that characterized each of the phases of Nigeria's Check political history; these histories have been well documented and discussed in several books and are well known to those with a conscious interest in the history of Nigeria.

Available records on the history of the political development of Nigeria since independence have shown that the reins of government has always fallen into the hands of a political leadership class that showed more interest in private, group or ethnic gains than in the general wellbeing of the Nigerian state. In all, political power has alternated between the civilian and the military since independence and neither of the two categories that ruled the country has done better in terms of corruption ratings.

Indeed, the political leadership class has succeeded in entrenching corruption by providing a fertile ground and an environment conducive for the phenomenon to thrive incurably at the expense of national socio-



even from behind the scene. Although there is no widespread or comprehensive definition as to what constitutes corrupt behavior, the most prominent definitions share a common emphasis on the abuse of public power or position for personal advantage.

A simple dictionary definition of the phenomenon refers to it as "an impairment of virtue and moral principles."

## ANTI-CORRUPTION



According to the World Bank and Transparency International (TI), a leading global anti-corruption watch dog, corruption is the an abuse of public office for private gains for the benefit of the holder of the office or some third party.

Viewed from these definitions, political corruption can be broadly understood as unethical behavior, which violates the norms of the system of political order. Basically, political corruption can be for private and group enrichment and for

power preservation purposes. Often, these two forms of political corruption are connected. In fact, some of the larger and more serious political corruption scandals include both processes. Political corruption usually encompasses abuses by government officials such as embezzlement and

cronyism, as well as abuses linking public and private actors such as bribery, extortion, influence peddling, and fraud, to mention but a few. In this regard, corruption threatens good

governance, sustainable development, democratic process, and fair business practices.

From the definitions and explanations above, it is evident that the definitions of leadership explain the concept from a positive perspective while the definitions of corruption locate the phenomenon in the negative axis. Consequently, when the political leadership class of a country espouses corruption, it

ruler and the subjects, are not only subject to the rule of law, but are also equal before the law.

The rule of law promotes and protects the liberty, freedom and the gamut of the fundamental human rights of the citizens. Writing on individual freedom, It is noted that though the social contract gives the body politic absolute power over all its citizens, the sovereign cannot impose on its subjects any fetters that are useless to the community.

We can see from this that the sovereign power, absolute, sacred, and inviolable as it does not and cannot exceed the limits of general conventions and that every man may dispose at will of such goods and liberty.

However, our concern here is that whether absolute or not, individual liberties and freedom are guaranteed in a democratic state where the rule of law is supreme.

The Secretary General of the United Nations [2013] defines

## DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

nes the rule of law as a principle of governance in which all persons, institutions and entities are accountable to laws that are publicly promulgated, equally enforced and independently adjudicated, and which are consistent with international human rights, norms and standards. It requires, as well, measures to ensure adherence to the principles of supremacy of law, equality before the law, accountability to the law, fairness in the application of the law, separation of powers, participation in the decision making, legal certainty, avoidance of arbitrariness and procedural and legal transparency.

Similarly, the 1959 International Commission of Jurists Delhi Declaration states that the rule of law implies certain rights and freedom, independent judiciary, social, economic and cultural conditions conducive to human dignity.



The rule of law thrives in a state



# Cultural & Religious BELIEFS

**T**he Nigeria nation is a multi-ethnic nation with diverse cultural groups that are about three hundred in number. Rather than harnessing our diversities towards viable national development, we have become slaves to our ethnic origins to which our allegiance is largely focused at the detriment of nation building. Secular Fanatical ethnic consciousness has resulted into ethnic prejudice and mistrust, religious and political problems, and socio-cultural conflicts. These vices have pervaded all spheres of life in Nigeria, be it employment, education, religion and admission into federal Institutions. This magazine has highlighted some of the factors needed in nation building and how Nigeria has fallen Chshort in meeting them due to competitive ethnicity. The magazine recommends what role social studies education should play in teaching multi-ethnic issues in our schools so as to enable students understand other ethnic groups outside theirs and be able to co-exist peacefully in the country to bring about a virile nation.

Nigeria is a multiethnic society consisting

of about 300 ethnic groups. It is a well known fact that Nigeria is a colonial creation. Chief Obafemi Awolowo pointed out that Nigeria was "a mere-geographical expression". This means that in terms of social relations and national identification, Nigeria was not yet a nation. As a multi-national society, one of the sociological problems of building Nigeria as a nation, is multi-ethnicity with its concomitants such as multi-lingual and competitive ethnicity. Prior to the coming of the Europeans to Nigeria, the indigenous Nigerian societies were not static and they were not in equilibrium relations. There were varieties of links which existed between the various states and peoples which were the predecessors of modern Nigeria. For example, there were links among Kanem-Bornu, the Hausa States, Nupe, the Jukun Kingdom, the empires of Oyo and Benin, the Delta States and the loosely associated Ibo communities.

These various societies, though inter-dependent, apparently did not set up the process to constitute themselves into one society. Yet, they provided socio-cultural

and terms that are used in this magazine i.e. leadership, political leadership, corruption and political corruption.

Leadership has been defined in so many ways that it is hard to come up with a single working definition. However, leadership may be defined as a body of people who lead and direct the activities of a group towards a shared goal. It also denotes the ability to lead, direct and organize a group. In line with this understanding,

Leadership could be best describes leadership as a potent combination of strategy and character and strongly emphasized that of the two elements, character is the most preferred for leadership

Consequently, leadership is a process of social influence by which a person influences others to accomplish an objective and directs the organization in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent.

A leader therefore is expected to demonstrate qualities, which embrace but not limited to good character, vision, tact, prudence, and ability to lead by example because people basically ascribe leadership to

those who they feel can most enable them achieve important goals or objectives.

Political Leadership refers to the ruling class that bears the responsibility of managing the affairs and resources of a political entity by setting and influencing policy priorities affecting the territory through different decision-making structures and institutions created for the orderly development of the territory. It could also be described as the human element that operates the machineries of government on behalf of an organized territory.

This includes people who hold decision-making positions in government, and people who seek those positions, whether by means of election, coup d'état, appointment, electoral fraud, conquest, right of inheritance or other means. Broadly defined, however, political leadership goes beyond the ruling elites that directly manage the affairs of a territory it embraces the totality of the political class that has the capacity to manipulate the machineries of government



country endowed with many resources still has more than 70 percent of its population living below the poverty line as a result of corruption and economic mismanagement. Pathetically the logic of the Nigerian political leadership class has been that of self-service as some of the leaders are mired in the pursuit of selfish and personal goals at the expense of broader national interests.

