

THE PARADIGM OF TERRORISTS' OPERATIONS IN TARABA STATE, THE PROMISSORY NOTE OF THE LAW, THE FAILURE OF GOVERNMENT, AND THE ROLE OF RELIGION

Ishaya rBunu (Ph.D Fellow, UNN)

Lecturer Department of Christian Religious Studies,
Faculty of Arts,
Taraba State Univeristy, Jalingo (ishayabrunu@gmail.com)
&

Habila Katuka, Ph.D

Lecturer Department of Christian Religious Studies,
Faculty of Arts,
Taraba State Univeristy, Jalingo (katukashock@gmail.com)
&

Ibrahim Sersinyang

Department of Christian Religious Studies,
Faculty of Arts,
Taraba State Univeristy, Jalingo

ABSTRACT

Hitherto, terrorists in Taraba State have engaged in the nefarious act of bombing of facilities, leading to the loss of many lives and destruction of property. However, in recent times, terrorism, has assumed a paradigm shift that found expression in banditry and kidnapping. These have affected the people in no small measure; threatening their lives and means of livelihood. This study was an attempt to understand the situation in view to proffering solutions. The study found out that Fiscal terrorism occasioned by theft of the national treasury by government agents, coupled with other factors such as the Ambazonia struggle for Independence in the Anglophone Cameroon, clemency over Chieftaincy rights in places such as Takum, Sardauna and Karim Lamido Local Government Areas, the exploration of Rose wood, the displacement of Boko Haram and ISWAP in northeast Nigeria, gave impetus to terrorist influx in Taraba State. These terrorists operated mostly through high-profile kidnapping and banditry. These have affected Taraba State in areas such as education, agriculture and tourism. To make matters worse, the Laws on the fight against terrorism and terrorist financing have been ineffective, hence, demonstrating the failure of Government. The study recommended that Christian, Islamic and Traditional leaders should form a caucus through their various recognized groups, in order to pressure the government to enact effective legislation, checkmate corruption, equip the security agencies, so as to be effective in the fight against terrorism. These religious leaders, through their institutions, should also inculcate moral values to their adherents, which will go a long way in strengthening social solidarity for corporate existence and development.

Key words: Terrorist, Law, Government, Religion

INTRODUCTION

Terrorism has registered its name as not only a menace in the society, but also, as one of the concepts that have drawn the attention of scholars. Hence, it has shaped intellectual discourse, in the global system of deadly crime management. Taraba State, just like most States in the northeast regional bloc of Nigeria, has witnessed and is still witnessing the disastrous effects of terrorist activities. Terrorism is affecting every stratum of Taraba society, and has gradually eaten so deep into its fabrics, thereby, causing devastation of higher proportion.

As one of the six States in the northeast Nigeria, Taraba State is riddled with the activities of the displaced terrorist groups, such as “Boko-Haram” and the Islamic State West African Province (ISWAP). For instance, Taraba News Online (2023) chronicled the activities of terrorists in Taraba State, and reports that in 2012, at the hit of the “Boko-Haram” insurgency, the convoy of a Commissioner of Police, Mamman Sule, who was posted to Taraba State, was attacked in Jalingo, between the Government House and the Police Headquarters. During the attack, many bombs blasted, about 11 people died, and more than 20 others were severely injured. In the years that followed, several attacks across the State were reported.

There have been attacks in Wukari, Kpambo, Garba Chede, Bali, Jalingo, Iware and a host lot of other communities, that left people death and properties destroyed (Taraba Truth and Facts, 2023). In recent times, the renewed attacks have been overwhelming; on April 19, 2022, there were several bomb blasts at “Angwan Mashaya” in Iware, Ardo-Kola Local Government Area. These incidences, claimed the lives of more than 20 persons, and left several others injured. In Jalingo, there were several bomb blasts at Nukkai on April 22, 2022, ATC on September 18, 2022, and at “Angwan Doruwa” on May 15, 2023. These bomb blasts led to loss of lives and properties worth millions of naira. In Mutum-Biyu, Gassol Local Government Area, a Catholic Chapel at St. John’s College was bombed on January 24, 2022 (Taraba News Online, 2023). Other places in the State have witnessed the influx of these terrorists, who perpetrate different kinds of crimes, such as high-profile kidnappings and banditry, thereby, threatening the peoples’ socio-economic existence.

