

The Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria: A Critical Study of the Movement's Ideological Posture and Implications

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Abstract. The Nigeria's Boko Haram Movement founded in 2002 by Ustadh Muhammad Yusuf is officially recognized by its members as '*Jama'at ahlis Sunnah lid Da'wat wal Jihad*', meaning 'people committed to the propagation of the Prophet's teachings and jihad'. It is dubbed Boko Haram, loosely translated from Hausa Language to mean that western education is unlawful (haram). By extension any culture that is western is equally prohibited. It is for this reason that they advocate government based on shariah in preference to democratic order. The Movement's style of operations involving gun attack, suicide bombings targeting public buildings and houses of worship makes it look like a terrorist organisation. It is against this background that we shall in this study examine the Boko Haram's ideological doctrines within the context of the pristine Islamic value system. appraise the impact of the Movement's educational philosophy on the attitude of the northern Nigerian Muslims to western education, assess the response of the Shari'ah States of the north to the Movement's advocacy for the full implementation of Shari'ah and examine the alleged political motif and connection with the outside terrorists' organisations as the underlying factors for the activities of the Movement. The study is concluded with appropriate recommendations.

Keywords: Islam, Nigeria, Boko Haram, Education, *Shari'ah*.

1. Introduction

Nigeria, the most populous African country with more than 300 ethnic nationalities has been described as one of the greatest Islamo- Christian nations of the world (Opeloye, 2001). what is meant by this is that Nigeria is about the only country where one finds a very large population of Muslims living side by side with a very large population of Christians. In the other nations with fairly large population of Muslims and Christians, what we find is a situation where one is dominant over the other. The country can be zoned into three in terms of religious affiliation of the citizenry: the giant North with a large Muslim majority; the South East populated mainly by the Christians and the South West with balanced Muslim-Christian population. The Indigenous African Religion practitioners constitute a negligible minority.

The multi-ethnic and multi- religious configuration of Nigeria largely accounts for the incessant ethno-religious imbroglios experienced in the nation for over three decades since the 2nd Republic in 1979. The country has hardly survived the ethno-religious crises when the Boko Haram problem violence erupted in 2008. The Boko Haram insurgency with all its destabilising propensities is another challenge of serious concern for which the Federal Government of Nigeria is yet to find solution. The questions then arise: Who are the Boko Haram? What are the Movement's ideological doctrines? Are the doctrines in tune with the pristine Islamic principles, or are they prone to subvert the Islamic cultural values? What is the motif for the formation of the Movement? Is it to achieve political gains or is it a response to the trendy global terrorism? The study will attempt to deal with these and other related issues.

2. Ideology of the Boko Haram and the Islamic Value System

The Boko Haram Movement founded by Ustadh Muhammed Yusuf in the North Eastern part of Nigeria is officially recognized by its members as *Jama'atAhlis-sunnah Lid-Da'wat wal Jihad*, meaning 'people committed to the propagation of the Prophet's teachings and Jihad'. The Hausa appellation Boko Haram signifies its ideology which forbids western education and any culture that is western. It is for this reason that they advocate abolition of democratic governance and any man made laws. The Movement was founded in

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2002 in the city of Maiduguri, in North Eastern Nigeria with the aim of establishing a true *Shari'ah* government in Borno State under Ali Modu Sharif after he would have won the governorship election in 2003.

The movement did not become militant until 2009 when its leader was captured by the men of security forces and was later found dead. From 2009 till date, the Boko Haram, in pursuit of their ideology, have engaged in arson, bombing, shooting, stabbing with disdain and impunity – targeting important national events, public institutions, markets and sometimes Christian places of worship and Christian festivals and most recently the mosques.

It is remarkable to note that apart from the Boko Haram's targets they sometimes engage in sporadic bombings of the major northern towns and cities as it did happen in Kaduna, Zaria, Jos, Kano, Maiduguri and Damaturu among others. When this happens, they kill indiscriminately; they killed both Muslims and Christians alike. They have killed the rich and the poor, young and old, male and female, weak and strong, elites and commoners, northerners and southerners alike. With this it can be reasonably concluded that the Boko Haram insurgency is a war against the nation. Is there any basis in the Islamic value system to justify the Boko Haram doctrines notwithstanding the passage of the Quran cited as motivating them? We should first examine Islamic concept of education.