Consequently, emphasis has been on personal aggrandizement and self-glorification with the result that corruption has become a euphemism for explaining political leadership in Nigeria in relation to the management of national wealth.

History has shown that no nation of the world grew and enjoyed steady development in virtually all spheres of its national life without experiencing good and selfless political leadership. This is largely because qualitative growth and development as always been an outcome of good governance.

Commenting on the experience

of the Nigerian nation, the re-owned novelist, Chinua Achebe, insisted that the root cause of the Nigerian predicament should be laid squarely at the foot of bad leadership. "The trouble with Nigeria," Achebe argued, is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. There is nothing basically wrong with the Nigerian character. There is nothing wrong with the Nigerian land, climate, water, air, or anything else. The Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to their responsibility, to the challenge of personal example, which is the hall mark of true leadership.

Consequently, the state of Nigeria's pitiable socio-economic development has been a direct consequence of the actions and inactions of the leadership class that has managed the affairs and wealth of the country since independence.

For the purpose of conceptual clarification and to limit the level of ambiguity, which as a rule is the hallmark of academic research, it is important to examine some of the concepts

frame-work for all Nigerian society, their relations with one another;

Ethnographers estimate that over 250 ethnic groups make up Nigeria. Each of these consists of smaller social groups for example the Yoruba consists of the Ekiti, Ijesha, Oyo and so on. The Ibo consists of Oguta etc, the Urbobo of Agbarho, Agbon, Ugheli and others. The Hausa have their various indigenous states none of these groups however large was a nation in any sense before the colonial regrouping. It was the colonial government that merged them together in 1914 and later Balkanized Nigeria into three regions in 1947 along ethnic lines.

From 1947, the multiethnic composition of Nigeria continued to be a bane to Nigeria's national unity and development. It was claimed that whatever is done or anticipated in Nigeria, particularly in the quarters had employment, administrative distribution of social relationships and attachments and conspicuously many

Nigerian first to his ethnic group before the nation is a bane to Nigeria's national unity, national consciousness and socio-political integration.

There have been cases of multi-ethnic vices such as allegiance to ethnic-group, intra-cultural and inter-ethnic

antagonism, hostility, aggression, bitterness, hatred, mistrust in the country which have not augured well for the building of a virile Nigerian nation. Rather than harnessing our diversities towards viable nation building, we have become slaves to our ethnic origin to which our allegiance is largely focused at the detriment of nation building.

Interfaced with religion, statism and class, ethnicity is a potent reality in the Nigerian federal equation. Almost invariably, minority group problems and other related to them in Nigeria, are assumed to have their roots, in ethnicity. Both concepts - minority and ethnicity according to a scholar describe it to be seen to be inseparable. The collapse of

nation building experience in a majority of cases in Africa in general and in Nigeria in particular, has resulted from rugged ethnic

particularizes of given constituent units of these nations.

The concept of ethnic group has been variously defined as based on nationality, race and religion in the defined an ethnic group as any group





which is defined or set off by race, religion or defined origin or some combination of these



members, who defined themselves as social identity, acts of a part of Nigeria. Nigerians majority which co-the co-within d to the dent of history.

Competitive ethnicity started in Africa since the colonial days. In search for the crumbs from colonial production, competition among Africans created or reinforced common consciousness among the various competing ethnic groups. At times the historical and competitive aspects of this consciousness were contemporary competition which may create a common warring section among previously and historically hostile and warring sections of the same ethnic group. Exclusiveness is an attribute of ethnicity, in group-out, group-in bounding emerged with it and, in time, become mark more distinct than before and jealously guarded, by the various ethnic groups. Acceptance and rejection on linguistic-cultural grounds characterizes social relations. These are expressed inevitably through interethnic discrimination in jobs, housing,

categories. This definition is of limited utility especially when Nigerian materials are under consideration. In Nigeria, the sense of identification with an ethnic group is by far different from that with either race or a religious group as far as Nigeria is concerned.

The terms ethnic group and tribe synonymously be defined as ethnic group as those whose members share a unique social and cultural heritage, passed from one generation to the other. Ethnic groups are frequently identified by distinctive patterns of family life language, recreation, religion and other customs which cause them to be differentiated from others.

Combining the various definitions for the purpose of bringing the various dimensions under a single definition, Another school of thought defined an ethnic group as consisting of interacting

10

to assess the impact of the phenomenon of corruption on the social and economic wellbeing of the country as a whole. It must be mentioned here that the perspective offered in this magazine does not exhaust all that there is to be discussed concerning corruption and political leadership in Nigeria. It will only approach the subject matter from the perspective of its contributions to public policy failure and its implications for socio-economic development.

It is instructive to state that political leadership in the context of this magazine refers not only to the government or to the leadership of an organized state, but embrace the totality of the political class that has the capacity to exert influence on the machineries of government even from behind the scene.

Hence, this magazine shall explicate on the contributions of both the military and the civilian leadership class that has managed and directed the affairs of the country to the growth and institutionalization of corruption in Nigeria. This is a way of justifying the underlying

thesis of this magazine that the political leadership of the country since independence is responsible for entrenching corruption in Nigeria and by extension had impeded meaningful socio-economic development.

It is an incontrovertible fact that corruption has been the bane of Nigeria's development. Without mincing words the phenomenon has ravaged the country and destroyed most of what is held as cherished national values. Unfortunately, the political class saddled with the responsibility of directing the affairs of the country have been the major culprit in perpetrating this act. Regrettably, since independence a notable surviving legacy of the successive political leadership both civilian and military that have managed the affairs of the country at different times has been the institutionalization of corruption in all agencies of the public service, which, like a deadly virus has subsequently spread to the private sector of the country.

Indeed it is a paradox that Nigeria the world's eighth largest exporter of crude oil, a

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Nigeria, a country richly endowed with natural resources and high quality human capital is yet to find its rightful place among the community of nations. A major reason that has been responsible for her socio-economic stagnation is the phenomenon of corruption. The kernel of the magazine rest in the fact that political leadership and corruption were

developments in the country before independence and the activities of Nigerian nationalists vis-à-vis the colonial masters, this magazine seeks to discuss the role of the political leadership class in the entrenchment of corruption in



## ANTI-CORRUPTION

interwoven and it is against this background that It explored the corrupt tendencies of the political leadership class in Nigeria and its implication for socio-economic development. The magazine concludes that for Nigeria to experience sustainable socio-economic development, responsible and credible leaders must emerge to implant the act of good and selfless governance in the country.