As a result, therefore, some people in places like Bali, Gassol, Lau and Karim Lamido Local Government Areas, are already fleeing their ancestral homelands for safety, due to threats of impending terrorist attacks. This state of attacks, and the panic it has created among the people, has affected them in many ways, ranging from agriculture, economic, education and the socio-political aspects of their lives. As a consequence, therefore, farms are left unattended, markets do no longer witness the inflow of goods due to restricted movement and low productivity, and schools have turned to Internally Displaced Persons’ (IDPs) camps, hence, affecting the educational sector. All these are challenging experiences that must be addressed if Taraba State is to make headway and take its place of pride as Nature’s Gift to the nation. This research is therefore, an attempt to investigate the threat posed by the phenomenon of terrorism, and its changing dynamism in Taraba State, especially in its new paradigm as it found expression in high-profile kidnapping and banditry. This is in the light of the promissory note of the laws, and the failure of government, so as to propose roles, which religion can play with other stakeholders, to ameliorate its disastrous effects.

HISTORICAL EVALUATION OF TERRORISM IN TARABA STATE

The history of terrorism in Taraba State is interconnected with the national discourse on the emergence of terrorism. Thus, the history of terrorism in Taraba State can be linked to the history of terrorism in the northeast region of Nigeria. However, the reports of some forms of terrorist activities in Taraba State were first noticeable during the activities of “Banni Isaella” in May, 2003 (Taraba Mirror, 2007). During that time, there were insinuations that the members of this group were drawn from Boko-Haram, to serve as thugs to then Governor, Jolly Nyame, to help him win election for the second term. Their activities were not to last long, as they were dispelled soon after the election. Thus, Taraba State recorded relative calm in the years that followed until 2012, when the convoy to a Commissioner of Police was attacked.

From then on, the activities of terrorists continued intermittently and in recent times, Taraba State has ascended the ranks as one of the most active places for terrorists in the northeast, Nigeria. Although the level of sophistication of terrorist activities in Taraba State—which is measured by the number of suicide bomb attacks—is comparatively low, what is generally recognized as terrorism in Taraba State are the activities of the Boko Haram sect, that are targeting innocent civilians, religious and public places, government officials, and security forces. Boko Haram, is only one of many formal and informal groups, engaged in what qualifies as terrorist activities (Adeyemi, 2022). The relevance and strength of the group has risen quickly from being a regional phenomenon to attaining global status. Its increasing relevance and spread also imply stronger and more significant influence on the political and economic fundamentals of Taraba State’s economy, begging for answers to questions concerning the underlying factors behind its origin and growth.

PARADIGM OF TERRORISTS' OPERATIONS IN TARABA STATE

Traditional acts of terrorism are majorly through bombing of government facilities and killing of high-profile government officials (Abbas, 2013). However, in recent times, there has been a growing concern over the changing dynamism and paradigm shift in the trends and patterns of terrorist activities, especially in Taraba State. Thus, the trends and patterns of the operations of terrorists in Taraba State are made manifest obviously in banditry and high-profile kidnapping of persons, not necessarily government officials:

Firstly, banditry is one of the ways in which terrorists operate in Taraba State. Even though banditry is not a new trend, its recent consistent operations are fueled by terrorists, because it serves as one of the means for the accumulation of the resources, needed for the continual financing of terrorist activities in the northeast and across borders. Yusuf (2017) thinks that banditry is reflected in criminal escapades like cattle rustling, armed robbery, drug abuse, arson, rape and the brazen and gruesome massacre of people of agrarian communities, with sophisticated weapons.

Thus, it is an issue now obvious, that the displaced terrorists from the northeast Nigeria, who have made inroad to Taraba State, hardly engage in the known classical methods of disastrous terrorists’ outings. What they do now is mostly acts of banditry that target vulnerable population, who in this era of national poverty and suffering, are struggling to feed. For instance, in Bantaji, a town in Wukari Local Government Area, and Maihula, a town in Bali Local Government Area of Taraba State, banditry such as cattle and sheep rustling, as well as

the killing of innocent citizens, has a strong connection with the influx of terrorists from the folds of Boko Haram and ISWAP.