There is no gainsaying that education occupies a pride of place in Islamic value system. The first Quranic revelation received by the Prophet of Islam is contained in *Suratul 'Alaq*. Reference is made in the passage to elements required for dissemination of knowledge namely reading, teaching and pen. This first inspirational experience of the prophet Muhammad developed in him the ability to read and teach. Similarly, from the Qur'anic narration in *Surah 2: 30-35* we realize that knowledge accounts for honour and superiority enjoyed by the father of humanity, Adam over and above the angels (Safiur-Rahman, et al, 2003)

With regard to the type of education to be acquired, the prophet of Islam is reported to have instructed the Muslims to seek knowledge to as far place as China, a non-Muslim country (Ahmad Sharbasi, nd). This singular prophetic tradition is a pointer to the fact that Islam has a broad perception of education which is not limited to Islamic education. The *Hadith* reported by Ibn Mas'ud makes this clear as it classifies knowledge into three components: (i) The general knowledge, (ii) The obligatory jurisprudential knowledge especially of inheritance and (iii) the Quranic knowledge⁶. Taking full cognisance of these traditions, The Islamic Academy in Cambridge classifies knowledge (education) into two categories (Abdul Hamid Sidiqi 2009)

'Perennial knowledge' based on the divine revelation presented in the Quran and Sunnah and all that can be derived from them with emphasis on Arabic language as the key to the understanding of both 'Acquired knowledge' including social, natural and applied science susceptible to quantitative growth and multiplication, limited variations and cross-cultural borrowings as long as consistency with the *Shari'ah* as the source of values is maintained

It is these two categories that contribute to the balanced growth of the total personality of man through the training of man's spirit, intellect, the rational self, feelings and bodily senses. This is in consequence of the philosophy that education should cater for the growth of man in all aspects: spiritual, intellectual, imaginative, physical, scientific and linguistic.

Looking at education from the perspective analysed above, it becomes crystal clear that Boko Haram's view of the concept of education is grossly un-Islamic as it is hypocritical. It is hypocritical in the sense that their conduct is contrary to what they propagate. They condemn western education, yet they make use of facilities and weapons that are products of the western culture in executing their struggle. Their members make use of mobile phone for communication; depend on computer for their networking, and even the weapons of destruction used in perpetrating their havocs.

The second major ideological precept of the Boko Haram to be examined occurs in the official name of the Movement. The precept is Jihad which again suffers misconception and misapplication. Jihad is a theological term derived from the verb *Jāhada* which has different shades of meaning viz to struggle, to strive, to propagate or to wage holy war (Opeloye, 1987). The use of the term in the sense of spiritual striving and propagation to attain closeness to God can be seen in Qur'an 29: 6 while its use in terms of waging war is found in Qur'an 2: 218 among other Qur'anic passages.

It is worthy of note that in the official name of the Boko Haram Movement, the term *da'awat* (propagation) occurs with the concept of jihad which have overlapping meanings. The occurrence of the two terms to my mind is no coincidence. It is intended by the movement to reduce the theological signification of the concept jihad to the narrow perception of waging the holy war to justify their inclination towards militancy. The term jihad used in this sense is erroneous as it is misleading. Its application in the present day Nigeria is anachronistic. Nigeria as a multi-religious democratic nation is a reality generally accepted not only by the Nigerian political class, as well as Muslims and non-Muslims, but also the traditional institution across the country. This explains why the excesses of the Boko Haram continue to receive vehement condemnation of the Northern Emirs including the President, Supreme council for Islamic Affairs – the Sultan of Sokoto (the Nigeria equivalent of *AmīrulMūminiīn* – commander of the faithful). Many factors would militate against successful prosecution of a holy war in a country like Nigeria. The Boko Haram's jihad cannot be taken serious as long as the Movement lacks the courage to:

Declare what part of Nigeria is abode of war (*dārul tarb*) and what part is abode of peace (*dārul Islam*)