Corruption in Nigeria from a historical point of view with heavy concentration on political

Nigeria from a socio-economic perspective. This magazine argues that the political leadership class in Nigeria cannot exonerate itself from the current travails of socio-economic underdevelopment in the country.

It explores from a historical perspective the destructive effect of corruption on public policy decisions, actions, and the management of collapsed infrastructure and the nation's resources as well as its socio-economic implications to development. Attempt is made

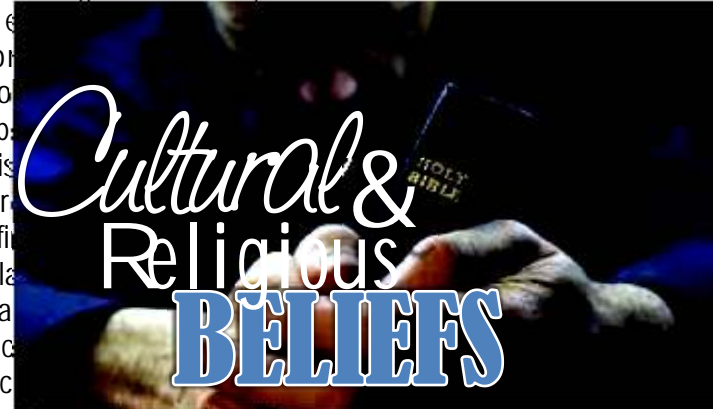
admission into educational institutions, marriages, business transactions or the distribution of social services. This factor of exclusiveness is usually accompanied by nepotism and corruption,

- (2) Similar culture and tradition; and
- (3) Common geographical location.

Where there are differences in the characteristic attributes of a nation, among the peoples of that country,

Conflict according to is an important

aspect of under competition resources inequality is wealth is gr being conf interethnic divisive a economic c social effect



and various forms of violent agitations become instruments in interethnic relations. The scarcity of much highly valued resources encouraged destructive competition.

There are many definitions to the concept of a nation. The African Encyclopedia for schools and Colleges (1974; 362) defines a nation as "a large group of people who live in the same country; and who share similar traditions, culture and ways of life, Watson (1977) defined a nation as a "community of people whose members are bound together by a sense of solidarity, a common culture and a national consciousness, Using Watson's definition, three factors are basic about a nation and they are;

- (1) National consciousness;

result of differences in culture, tradition, religion and language. Also problems like alienation, discontent, disaffection or disillusionment may arise where there is low level of national consciousness.

According to a school of thought nation building involves actions, behaviors and thoughts or feelings aimed at sustaining the attributes of a nation. The problem of nation building is more critical in the third world country generally and more particularly in Nigeria where there are peoples with different cultures, languages, religion and a diversity of inclinations who have been forced together into one geo-political entity (Ezegbe:1994). Eboh an Ekong, (1993) defined nation building as a process, whereby the leaders of a country strive to



A child is anyone born of Nigeria, children are expected and living in a International to know their rights geographical area Declarations, regarding the whose age is under Conventions, instrument and the eighteen years. In other Protocols, Charters.etc only way they can words, he is a minor, know is to be taught.

Specifically, Article 26

himself. It is therefore of the United Nation The Nigerian government

being posited here that the Federal, State and Local government arms are morally liable for the carrying out of some duties, for the care of Nigerians under eighteen years of age. Constitutionally, it is a child's right to demand

## CHILD'S RIGHTS ARE ACHIEVABLE TREASURES



all the rights 1948 Universal ratified the entrenched in all the Declaration of Human Convention of the working instruments Rights and article 28 of Right of the child in on which government its convention on the March 1991. By that, operates and to which Right of the Child the Nigerian she subscribes. Some provides for the basic government has of these instruments rights of the child. signified its intention are the constitution of Knowledge is power, to pass new laws with the Federal Republic says a motto. All which it intend to

political process and the end result is lack of respect for the rule of law, corruption and conflict. As we have shown in the magazine, religion is used by the elite as a tool to manipulate to have access to power. There is therefore a big difference between constitutional provisions and reality. The challenge is to ensure the creation of institutions and mechanisms that will anticipate, forecast and try to prevent these conflicts and mobilize the people to ensure good governance, accountability and transparency while ensuring that there are institutions of horizontal accountability that are independent.

Perhaps, in the midst of all this,

Nigeria is a nation with great ethnic and religious diversity and a very rich history of constitutional development. This diversity has posed a lot of challenges to governance in Nigeria. There have been various challenges but the political elite has not tackled these challenges. At present, there are many challenges to tackle these challenges. We have a lot to learn from our experience. But whether the problems posed by these challenges will be resolved will depend on the balance of forces within the Nigerian State and the mechanisms and institutions that are put in place for political accommodation, and management of social diversities and religious difference. The most important thing to note now is the increasing rate at which we would abide with the distinct rule over the most





Midwest region was created bringing the number of regions in the country to four. Each region had its own police, Courts and Prisons. The intrusion of the military into governance changed all these and turned the country into more or less a unitary State after the manner of military high commands.

During the 1954 Constitutional Conference that led to the making of the Lyttleton Constitution of 1954, minority groups in Nigeria expressed fears of discrimination, marginalization and oppression. This led to the Willinck Commission in September 1956 which recommended fundamental rights in the Constitution. These were accepted and fundamental rights provision has been in the Constitution from the Independence Constitution of 1960 till date.

Apart from the measures described above, government usually sets up a Commission of Enquiry after every major crisis in Nigeria. Unfortunately, the reports of most of the Commissions are neither made public nor acted upon. In the recent past, the Federal Government set up an Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution. Meanwhile, there is no mechanism for early warning signal and conflict prevention in Nigeria.