However, in places like Ussa, Takum, Kurmi and Sardauna Local Government Areas, which lie on the border with the Republic of Cameroon, trans-border banditry, by the local groups as well as challenges relating to the Ambazonian struggles in the Cameroons, explains the nature and pattern of rural banditry. Livestock theft is becoming a trans-border criminal activity affecting movements along Sardauna and the Cameroonian borders. Local bandit groups, mostly the displaced terrorist in the northeast, connived with traditional elites to rustle livestock and share the proceeds of their criminality (James, 2019). In northern Taraba State, the first recorded case occurred somewhere between the border communities in Adamawa and Nasarawa States in 2007, when 780 cattle, and donkeys, laden with grains, were attacked, and in the process, 42 merchants killed. This shows that banditry has gradually transformed in scope and dimension overtime, from its rudimentary phase, to a more complex and complicated pattern of criminality (Global Conflict Tracker, 2021).

Secondly, high profile kidnapping has been identified as a new pattern of the activity of terrorists in Taraba State. High-profile kidnapping in Taraba State began rising in 2016, when terrorist groups such as Boko Haram and ISWAP, made inroad to Lau Local Government Area, and started kidnapping people for ransom. For instance, in 2017, one Zakari A. Abdullahi, a member of the displaced Boko Haram terrorist group, was arrested by the security agents in connection with the rising tension of kidnapping in Taraba State. Additionally, on February 5th 2018, fifteen miners that were kidnapped in Bali were released after being held for more than six weeks. On August 18th, 2019, what appeared to be a major warning to the government and the citizens was announced by the terrorists parading as kidnappers, when they vowed to extend hostilities beyond the Yorro, Lau and Zing Local Government Areas to Jalingo LGA. Similarly, on January 25th 2022, what appeared to be high profile reported case of abduction of people took place, when four foreign Rose wood buyers, were kidnapped in Takum LGA (Taraba News Online, 2023).

CATALYSTS FOR TERRORIST OPERATIONS IN TARABA STATE

From available records, a lot of reasons can be advanced as the causes and motivations for terrorist activities in Taraba State. The recent onslaught by the Nigerian military and other sister security agencies on Boko Haram, Ansura and ISWAP in the northeast region of Nigeria, has greatly displaced them. As a result, they are now at large, looking for safe havens, and Taraba State, among other places, has become a new destination for them. Taraba State offers the kind of terrain required for criminals to operate nearly unhindered. The vast landmass of Taraba State is a perfect hideout for terrorists and criminals. More so, the porous international border that Taraba State shares with the republic of Cameroon, is telling on the easy access it has created for terrorists to find their ways into the State. No wonder the Ambazonian fighters also found easy ways into Taraba State along the border communities.

Thus, one can safely say that the Ambazonia struggle for self-determination in Anglophone Cameroon is another factor that motivates the influx of terrorists into Taraba State. The Ambazonia struggle developed into Guerilla armed conflict with the Cameroonian security forces in 2016 (Institute for Economic and Peace, 2017). Thus, in an attempt to stem the tide against them, most of them ran into Nigeria as refugees, through the porous Abong and Bissaula

borders. In the passage of time, they regrouped and began kidnapping for ransom, as a means to provide financial assistance for the Ambazonia struggle in the Cameroons. This has added impetus to the rise of terrorism and its destructive activities in Taraba State over the years.