Be identified with any recognized authority in support of their cause

Unveil themselves and stop acting undercover in pursuit of their agenda

The unjustifiable killings by the Boko Haram in the name of 'holy war' amount to waste of human life. They are perpetrated in violation of the Islamic teachings which regard human life as sacred. The sacredness of human life can be appreciated from Qur'an 5: 32 -33 which equates termination of a soul to extermination of mankind and protection of a soul to preservation of mankind. The import of the passage according to Ibn Khathir (*op. cit.*) is that whoever would have the audacity to terminate a soul unjustifiably, would not care to wipe out the whole mankind if he has access to weapon of mass destruction. In like manner, whoever has respect for a life and would do whatever it takes to protect it, would do same for the souls of the whole mankind. To show the seriousness with which Islam views wilful murder the law of equality in punishment (*Qisas*) is prescribed by the Qur'an for whoever is guilty of homicide (Qur'an 17: 33). For a plural society like Nigeria, the Qur'an expects the Muslims to coexist peacefully and harmoniously with the non-Muslims, hence the Quranic provisions regarding freedom of worship (Qu'ran2:255); recognition of other faiths (Qur'an 2: 62); respect for other faiths (Qur'an6:108); interaction with the non-Muslims (Qur'an 5: 5); protection of the non-Muslims (Qur'an 9: 6).

3. An Assessment of the Impact of the Boko Haram's Educational Philosophy on the Muslim North

The first form of formal education known to the Muslim north was Islamic education traceable to the advent of Islam. The Muslim scholars of the Kanem Borno Kingdom as well as those of the Sokoto Caliphate made tremendous contributions to the growth of Islamic scholarship comparable to what obtained in any part of the Muslim worlds of their time. The Muslims, haven been used to Islamic form of education, understandably received western education with pinch of salt when it was introduced by the colonial masters, a factor that accounted for the wide gap in western education between the Northern and Southern Nigeria till date. The Muslims' attitude was justified because the western education newly introduced was Christian sponsored and the Christian missionary schools were established primarily to make converts to Christianity. The western education was therefore seen as a threat to Islamic faith (Fafunwa, 1975). To appreciate the Muslims' aversion to western education at this very initial stage, the table below shows the pattern of the pupils' enrolments in the different types of schools within the public domain which shows preference for Islamic education (*ibid*)

Table 1

Type of Schools	Number of Schools	Number of Pupils
Missions (Western)	29	339
Government (Western)	12	527
Quranic	19,073	143,312

Some of the government's educational policies over the years both at the federal and state levels have served as encouragement to make the Muslim North develop positive attitudinal change towards western

education. The latest in the federal government's efforts is the inauguration of the *Alimajiri* system of education. The response is without doubt reassuring but the western educational gap between the North and the South can hardly be bridged as the table below illustrates.

Table 2: Statistics of Entries for West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examinations May/ June 2001, 2009, 2010 and 2011 in English Language for selected Northern and Southern States of Nigeria

S/N	STATES	CENSUS FIGURES	2001 ENTRY	2009 ENTRY	2010 ENTRY	2011 ENTRY
1	Kano(N)	9401288	9532	40815	54137	46715
	Lagos(S)	9113605	153492	164180	155763	146784
2	Kastina(N)	5801584	9192	29741	27992	35196
	Oyo(S)	5580894	79308	62760	67364	73260
3	Jigawa(N)	4361002	2965	13813	12345	16283
	Delta(S)	4112445	41275	29761	39242	51687
4	Borno(N)	4171104	13230	2611	9514	33082
	Anambra(S)	4177828	28413	30068	39602	51361
5	Sokoto(N)	3702676	6073	14400	15210	19108
	Ogun(S)	3715140	52030	51348	53171	59250
6	Zamfara(N)	3278873	215	17902	18187	22991
	Enugun(S)	3267837	36786	40499	42977	46605
7	Yobe(N)	2321339	5441	14378	16200	18664
	Ekiti(S)	2398957	22623	18778	26277	25971
8	Nasarawa(N)	1869377	16214	37847	41614	50676
	Bayelsa (S)	1704515	9105	14130	14125	16771

This table seeks to serve two purposes. First, is to show the disparity in western education between the North and the South which is why the states of the North and the states of the South with comparable population figures are paired in the table showing the students' entries in English Language in the four years indicated. The table makes it abundantly clear that the disparity still persists as evident in the higher students' entry in the southern states than the northern states. Students' entry for English Language is used as an instrument for measurement being a core subject for which every student must enrol. The only exception revealed by the table is item 8 involving Nasarawa and Bayelsa. The reason for this could be due to Nasarawa State's proximity to the Federal Capital territory which makes it convenient for the southerners working in FCT to reside in Nasarawa State. This is apart from the fact that the states of the North in the middle belt are relatively more receptive to western education compared to the rest of the North.