There are a lot of lessons that can be learnt from Nigeria's experience in managing ethnic and religious diversity. First, constitutional engineering after the failure of the first republic in Nigeria has prevented the emergence of religious parties in Nigeria. Although some of the political parties have more following in certain regions of the country (Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) and Alliance for Democracy (AD) in South Western Nigeria, Peoples' Redemption Party (PRP) in Northern Nigeria, All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA) in eastern Nigeria, the outlook, programmed and mobilization of all the parties are national. Second, the Nigerian experience has shown that constitutional provisions alone cannot prevent ethnic and religious conflicts. Furthermore, the constitutional prohibition of State

religion has not prevented Governments (both Federal and State) from giving preferential treatment to certain religions. It has also not stopped some State Governments in Northern Nigeria from introducing the Sharia legal system. In addition, the experience of constitution making in Nigeria shows that the people have never really participated in the making of a constitution for the country. Since the people did not participate in the making of the constitution, they cannot relate to the final product as their own. They are therefore alienated from the



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comply with the child has not been provisions and encouraged to obligations in the participate in convention and report decisions affecting regularly back to an him/her as provided independent UN for by Article 12 of the committee on the convention. As Rights of the Child. indicated earlier, government has not

Unfortunately, the Nigerian child has protect its children been denied virtually from exploitative all the important labor, physical and provisions of the sexual abuses, neglect conventions as and discrimination of enlisted by, all sorts. This Participation, contravenes Article 39 Protection and of the convention. Provision. This denial Government is yet to is evident by the and should observe following analysis. and respect the child's right to education as

Firstly, the Nigeria provided for in Article

28[1-3] of the Convention. The Convention says that the child has the right to education, and it is the duty of the country to ensure that primary education, at least, is made available, free and compulsory too, while secondary including general and vocational education should be made available and accessible. Government's responsibility in this direction should be unequivocal in making education free and compulsory for all, developing all forms of secondary, general and vocational education, taking measures to encourage regular attendance at schools by encouraging teachers to teach effectively and with vocational facilities, equipment and materials. Furthermore, the

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government is sorts of imaginable out of the bargain. An expected to make and unimaginable opportunity to learn a higher education types of odd jobs. The trade is unthinkable qualitative and slavery and abuse set and just cannot and accessible to all. in when it is the case must not be Incorporating the where the child is mentioned. teaching of the merely entitled to convention on the feeding and clothing This is total Rights into the school while the monthly exploitation and we in curriculum and stipend is paid to his CHILDREN abhor it and wish to emphasize enforce the teaching of parents or guardians. here that it is the it in public and private The food is just responsibility of schools. enough to keep him

14 The Nigerian child is virtually sold into slavery as he is given out to unknown



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alive while the persons, sometimes at clothing merely serves some Nigerian an age as low as six the purpose of children, particularly years to go and serve covering nakedness females of below as a housemaid, house and the visibly fourteen years help, baby sitter, cook countable ribs. Of sometimes, are and steward, and all course, schooling is blindfolded, tricked,

interrelationships across ethnic boundaries would be enhanced.

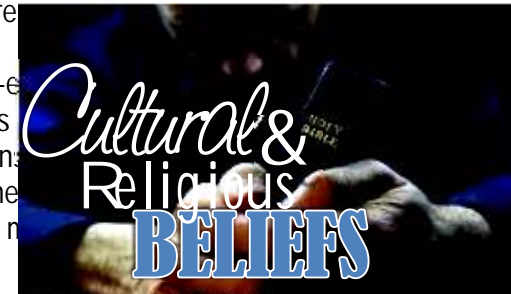
Nigeria is yet to meaningfully address multi-ethnic education in a multicultural nation and world Social studies educators are therefore urged to redirect some of their teachings to Multi-ethnic studies As highlighted by Armstrong , some of the useful tips for teaching multi-ethnic education effectively in social studies should be taken into consideration by teachers and some of these tips are:

- (1) Teach the identified peculiar feature of the individual ethnic groups.
- (2) Teach their common experiences or commonalities.
- (3) Highlight difference

In teaching multi-ethnic education, major approaches for multi-ethnic integration include the implored and the cultural pluralism, not pedagogy, It is hoped that if multi-ethnic education is properly addressed in our institutions right from the primary schools, much of the multi-ethnic vices, which are debarring the process of nation-building will be drastically reduced if not totally eradicated.

Various stakeholders have written on the politicization and manipulation of ethnic and religious identities in Nigeria. In the

past twenty years, there is a resurgence of ethnic and religious violence in Nigeria. It is instructive to note that this resurgence coincided with economic crisis experienced in Nigeria; It has been argued that the sources of conflict in Nigeria include militarism, absence and distortions of democracy, economic problem, collapse of the educational sector, the growing army of almajirai, security inadequacy, intensification of micro-nationalism, absence of justice and equity and weakness of Civil Society groups . One common thread that runs through any discerning mind was the argument that most ethnic clashes in



35 Nigeria often have religious dimensions. The table below shows a survey of ethnic and religious clashes in Nigeria. It was reasoned that with the

diversity of Nigeria, federalism would be the best system suited for the country. As noted earlier, the move towards federalism, which started with the Richards Constitution of 1946, was consolidated by the Lyttleton Constitution of 1954 when there was co-existence of the Federal Government alongside the Regional Governments of North, East and West. In 1963, the



ethnic clashes are doing more damage to the nation rather than building it. Some of the crises/clashes are discussed below:

This crisis which started in the month of March, 1997 went on for over six months. The crisis broke out between the Ijaws and the Itsekiris, two of the three major ethnic groups in Warri. For some time now, the two groups have regarded each other with mutual suspicions. The crisis of 1997 came after the location of the headquarters of one of the newly created local governments in the area. The crisis led to the sack of several villages while properties worth several millions of naira were wantonly destroyed. Sophisticated weapons including grenades and other explosives were freely employed.

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According to the 1997 report of the human rights commission, many youths in the art of handling weapons of modern warfare became emulators of classroom activities in many months.

In this kind of situation, nation building processes cannot be possible.

The creation of 183 additional local governments in Nigeria by the Abacha administration in 1996 had generated hostilities in the country. In Ife-Modakeke, palpable tension had been generated over the location of the headquarters of the newly created Ife-East Local Government; Indigenes of the two communities engaged themselves in

physical warfare. Houses and properties were looted, vandalized or completely razed. Many people were killed. Educational and social activities in the area were paralyzed (CDHR; 1997). Other Cases of ethnic/communal clashes hostilities between the Esan speaking people of, Ilushin and their Uro-speaking migrant neighbors; and the ethnic crisis involving Pam-Pam and Gindiri townships of the Mangu Local Government Council of Plateau State to mention but few, Many other inter-ethnic crises occur almost everyday in the country and these rather than helping in the building of a virile nation have been destabilizing the process of nation building.