All these are further compounded by the struggles for clemency rights over chieftaincy, especially in Takum, Sardauna and Karim Lamido Local Government Areas. These struggles, have added momentum to the influx of terrorists in Taraba State. These terrorists serve as mercenaries of war in the event of any armed confrontation. In Takum Local Government Area for instance, the long struggle for the installation of "Ukwe" Takum, the paramount ruler of the Kuteb Kingdom, has resulted in armed conflict between the Kuteb and the Chamba people. In Sardauna Local Government, since the early 2000s, Fulani and Mambilla ethnic nationalities have been in constant fight over sole ownership to the First-Class Chief on the Mambilla Plateau. In Karim Lamido Local Government, between April and May, 2023, crisis emanated between the Jenjo and the Wurkum people over claim to a Third-Class Chieftdom that was created in that area (Taraba Truths and Facts, 2023). Thus, these continual struggles have given each of the camps the need to fight for the survival of the throne in their respective areas. As a consequence, it is insinuated that these ethnic groups have resorted to hiring mercenaries, who are masters in guerilla warfare. These mercenaries unfortunately, are alleged to be mostly from among the displaced terrorists in the northeast region.

Additionally, the discovery of timber and mineral resources such as rose wood, gold, diamond, and other precious stones, in places like Bali, Kurmi, Gassol and Sardauna Local Government Areas in commercial quantity, has spiked the pace of the encroachment of terrorists into Taraba State. For instance, the rise of Rose wood as an important commodity in International Trade aggravated the influx of terrorists into Taraba State. This is because Rose wood dealers have been insinuated to deal in excessive cash. Most of their transactions are done with physical cash instead of electronic transfer. In this regard, most terrorists who learned about it have therefore, seen Taraba State as a base where money could be easily acquired from the Rose wood dealers. Thus, it is the opinion of many people that the continual exploration of such Timber resources as Rose wood in Taraba State, will continue to give room for terrorism to thrive. It should be added that Taraba State is a Nature's Gift to the Nation and as such, there are no shortages of these timber resources. In fact, Kurmi Local Government Area, that is nick named as the "Home of Abundant Natural Resources" and the third richest Local Government Area in Nigeria, has a Timber Plantation that holds the capacity to sustain Taraba State at least for 100 years (Jonathan, 2018).

EFFECTS AND IMPLICATIONS OF TERRORIST OPERATIONS IN TARABA STATE

The effects and implications of terrorist activities in Taraba State are telling. These have been revealed in numerous ways, among which are:

i. Dislocation in Economic Engagement

Due to the activities of terrorist in Taraba State, a lot have been lost in the area of economics that affect lives and livelihood. It is important to note that, markets are deserted and investments from investors in almost all the areas of economic activities have been lost. The Mararaba-Donga Cattle market has been on the decline, because marketers fear for their lives. The Wukari Yam Market, no longer witness the influx of sellers and buyers in droves as a result of fear of terrorist attack. The Food Produce Market at Garba-Chede is almost deserted. Mentioned can

also be made of the decline in international trade with the Cameroons along the border towns of Bissaula, Abong and Gembu respectively. The Palm Oil Market at Baissa is now an eyesore. These challenging situations have affected in no small measures the rate at which economic activities in Taraba State have been booming hitherto the onslaught of the terrorists.

ii. Enhancement in Agriculture and Food Production Insecurity

It is often said that a flourishing economy that depends on agriculture and food production requires a peaceful and serene environment to foster. This is because the slogan; “peace gives development” lives true for all ages (Bala & Tar, 2019). Thus, as a consequence of frequent terrorist attacks either through banditry or kidnapping, farmers have left the forest. This is because the forest where food and Agric resources are tapped, has become the den and hideout of the terrorists. In this situation, farmers find it very difficult and challenging to cope, especially that, the securities forces have not lived up to the task of curbing the menace of terrorism (Eva, 2013). More worrying is the fact that in areas where farmers could farm with little or no security challenges, the government has not provided the required subsidies and incentives to boost production. Provision of subsidies in the areas of timely distribution of and reduction in fertilizer prices, farm machineries for large scale farming such as tractors, planters, harvesters and the like, have met with irresolvable challenges due to corruption. In worst case scenarios, where farmers are able to make large production, the challenge of storage facilities or transportation to large markets always arises (Jonathan & Berisha, 2021).