Secondly, the table seeks to show if the Boko Haram's insurgency has any adverse effect on students' enrolment in the conventional schools in view of the Movement's campaign against western education. This becomes pertinent when we realise that many Boko Haram fanatics ignominiously demonstrate their aversion to western education as in the examples of some university dons destroying their hard earned certificates as it happened in some northern universities or as in the cases of the university undergraduates abandoning their courses, as recorded in some states of the north eastern Nigeria. This objective in view informs the entry years selected, i.e. 2001, 2009, 2010 and 2011. Since Boko Haram as a sect was founded in 2002 and became radicalised in 2009, seven years are enough for the sect to have impacted on the society's psyche. The 2001 entry enables us to know what the students' enrolment was before Boko Haram was founded, the 2009 enables us to know what the situation was like when the Movement became radicalised, while the 2010 and 2011 show the effect of the Movement after it has been radicalised.

Looking closely at the table, it is clearly evident that boko haram is of little or no effect on student's attitude to western education in view of the general steady rise in the student's enrolment pattern. For instance, Kano state entry pattern shows a steady increase with a decline only in 2011. Katsina, Jigawa and Borno states' entry pattern shows a general decline in 2010 with a sudden rise in 2011. It is difficult to prove that the instances of decline recorded were due to the boko haram insurgency. It may be due to other extraneous factors, after all, a similar decline is recorded in Ekiti and Lagos states in 2009 and 2011 respectively. As for Zamfara Sokoto Yobe and Nasarawa states, steady increase is recorded with no decline at any point in time.

The fact that the Muslim north has not responded to the boko haram campaign against western education is an indication that the north is more determined than ever before to further narrow the western educational gap between it and the south, having perceived western education as veritable tool for the needed transformational development

4. The Response of the Shari 'ah States of the North to the Boko Haram's Struggle for the Full Shari 'ah Restoration

Since the declared aim of the Boko Haram Movement's struggle is for the full restoration of *Sharitah* in Nigeria, it is appropriate to examine the response of the North to this advocacy.

There is no gainsaying that *Shari 'ah* has a long history in Nigeria since it is synonymous with Islam. It was the system of government in the geographical expression today known as northern Nigeria before the arrival of the colonial masters. The full implementation of the law started in Kanem Borno right from the 9th century (Abdul Rahman, 2012). Similarly, under the established Sokoto Caliphate by the Jihad Scholars in the Nineteenth century, *Shari 'ah* was fully implemented until the arrival of the colonial masters at the commencement of the Twentieth century when the system was replaced with the penal code (Clark, 1982). After Nigeria's Independence in 1960, the scope of *Shari 'ah* administration of justice as recognized by the constitution was restricted to the law of personal status. The gradual reduction in the scope of *Shari 'ah* in the constitutional provisions is without doubt a development against which the Muslim north generally have their reservations.

This explains the agitation by some northern Muslims for Islamic system of government when the country was preparing to return to civil rule after the collapse of the second republic in 1983. In 1988, Opeloye in a study titled 'Problems of DE secularizing Nigeria's Political Order' opined without mincing words that Islamic system of government cannot work in Nigeria in view of the heterogeneous nature of the country. He asserted that the impossibility of the system is more at the federal level than at the state level arguing that the homogeneous Muslim states of the north could implement the law especially if true federalism is in vogue (Opeloye, 1988). It is therefore not surprising that twelve out of the nineteen states of the North opted for full implementation of *Shari 'ah* in 1999 at the commencement of the fourth republic.

Borno state, in the north eastern Nigeria, is one of the states that made declaration for the full *Shari 'ah* implementation in 1999, and it is one of the states that have experienced the worst violence of the Boko Haram. It will therefore be appropriate to examine the level of *Shari 'ah*'s full implementation in the state to determine the justifiability of the Boko Haram's insurgency for the restoration of the system. The declaration of full implementation of *Shari 'ah* in Borno State was made by Late Alhaji Mala Kachala, the former Executive Governor of the State, (1999-2003) following the submission of report of *Shari 'ah* Implementation Committee and the Governor's assent to the Act of Borno State House of Assembly.