Nigeria's pervading multi-ethnic vices such as allegiance to ethnic group, inter-ethnic antagonism, hostility,

aggression etc may have been promoted by the monoculture nature of most Nigerian school and absence of well-conceived and articulated multi-ethnic education program. Multi-ethnic education is necessary in a country like Nigeria so as to enable students to understand other ethnic groups outside their own and in so doing, ethnic tolerance, understanding and mutual

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is the active connivance of their biological parents. We can then imagine the case of children without parents; they are simply tossed into prostitution and other forms of exploitation.

Some of our children are deprived of some of their inalienable rights just because of their states of origin. we can imagine a situation where a child who is qualified to gain admission into a school does not get it because of the cut off mark, for his home state which has been

residing in his state of origin, or has not paid taxes. A child does not get basic education because his parent cannot pay education support levy [or whatever name it is called in his vicinity], which sometimes are as low as N200. A child labors through the term or session to attend classes but will not be allowed to write the examination because the parents have not paid the PTA levy or other levies imposed on pupils by a caucus of fraudulent PTA officials with the connivance of school

authorities. It is worse still when a child is barred from enrolling for the Senior School Certificate Examination after 6 years to toiling in school because all levies and fees must be paid before the SSCE fees.

These are deprivations, which lead to frustration and result in heartlessness of some youths. Government has a role and a grave responsibility to play in eradicating these areas of official deprivation, which actually border on crime.

A few years ago, it took public outcry, almost assuming a global dimension for some so-called kid robbers to be saved, as they had been sentenced to death for

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acts bothering on armed robbery. We wondered where the laws forbidding children who are under-age from being charged for criminal matters were. Section 30 of the criminal code and section 50 of the Penal code were supposed to have been the canopy under which those kids were to have found refuge, but by the very nature of robbery and firearms Tribunal [the Tribunal inclusive], the right were flagrantly thrown overboard. The physical and mental, emotional and traumatic agonies the children could have undergone can only be imagined. So also, their parents who must have spent their last kobo and borrowed so much to sustain the legal battle and the media engendered

awareness that eventually saved the children.

Several sections of chapter 4 of the 1979 constitution of the federal republic of Nigeria constitution which subsequent versions in 1995 and or whichever is in force now or mimicker, are in agreement with the convention on the Rights of the child. These rights have to do with the child's freedom of expression, opinions, and access to appropriate

information. These rights are more relevant when issues pertaining to the child's education, choice of career, etc. are involved.

Complementary to these rights is that of freedom of thought, conscience and religion. These are in section 35, 36 and 38 of the constitution while section 31, 34 and 37 seek to ensure the welfare of the child. Being a signatory to that convention, and our Head of state or President have sworn



of Igbo's were reportedly being killed in the North, suggested the use of Hausa, as the national official language because to him, Hausa is a majority language and language of wider communication used in Nigeria's neighboring states. Replying to this suggestion, Achebe accused of insensitivity and inhumanity and tagged him as a lunatic.

Opinions were divergent on the issue of a national indigenous language because of the fear of linguistic and cultural domination of minorities. observed that if Nigeria wanted to use language as a cohesive force of effective nation-building, people must be resolved to face the challenges of tribalism, which has eaten deeply into the national structure.

As an instrument of nation building, education builds the mass to build the nation. But regrettably, the education system in Nigeria has collapsed to the extent that nothing in the name of functional education goes on in the educational system. According to them Nigerian schools are empty of the right quality and quantity of human and material resources to make Nigeria's nation building a reality.

Nigeria has been characterized by

perpetuating socio-political instability right from the first three years of her dependence. This is consequent upon Nigeria's ethnic multiplicity and its associated political oddities. There are crises here and there. Incidences of communal clashes between ethnic groups have been on the increase even in recent years. In real terms, Nigeria has never really been an integrated nation. Most of the time what is described as harmonious co-existence between groups is often very fragile and this snaps as soon as there is any slight provocation. What follows afterwards are violent clashes in which lives are lost, school activities paralyzed and valuable



properties were destroyed.

For example, there were series of inter and intra-

communal crisis and ethnic clashes in 1997 arising from either deliberate marginalization, differential opportunities of employment, education, government appointments and so on. The level of damage, the degree of loss of lives and properties, the disruption of social activities are pointers to the fact that



achieve unity and progress for their nation through various program. It is aimed at promoting peace and harmony, reducing conflicts, laying good foundations for economic, social and political development and above all to create conditions for progress.

A very crucial factor in nation building in Nigeria is that of accommodation and integration among the various peoples of the country. It is very necessary that the various peoples should accommodate one another. This is not easy to achieve in Nigeria. Also, the minority groups should be carried along so as to peacefully achieve the goal of nation building.

multilingualism and competitive ethnicity. Some of these problems are discussed below:

A major problem facing the developing nations of the world, especially those which are multi-ethnic and multilingual in their composition is how to integrate their diverse ethnic-linguistics groups. This has generated a lot of controversy and crisis in Nigeria. Attempt to replace English with an indigenous language as a national official language in Nigeria started in 1960 after the attainment of independence. Contributing to the debate on the issue of an indigenous language, on the floor of the house of representative, Mallam A.Y. Baba of Adamawa-North West constituency suggested that the house should encourage the government to introduce the teaching of Hausa, Ibo and

Yoruba into the institutions of learning throughout the country. This is to enable one of the languages to emerge as an indigenous official language in future. Opinions were divergent on which

language should be the indigenous official language. While some people supported Hausa, some supported Ibo and some Yoruba language. In the heat of the Nigerian civil war in 1967, when hundreds

32 Listed some factors from literature which according to him constitute pre-requisites for the building of a strong nation. Some of the factors include:

- (1) Obedience, allegiance and loyalty to a central government
- (2) Willingness to sacrifice for the people;
- (3) National sentiment
- (4) Loyalty to a nation

Most of the above factors are not ready to subjugate local ethnic loyalties to those of the nation. The task of nation-building within the context of Nigeria is besieged by a variety of problems. Most of these problems are seriously linked with multi-ethnicity with its concomitants such as



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to uphold the constitution, it is the responsibility of the democratic government to grant all, not most, all the rights therein.

The judicial arm of government has a responsibility to uphold the right of the child as entrenched in cap 112, sections 155 and 183 of the Law of Evidence. These enactments provide for respect for the views of the child. In

matters pertaining to the divorce of his parents, his education, choice of career and such matters that the future of the child depends on, the views of the child, though not to be wholly accepted as they are, are necessary inputs for the child to have a sense of belonging.