iii. Retardation in Educational Development

The incessant attacks by terrorists have led to the creation of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). These IDPs are usually settled in camps on a temporary basis. According to Institute for Security Studies (2019) it is unfortunate that government has not made provisions to cater for this emergency. Consequently, people who are displaced as a result of terrorist attacks or because of fear of impending terrorist attacks, usually stay in open fields, uncompleted or abandon government buildings, and churches. Some usually stay with host families within the communities where they ran for safety, while others stay with relatives in those areas. In situations where these places are filled to capacities, the next available options are usually school premises. In which case, government do close down schools so that those premises could serve as temporary camps for the displaced persons. These actions affect and indeed, retard educational growth both of the communities where people ran from, and of the host communities, where they are to stay on a temporary basis.

iv. Depreciation of Tourism Potentials

From available records, Taraba State obviously presents itself as a tourist destination on the global stage. The Savannah and high mountainous regions of the Mambilla Plateau, the Gashaka Gumti National Park, the serene desert of Bali, the warmth forest of Baissa, the Wukari Crocodile Pound, the Nwonyo Fishing Festival of Ibi among many others, are clear evidences of what Taraba State offers the world in terms of sites for tourism attraction. Thus, there is no gain stating the obvious that all these tourist attraction sites have not been harnessed due to the fear of possible terrorist attack, especially on the intending tourists. In the past five years or so, there have been decline on tourists who visit places like the Gumti National Park and other tourist destination on the Mambilla Plateau (Institute for Economic and Peace (2020). This decline in those who travel for tourism purposes have been attributed to fear of impending terrorist attacks.

v. Scars on Peace, Human and Societal Development

The overall effect of the terrorists' onslaught on the people of Taraba State could be felt in the areas of peace, human and societal development. It is a fact that insecurity, especially the one that is orchestrated by terrorism has been a scar on the peace of the land (Yakubu & Idahen, 2021). Thus, the continuous attacks on the people of Taraba State in almost all its communities have greatly hampered human development. It is the opinion among scholars that the society is made of people and that the level at which any society develops is dependent on the strength and productive capacities of its people (Okoli & Agada, 2014). Development occurs in an atmosphere of peace. Peace therefore is instrumental to the growth of any society the world over (Ellis & Chris, 2015). This means that for the human mind to think creatively and productively, it must be settled in an environment where peace reigns.

LAWS ON THE FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM: INVESTIGATING THE FAILURE OF GOVERNMENT

The legal frameworks of the State in the fight against Terrorist remain a critical challenge to State security and stability. These legal frameworks are built on the foundations of the Nigerian State. Below is an overview of some of these frameworks as put forward by Institute for Security Studies (2019), Adeyemi (2022), Eleanor (2023) & Chady (2023):

- i. **Terrorism Prevention and Prohibition Act, 2022:** This Act criminalizes acts of terrorism and the financing of terrorism. It empowers law enforcement agencies to investigate, arrest, and prosecute individuals or entities involved in terrorist financing. The Act also provides for the freezing and forfeiture of assets linked to terrorism and terrorism financing. The Act makes robust provisions on the powers of law enforcement agencies and the powers of the Nigeria Sanctions Committee to identify and designate groups, individuals and entities as terrorists.
- ii. **The Nigerian Financial Intelligence Unit (NFIU) Act, 2018:** This Act establishes the NFIU as an independent body responsible for receiving, analyzing, and disseminating financial intelligence reports on money laundering, terrorist financing and other relevant information to law enforcement, security & intelligence agencies, and other relevant authorities. The NFIU plays a crucial role in detecting and investigating terrorist financing activities as the Act establishes the Unit as the Secretariat to the Inter-Ministerial Committee on the Nigerian Sanctions Committee.

The foregoing legal frameworks hold a promise for ensuring that the citizens are protected. However, despite the existence of these robust legal and regulatory frameworks to combat terrorist activities and financing, there are challenges with the effectiveness of these measures and their practicability. These challenges serve to demonstrate the failure of government, and they include:

- i. **Implementation and Enforcement:** While Nigeria has enacted laws and regulations to address terrorism, there are concerns about the effectiveness of their implementation and enforcement. This is due to inadequate resources, lack of capacity, and presences of corruption within the relevant agencies.
- ii. **Interagency Coordination:** Effective prevention of terrorism requires close coordination among various government agencies, such as the NFIU, CBN, and law enforcement agencies. However, there have been instances of weak coordination

and information sharing among these agencies, which hinders their ability to effectively combat terrorism.