With the declaration of the full implementation of *Shari 'ah* in Borno State, some steps though superficial, were taken to demonstrate the State's commitment to the implementation. Consequently, brothels and drinking parlours as well as gambling joints and cinema houses became outlawed and their operators were directed to wind up after sufficient time had been given to them. In addition, all sculptural figures that adorned the main junctions of the State Capital except the one on the traditional slate (*Al-Lawh*) were also pulled down in compliance with the dictates of *Shari 'ah*. Furthermore, indiscriminate gender promiscuity in the public was also prohibited, new *Shari 'ah* courts and Judges were built and appointed respectively and there were also Islamic inscriptions written on sign boards adorning the major streets of the State Capital. The enforcement of the new law is believed to have resulted in reduction of vices such as theft, consumption of alcohol, gambling, adultery and fornication among others in the State.

All these put in place, gave the impression that the State was ready for full implementation of *Shari 'ah*. However, with the exit of Governor Kachala at the expiration of his tenure in 2003, and the coming of his successor, Governor Ali Modu Sheriff (2003-2011), no further progress was made in the implementation of *Shari 'ah* in Borno State. In point of fact, some of the prohibited acts have found their ways back to the State thus signifying the collapse of the *Shari 'ah* system.

The coming of Alhaji Ali Modu Sheriff as Governor in 2003 would appear to have created the Boko Haram problem. He used *Shari 'ah* as a campaign issue for election which he won only to abandon *Shari 'ah* on assumption of office, thus dashing the hopes and aspirations of his followers. There is no gainsaying that the state of *Shari 'ah* in the other States of northern Nigeria that declared for its full implementation is not different from the situation in Borno State which accounts for the ease of infiltration of the Movement's members into the other states. The setback suffered by the full implementation of *Shari 'ah* to my mind is a consequence of lack of commitment of the protagonists of the system. There is no way *Shari 'ah* can be fully implemented when the State Governments have failed to put in place the necessary mercenary for its effective implementation. This development proved former President Obasanjo right in his assertion that it was 'Political *Shari 'ah*' that was being declared at the commencement of his tenure.

5. Implied Motifs for the Boko Haram Movement's Insurgency

The Boko Haram insurgency not being ethno-religiously induced is significantly different from most of the insurgencies that had occurred in northern Nigeria in the last two and a half decades including 1986 Ilorin Palm Sunday Riot, 1987 Kafanchan Revolt, 1991 Tafawa Balawa Riot, 1992 Zango Kataf Crisis, 1995 Bauchi Crisis, 2000 Kaduna Tumult and the more recent Jos Crises that have been on since 2008.

The insurgency has been viewed from different perspectives. To some, it is another sectarian insurgency for the propagation of heretical doctrines, to others, it is a manifestation of global terrorists' organizational networking and yet to others, it is an insurgency occasioned by the nation's flawed political process.

If we consider the fact that northern Nigeria has a history of spawning heretical sects, there will be justification in suspecting the Boko Haram as another heresy. To hold this view is to see similarity between Boko Haram and a sect like Maitatsine an earlier heretical movement founded by Muhammed Marwa who propagated some blasphemous teachings about the prophethood of Muhammad.

With regard to Boko Haram's alleged connection with the global terrorists' network, it is noteworthy that the United States already includes the Movement on its list of terrorist organizations. Boko Haram considered to be an ally of Al-Qaeda is seen as an emerging threat to the USA and its interests. Boko Haram is one of the three terrorists groups identified in Africa, the other two being Shabab of Somalia and Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb across the Sahel region (Farouq, www.bbc.co.uk). It is believed that their link with Al-Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb creates for them avenue for more funds from similar groups in Saudi Arabia. Some of the activities of the Boko Haram would tend to lend support to their alleged external connections especially when we consider their attack on the United Nations building in Abuja and the abduction and eventual assassination of the Italian and British Nationals, Franco Lamolinara and Christopher McManus in Kebbi State very recently.

The third interpretational perspective which sees Boko Haram's activities as having socio-political undertone is to us most plausible. John Onaiyekan (2012) in this regard is indeed right when he opines that the Islamist Boko Haram insurgency is as rooted in bad governance as much as in its push for governance in accordance with *Shari 'ah* dictates. According to him, corruption of the political class, which is an index of bad governance, leads to economic and social inequality more manifest in the Niger Delta and the Muslim North. The people of the Niger Delta are impoverished despite the region's control of the oil resources while the situation is not any better for the people of the North despite the apparent political advantage enjoyed by the region.

According to Onaiyekan militancy is inevitable in this prevailing situation. In other words, a situation where people in government and their friends and relations get stupendously richer and the masses get poorer is a veritable incubator for violence and revolution. The Boko Haram insurgency may therefore be seen as a revolt against the socio-economic menace of corruption, growing unemployment and poverty perpetuated by the politicians. The North in particular has no cause to be so disadvantaged considering the fact that the region has been in control of power for much longer a period than any other part of Nigeria.