Apart from provisions in the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Nigeria is a member of the United

Nations and the Organization of Africa Unity and appends her signature to some rights on the child. Some of these are the Universal Declaration.

However, Security agents who are supposed to be enforcer of the law have turned into breaker of the law, as extra-judicial killing has become the order

of the day. Case of rape and pedophiles has risen, so alarming that one cannot help wondering what could have influenced this bestial trend. The level of impunity everywhere is so alarming that a sitting governor was molested and humiliated by a police commissioner in its state. Who and how then can the rights of a minor be protected?

To develop a society,



aside the infrastructural needs, the human resource development is most important, this human development can best be incorporated into the system, starting from the child. The way the society train its young ones forms a major component in the eventual product of national development that it stands to get.

under the ground. Therefore, the child's right to education, protection and other forms of freedoms are genuine national treasures that must not just be signed-to on papers but backed through action plan of government and protected by law enforcement agencies.

education is not ensured just as the facilities are not affordable and accessible to all. Institutions of government are not keenly monitored to ensure the guarantee of children's rights.

Lastly, beyond mere acknowledgement, the Federal, State and Local government authorities must begin to ensure practical steps of not only guaranteeing all the rights of the child but also seeing to the protection and actualisation of it. It is only these practical steps that can help the

A generation of children with protected rights to education, guaranteed social rights, ensured rights of expression, and all other freedoms would grow up to be better citizens and a contributor to both growth and development of the nation. It is this factored indices that allows proper analyses of the developmental potential of a nation rather than the material resources

We must say, that the trend of things in the polity does not point to so much practical achievement by the government. The enrolment level in public and secondary schools is on the decline, the right to



ce training ground of trial and error properly funded, university management will not hike tuition fees

*The best any government can do for its youths is to invest in their education, by continuously providing a conducive environment for learning ,appropriate funding, equipping the institutions with the needed facilities to boost academic standard and to make education an attractive and productive sector. Sadly enough, the federal government has paid lip only lip service to education from time immemorial .The best we had has been frequent promises that have not been fulfilled. Promise and fail will not help build a true 21st century institution that can compete side by side with other universities and colleges across the world. To produce students who are worthy in character and excellent in learning and service to humanity, there is the need for proper and continuous funding of Nigeria educational institutions, creation of laboratories and functional research centers, provision of well equipped libraries, standard modern and adequate lecture theatres and other needed facilities that will help produce students that will be fit for their respective sectors. The fact remains that if the university are*





out of 160 million Nigerians are covered under the National health Insurance scheme of the country. Stake holders opine that this lack-luster attitude of government towards the sector is a major reasons why Nigeria records one of the worst health indices in Africa and indeed the world.

According to the 2012 United Nation aids report released in June, Nigeria has the highest population of babies born with HIV/AIDS and is among the top four countries with the highest rate of infections. The unexpected decay in our sector is a course for worry what matter basically is the unending

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The country has also retain the shameful position as the only country in Africa that has yet to eradicate polio. Even war thorn countries like Mali, Somalia, and Liberia have respectively banished polio infections from their population.

The power sector has always remains one of the most frustrating areas in the country. It has attracted much interest due to its strategic nature. It is one sector that has gulped billions of Dollars, without commensurate electricity supply for the people .As a result it is a norm to live in the dark in this part of the world. Many people are still

experiencing darkness more than light, even while the FG has handed over power generation and distribution in its privatization scheme to private investors. All what the people can muster is hope, despite the fact that a lot has been expended on the exercise. Between 1999 and 2007, under the former president Olusegun Obasanjo administration ,a whopping \$16bn was reportedly spent on the sector, the probe panel set up by the House of representatives to investigate the projects awarded under the National Independent Power Projects was startled by mind blowing revelations on how some contractors got mobilization fees without doing the job, while the Jonathan's administration handed over the certificates of ownership to power generation and distribution companies on Nov1,2013 with over \$1.957bn reportedly paid into the FG's coffers, its government is however silent on the country completion dates of the NIPP projects scattered across the country. These private investors are yet to convince Nigerians that they can deliver on their promise of improved power supply

, that DEMOCRACY is our why de a r AND GOOD countr y has bec o me GOVERNANCE a n ti appre

e when there is a separation of powers among the main organs of government, namely, the legislature, the executives and the judiciary, so that the powers of law making, execution and adjudication are not concentrated in one person or a group of persons. DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

Absolute power, corrupts absolutely. To avoid tyranny and oppressi



on of the citizens, the rule of law should equally embody the separation of powers, so that each organ or arms of government shall be a check on the excesses of the other arms. It is on this premise that democracy can thrive in a state. Kelly [2013] shares the above view when he explains that the framers of the American constitution applied the concept of separation of powers when they decided that the three branches of government: executive, legislative and judicial should be distinct and have checks and balances on each

other, so that no one branch can gain absolute power or abuse the power they are given.

A functional separation of powers will guarantee checks and balances among the executives, the legislature and the judiciary, making sure that none of the organs appropriates the powers of the other organs. In countries, such as, Nigeria where this functional separation of powers is lacking, checks and balances will be difficult, hence authoritarianism may be the order of the day. Under this condition, promotion and protection of the fundamental human rights of the citizens will be

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difficult. Governance is the act of governing. It relates to decisions that define expectation, grant power, or verify performance. It consists of either a separate process or part of decision making or leadership processes. In modern nation-states, these processes and systems are typically administered by a government. Good governance is a difficult concept, as it is not always easy to define. It is amenable to different definitions depending on the perception of the



person. However, when we remember that the modern state is a human creation, according to the social contract theorists, John Locke, Thomas Hobbes and Jean Jacques Rousseau, one can hazard on what constitutes good governance. Generally, the social contract theory, believes that the

## DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

violent, unsecured and unpredictable state of nature compelled men to come together, under a social contract, and surrendered their rights to security of personal lives and property of the state. The state is expected to protect the personal lives and property of the citizens, as well as their general welfare. The state, as an amorphous entity, cedes this power to a smaller and proactive agency called the government. Good governance, therefore, includes the processes and products of the government towards the fulfillment of the social contract it has with the people.

Specifically, good governance involves: enthronement of a democratic government, which guarantees equal participation of all citizens in governance; provision, promotion and sustenance of the rule

of law; provision and protection of the constitution; promotion and protection of the fundamental human rights of the citizens; provision and sustenance of the freedom of the press; availability of a transparent, accountable and participatory governance at all levels of government; regular, free and fair elections; as well as provision of basic amenities, such as, portable water, electricity, qualitative education, healthcare delivery, good roads, among others.