- iii. **Proliferation of Terrorist Groups:** The existence of several terrorists in Taraba State such as Boko Haram and the Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP), present significant challenges in combating terrorism. These groups have been known to employ diverse and complex financing methods, making it difficult for authorities to detect and disrupt their activities.

INSTITUTIONAL TERRORISM: EXAMINING FISCAL TERRORISM

Fiscal Terrorism encapsulates financial misappropriation or thievery, of the national treasury, of the funds required to fight terrorism. These funds may also include those appropriated for investment in other developmental projects. These investments are necessary for the smooth functioning of the Nigerian society, so as to create a decent environment that will be devoid of all sorts of crimes, such as terrorism. A peep into the nation's events reveals a myriad of financial frauds by government officials, agents and proxies that are mindboggling. These have been the bane for development and thus, have created a kind of society that allows terrorism to flourish. For instance, the 9th Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria appropriated the sum of 30 trillion naira as ways and means for the Central Bank of Nigeria without accountability (Punch News, 2024). In fact, in what could be describe as a show of shame on the floor of the Senate, most of the Senators stood on national television to take excuse that they were not in attendance, when such obnoxious bill was passed.

More so, the implementation of the 2024 Budget of the Federal Government, also calls for scrutiny. Senator Abdul Ningi of Bauchi State insinuated that the Budget was padded by the Godswill Akpabio's led Senate. His stands on the matter, led to his voluntary resignation as the Chairman of the Forum of Northern Senators. Not only that, he was suspended by the 10th Senate for three months. Speaking on this issue, Senator Jarigbe Agom, on the floor of the Senate, in a heated debate, submits that:

All of us, the Senators, are culpable. Some so-called senior Senators here, got five hundred million naira (500, 000,000) each, from the 2024 budget. I am a ranking Senator; I did not get anything. No Senator has a right to accuse Senator Ningi.

This singular episode has led to several commentaries on the Nigerian political scene. A lot of persons have lent their voices. Atiku Abubakar, on March 14, 2024, on his Facebook Page, put up the following:

Over the past few days, allegations have rocked the Senate, questioning the very integrity of the 2024 Appropriation Act, the cornerstone of our nation's annual planning and development. A fiscal policy analytics and advocacy organization, has unequivocally confirmed, a disturbing lack of transparency within the 2024 Appropriation Act... the allegation of budget padding, totaling N3 trillion, cannot be dismissed lightly by the government... given the current hardships facing our nation, a padded budget is already translating to a padded hunger, padded poverty, padded insecurity, and the soaring cost of living.

The position of Atiku Abubakar only reveals how deteriorated Nigeria's fiscal policies are. These revelations are disheartening and heartbreaking especially in such a time that the country is faced with the twin evil of terrorism and poverty. Peter Obi, had earlier on, precisely on

March 10, 2024, called attention on this matter of national disgrace. He postulates on his Facebook Page that:

I find it deeply disconcerting and a matter of grave concern, and even shameful, to read about the alleged N3 trillion discrepancies between the budget approved by the Nigerian Senate and the one being implemented by the presidency... this alleged discrepancy is especially worrying because it represents over 10% of our national budget, which is more than the combined education and health official budgets... with insecurity, hunger, poverty, inflation, and unemployment, plaguing the nation, these actions are insensitive to the people's plight... therefore, we, the Nigerian people, demand a public explanation from both the National Assembly and the Presidency, regarding the purpose and process of adding this alleged N3 trillion allocation to the officially approved national budget of 2024.

More so, it is troubling to see how Nigeria Fiscal Policies have been terrorized and assaulted to unprecedented levels by the present and the preceding administrations. Bryan (2019), Richard (2019) & Chady (2023), chronicled some acts of brazen official corruption that can be equated to terrorist onslaught on the nation's treasury, and submits that, from 1992-2023, unpaid ground revenue of 6 trillion naira was diverted. Alien Card (CERPAC) revenue of 40 billion naira was diverted. From 2011-2014, 29.17 billion dollars was lost to stolen crude oil. By 2018 government enterprises and CBN did not remit operations surpluses of 10 trillion naira. In 2019 the Combined Expatriate Residence Permit and, and by 2020 the outstanding royalty of 62 billion dollars by International Oil Companies was not accounted for.

The foregoing pattern of embezzlement, holds the potentials to disfigure any giant nation the world over. In fact, it does not stop there, 2 billion dollars appropriated in 2014, for the purchase of arms, to execute the fight against terrorism, was embezzled in what has come to be known as the Dasuki-Gate. Just recently, a court asked Sadiya Sadiq, to account for the over 700 billion naira she claimed was given to Nigerians during the Covid-19 lockdown. More shaming is the collapse of Mamman Sale, former minister of Power, during his prosecution, for laundering over 33 billion naira. This startling exposé, highlights a grim reality of corruption within Nigeria's government, raising urgent concerns about financial mismanagement, and the need for stringent accountability measures (Punch News, 2024). The sum of the foregoing is what is termed "Fiscal Terrorism".

ADDRESSING THE MENACING EFFECTS OF TERRORISM: RECOMMENDING THE ROLE OF RELIGION

On the basis of the above findings, the following recommendations are here proposed as new alternatives, to assist Religion on its sacred duties and obligations, of ensuring that the sanctity of the State and Government is preserved, especially now that it is being threatened by rising cases of terrorism in Taraba State:

- i. Christians and Muslims leaders should form a caucus that will give them influence over the policy making and decision taking processes of the Government. In this way, they can open the eyes of political leaders, to understand that banditry and kidnapping are two famous means through which terrorist operate especially in Taraba State. This will give government the impetus that will allow the office of the National Security Adviser to identify and designate any act of banditry and

- kidnapping as terrorism. In this way, bandits and kidnappers will be treated as terrorists.
- ii. Religion through the vehicles of Christianity and Islam, should pressure the Government and the Law Makers to enhance the effectiveness on laws banning illegal mining of mineral and timber resources by incorporating traditional and religious leaders into various committees that are set up to deal with such. The work of the committee set up by the Taraba State Government to combat the activities of illegal miners must be commended, however, the rigidity with which the committee operates must be relax to accommodate informed opinions that are legal and diplomatic.
 - iii. Religious leaders should ensure that Laws on Terrorism are strengthened. And security agencies should be deliberate through joint task force to strengthen national and inter-State borders so that the movements of persons especially those with suspicious behaviour can be noticed. This will greatly help especially in checkmating the influx of persons, especially the Ambazonia fighters along the Abong, Bissaula and Mambilla borders with the Cameroons. It will also help in identifying and proscribing a group as a terrorist group.
 - iv. Religious leaders and clerics under their various recognized associations, organizations and institutions, should rise up to the occasion and challenges of personal examples, to ensuring that their adherents are effectively informed on the moral positions and doctrinal tenets of their religious beliefs and principals. These pieces of information, when rightly inculcated, especially at the infant stage of the children's upbringing, will help in balancing the moral compass of the society. This is so because, it has been rightly established that most if not all of the terrorists are members of either Christianity or Islam. In this regard, the Government can help to enact laws that will regulate all religious preaching and teaching to ensure that the citizens are given the right kind of information that are required for the wellbeing of the State.

CONCLUSION

Terrorism is one of the many problems confronting Taraba State in recent times. It has raised its big head and shown its ugly face. Its consequential effects on lives and livelihood have been disastrous and devastating. The changing dynamism in the operations of terrorists have been menacing and degrading, especially in climbing the upper projections of the society through the ladder of growth and development. The implications are too overbearing on the Government's capacity to ensure development in areas such as education, agriculture, tourism, and the like. More than anything else, the Government's agents have been willing accomplices, through acts of commission and omission, in indulging in theft of the State's treasury in what could be described as Fiscal Terrorism. Thus, the cumulative effects have taken a toll on the society. Efforts by religious leaders and institutions in managing the situation have hit a concrete wall. It has not made matters any less difficult. This research therefore, studied the situation, made some findings, and offered laudable recommendations. It is hoped that, if they recommendations are put into consideration, they will help in eradicating the evil of terrorism in Taraba State or reducing it to a bearable minimum.

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