As stated in the introduction of this magazine, the relationship among democracy, the rule of law and good governance in any society is so intricate and organic that it is better described as a triumvirate. They are also interdependent that none can survive without the others. Their relationship is akin to what exists among road, car and fuel. The rule of law is the road, on which democracy, that is car, plies, while fuel, that is good governance, sustains the car (democracy).

The rule of law guarantees personal liberty, freedom and the gamut of fundamental human rights. It provides the conditions on which government functions, including the qualifications of people who can hold public offices. The law stipulates the type, nature and scope of

Corruption has reached an unprecedented height featuring the theft of N1.7trl on spurious fuel subsidy payments, looting of special funds, fraudulent budgetary and impunity at all levels of government. Democracy prides itself as being a government founded on the will of the people and for their advancement.

Therefore decision in a democracy are about the interest, security and welfare of the people. Beyond the constitutive act of voting in representatives the people still retain a residual power to kick out the

representatives when they veer from the path of rectitude and begin to think and act only in their selfish interest. This is the idea of a recall

m e c h a n i s m provided in many constitutions .It is also the idea behind legislative powers of impeachment against the President, Governors and their deputies. The people do not need to wait until another round of elections to kick out irresponsible and non-responsive elected officials. The other way of getting rid of non-responsive government and officials is for the people, through their power as the

ultimate sovereigns, to use mass and enforcement action and get into the street to demand for the official s to leave power. In other words, a campaign of civil disobedience against mismanagement of national affairs is legal and legitimate .This last option happened in Egypt in the last couple of months and there are lessons that can be drawn by the Nigeria populace who have been subjected to all manner of neglect and mal-governance.

Furthermore, the health of many Nigerians has suffered greatly, and quality of life of many is quite abysmal. While primary health facilities have



## DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

practically collapsed, patients have had to wait for more than four years to access major surgeries in public hospitals due to lack of facilities and shortage of doctors. Only a few –top government officials especially- can afford to fly themselves or their loved ones out for treatment in Europe ,America, Asia-or even some neighboring African countries.

It is also quite sad that only 5.5million



government.

Embark on electoral and bureaucratic reforms for improved service delivery.

Mass mobilization, value orientation and ethical rebirth of the citizenry.

The rule of law, democracy and good governance are the major features of any civilized society today. The governance of any state where any of them is lacking often degenerates to dictatorship and authoritarianism.

The rule of law provides

the general framework for good governance.

Democracy floats on the rule of law, while the

good governance promotes and sustains

both of them. Nigeria is governed by the rule of law and democratic principles despite some present limitations. Good governance is the destination of both democracy and the rule of the law. The media have worked hard to sustain both the rule of law and democracy despite some structural and institutional problems. Many years of civil rule, no doubt, assisted to frustrate the functional triumvirate of the rule of law, democracy and the media for improved good governance in Nigeria. Except an immediate overhaul of the structural, economic, legal, educational, administrative and

other bureaucratic impediments is done the rule of law and democracy may remain an article of faith, as good governance shall continue to be elusive in Nigeria.

The country democracy is based with challenges both man made and institutional which has given room for culture of impunity to thrive. There is the need for the rule of law to be entrenched if democracy must thrive, adding that disregard for rule

of law was a threat to the survival of democracy under Jonathan's government. Regardless of what President Good

luck may say, the United State position on the thriving culture of corruption in Nigeria gives a fair representation of opinion about the subject, both within and outside the country. While the government claims the extent of corruption in the country is exaggerated, the US government and other concerned climes are of the opinion that the matter has not been tackled with the deserved seriousness it required. Although corruption has always been perceived as pervasive in the country, corrupt acts have perhaps never attained the height of brazenness and impunity that has been witnessed in recent times.

government, as well as the nature of relationship among the organs of government. It provides equal opportunities for all citizens and makes provisions on how the personal freedom and liberties of the people will be promoted and protected.

A



state built upon the condition essential to the full development of our faculties will confer freedom upon its citizens. It will release their individuality. It will enable them to contribute their peculiar and intimate experience to the common stock. It will offer security that the decisions of the government are built upon the widest knowledge open to its members. It will prevent that frustration of creative impulse which destroys the special character of men.

For the rule to be supreme the three organs of government should be independent of one another for proper checks and balances to be in place. The judiciary must be vibrant and fearless, otherwise the executive excesses may go scout free.

Democracy will remain an article of

faith if the law is not supreme. The constitution guarantees the fundamental human rights, such as

life, right to dignity of human person, right to personal liberty, right to fair hearing, right to private family life, right to freedom of religion, right to vote and be voted for in elections, right to

freedom of expression,

among others, yet if

the law is not

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supreme the citizens will not enjoy these rights.

something to watch and learn over his environment, as well as report on inventions, opportunities, discoveries, decisions, dangers, social change, trade and commerce, conflicts and conflicts resolution, among other phenomena that have public consequences.

Democracy provides all these rights but if the people cannot enjoy them, and then it is not democracy. If people cannot freely elect their representatives in government, as well as control the government, then that government is not democratic. If people are disenfranchised for no genuine reasons and prevented from active participation in the electoral process, then its product is not democratic.

The mass media set the agenda on public discourse, monitor government policies, decisions and programs, expose the ills of the society and mobilize public opinion towards a particular desired direction. This is the basis of democracy, which is guaranteed only by the rule of law in any society.

The structure of communication reflects the structure d development of any society. The size of the communication, the volume of the communication, the direction of

Good governance sustains democracy, which guarantees the fundamental human rights, including freedom of the press. The media are the purveyor of information on both the rule of law and democracy. The mass media inform, educate, entertain and sensitize people on government and private activities as they affect the public, as well as draw the attention of the people to events, environmental issues and other important matters that have consequences on the citizens .It has been noted that man usually looks forward to



of the Obasanjo regime. residential elections among others. Despite the laudable role of the media in upholding the rule of law and democracy for good governance in Nigeria, there are some problems that still limit their aspiration of excellence.

These include but not limit to: Economic predicament which has deprived a large percentage of Nigerians access to media information on democracy, rule of law and good governance to few privileged people in the state capitals and other major cities in

Africa. information gathering and processing in Nigeria may include, but not limited to following:

- Seditious Publication Act (1958 Criminal Code; 1963 Penal Code Laws of northern Nigeria).
- Official Secret Act of 1962 and its Amendment Act of 1962.
- Protection of Public Officers Against False Accusation
- Newspaper (Amendment Act) Act of 1964.
- Obscene Publications Act of 1961, among others.

Today, corruption, ethnicity and ethnocentrism, maladministration,

ignorance, poverty, high rate of illiteracy, inflation and other economic predicaments have combined as militating problems against democracy, rule of law and good governance in Nigeria particularly despite elaborate constitutional provisions for remarkable progress. This means that mere constitutional provisions for democracy, rule of law and freedom of the press have not guaranteed remarkable good governance in Nigeria. This is a great challenge to scholars and practitioners of Nigerian democracy.

The Way Forward to promote democracy, the rule of law and good governance in Nigeria the following measures will be taken:

National economic restructuring to ensure equitable distribution of resources in the various countries. Provision of quality and functional education to improve the literacy level of the citizenry. To promote regular, free, fair and credible elections in Nigeria in order to elect credible and patriotic citizens into national government, as well as encourage participatory democracy. Restructuring of the judicial systems in order to improve the checks and balances of the organs of



According to Rousseau, he equates democracy with the general will of the people, he argued that inequitable distribution of wealth in any society is counterproductive to good governance. He has argued that democracy will only thrive if the government provides for the materials welfare of the people, as well as remove gross inequality in the distribution of wealth in the society.

handing over to the post independent African leaders, the former colonial masters carefully selected those who were sympathetic to the interests of the departing colonial masters and foisted them over the rest as the leaders. These leaders, they argues, are accountable to their paid masters; hence good governance may remain a scarce commodity to them.

Most African economies, including Nigeria are off tangent to the Millennium Development Goals, MDGs. They [African economies] top the index table of corruption in the world as



For the mass media, they have been active in promoting and sustaining both the rule of law and democracy in Nigeria. The Nigerian journalists have been fearless, consistent and forthright in

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exposing the ills of both the government and the society. The media fought gallantly against the following:

NADECO, by the Abacha administration. among others. Obnoxious third term elongation (live coverage of legislative debates by AIT and other media, not necessarily the senators, killed and buried the third term dream or agenda

Many scholars had share the above view when they argues that before

communication, the objective of the communication, the development of the communication, the role of the communication, to the society –the ownership of the instrument of communication the audience of the communication, the transfer of the individual communication roles, the stretching out and multiplicity of the society, the facilities and the purposeful use and or misuse of communication –the content of the communication network at any given time reflects the value pattern of the society it serves.

Emphasizing the role of the mass media in safeguarding democracy and promoting the rule of law for the ultimate objective of upholding good governance in any society, Thomas Jefferson, a former president of US summarizes thus:“... since the basis of democracy was opinion of the people, the very first objective was to keep that right. If it were left for me to decide whether we should have a government without the mass media or the mass media without the government, I should not hesitate a moment to chose the latter.

The summary of this triumvirate relationship is that democracy can only exist in a state where there is the rule of law, otherwise the latter[rule of law] will remain an article of faith without democracy, while good

governance sustains both of them with the mass media as their reinforcing element for durability and sustainability.

The Nigerian Experience Since Nigeria's political independence on October1, 1960 successive regimes have canvassed for the government based on the principles of the rule of law and democracy. Nigeria has elaborate provisions on the rule of law and democracy for the ultimate existence of good governance. For example, in the opening paragraph of the 1979 Nigerian Constitution, as consolidated in the 1999 Constitution, it is clearly stated thus:

We the people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria have

firmly adopted this document for the purpose of promoting the good government and welfare of all persons in our country on the principles of freedom, equality and justice, and for the purpose of consolidating the unity of our people

Sec (1) of both the 1979 and the 1999constitutions provides that this“ constitution is supreme and its





and uphold the responsibility and accountability of the government to the people.

There are also elaborate provisions on the citizenship, separation of powers and other conditions that guarantee the rule of law in the state.

provisions shall have binding force on all authorities and persons throughout the Federal Republic of Nigeria". The constitution makes elaborate provisions for the promotion and protection of the fundamental human rights as contains in sections 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44 and 45 among others.

Similarly, the constitution, under its fundamental objectives and directive principles, makes elaborate provisions on government obligations to the people as contains in sections 13 through 21.

Section 22 of the 1999 Constitution specially provides that "the press, radio, television and other agencies of the mass media shall at all times be free to uphold the fundamental objectives contained in this chapter

Nigeria is also a signatory to various international conventions, charters and treaties that promote and sustain the fundamental human rights and other elements of the rule of law. It is, therefore, safe to infer that the rule of law is supreme in Nigeria, at least, in theory.

Sec. (2) forbids any persons or group of persons to take control of the government of Nigeria or any part thereof, except in accordance with the provisions of this constitution, which include representative government based on elective principles. There are elections for the three levels of government in Nigeria today. The judiciary, through the various courts and tribunals, has tried to uphold the fundamental human rights.

The judiciary has pronounced some landmark cases which include:

Federal government withholding of over N18b monthly allocation due to Lagos state local governments under the Obasanjo regime.-shore/off-shore dichotomy.

i, Andy Ubah Saga in Anambra State. The summary of the above issues is that democracy is at work in Nigeria. Nigeria and other African countries are signatories to international conventions and treaties, apart from having elaborate provisions on democracy and the rule of law, yet good governance has been a scarce commodity for most of them. However, there are some limitations on democracy in Nigeria.

These include: government. Poverty, hunger, unemployment, among other economic predicaments, have limited people's participation in government in Nigeria.

Africans from benefiting from democratic principles. subordinating it to the executive. For example, it is still vivid to us how the Federal Executive, under the leadership of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, muzzled down the legislature in Nigeria.

Generally, the successive regimes in Nigeria have ample provisions

for democracy and the rule of the law, but good governance has been elusive. The existence of multiparty system has become a permanent feature of Nigerian democracy. The fundamental human rights, including freedom of the Press are elaborately provided in the constitution. This largely accounts for low score or outright negative index of Nigeria and other African democracies in the benchmark of good governance as corruption, election irregularities, poverty, unemployment, maladministration, gagging of the press, muzzling down of political opponents, emerging one party state, declining per capita income and gross national product, GNP, among other negative signals.







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**Debo Adeniran**  
Executive Chairman, CACOL

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