Of recent, President Goodluck Jonathan remarked that the Boko Haram's insurgency aims at truncating his government and making the country ungovernable for him. This is an affirmation of the President's belief that the Boko Haram Movement is serving the interest of some politicians. It is inconsequence of this that the

President may be justified to see Nigerian polity as politics of bitterness. The fact must also be admitted that politics of bitterness is just one of the many negative ingredients of Nigerian polity. In Nigerian perceptions, party politics is poisonous; it is politics of war not of peace; of acrimony and hatred and mudslinging, not of love and brotherhood; it is of anarchy and discord, not of orderliness and concord; it is politics of cleavages, factionalisms and disunity, and not of cooperation, consensus and unity; it is politics of hypocrisy and charlatanism, not of integrity and patriotism; it is politics of rascality not of maturity, it is of blackmail and gangsterism, not of constructive and honest contribution (Opeloye, nd). It may therefore be appropriate to liken politics as currently played in Nigeria to the Qur'anic evil tree devoid of root for stability and therefore lacking in capacity to bear fruits (Qur'an14: 24-26)

The violent uprising that greeted the 2011 presidential election in Northern Nigeria was a consequence of the bitterness of the Northern politicians in the opposition party who were not favourably disposed to the shift of power from the North to the South. The Boko Haram members who had become radicalised since 2009 became a ready tool used by these politicians to achieve their selfish political agenda at the expense of the Nation's wellbeing. This to my mind is quite unfortunate considering the fact that the North has been in control of power for much longer period than any other part of Nigeria, having produced the Heads of Government (whether military or democratic) for 38 years out the country's 52 years of nationhood. For instance the North Central ruled for 19 years, North East 6 years, North West 13 years, South West 12 years and South South 2 years. The opportunities utilized by the two southerners, Rtd General Olusegun Obasanjo and Goodluck Jonathan were only circumstantial.

Any northern resistance to a southern president at this point in time in Nigerian political history is a demonstration of high level political intolerance of the northern political elite, apart from being reflective of desperate effort of a failed leadership which superintended the affairs of the country for 38 years. Another dimension of the Boko Harams' attack targeting the Muslims' places of worship in which no less personalities than the Shehu of Borno and the Borno State Deputy Governor narrowly escaped death shows that the Boko Harams' grievances are multi-faceted, as the entire Muslim leadership gamut considered to have failed the people is not exempted. The latest in the Boko Haram's menace was recorded on Sunday 29th of July when a mosque near Bayero University, Kano and the family residence of the Vice President of Nigeria, Alhaji Namadi Sambo were bombarded leaving two people dead

6. Conclusion

Boko Haram Movement in view of our findings portends danger not only to Islam as a belief system, but also to Nigeria as a nation. This is because the doctrines they propagate and their manner of operation which compare with those of the Talibans, cause a lot of damage to Islam. The Movement has made the northern Nigeria unsecured and if this is allowed to continue unchecked it can only worsen the already bad situation of the region in terms development, as no meaningful development can take place in an unsecured environment

When one considers the outlook of the Boko Haram Movement in all the ramifications of its activities, it would be appropriate to describe it as a terrorist religious sect; and better still, a heretical sect in view of the strange doctrines it propagates. It is a terrorist organization because of its manner of operations. It is even Islamo-political because of its use of Islam as a weapon of manipulation. It manipulates the ideas and symbols of Islam to attract followership and win the hearts of less discerning members of Islamic faith to support its political agenda. Little wonder why the movement is disowned by the generality of the Muslim ummah.

Whatever interest Boko Haram Movement serves, it must be admitted that its activities have negative implications for the Nation's peace, unity and stability. For instance, the violence that was recently unleashed by the movement sent shivers through some parts of the North East and North Central zones of the country to the level it prompted the government of the affected States to impose 24 hour curfew in the States. Without doubt, the Boko Haram menace requires a systematic, concerted and well-coordinated security strategy to overcome the problem. The seeming incapacity of the Nation's security agencies to deal with the problem triggered the sack of three top security officials by Mr President viz – the Minister of Defence, the Special Adviser on Security and the Chief of Defence Staff.

If the Nation's insecurity is degenerating to anarchy level that warrants imposition of 24 hour curfew or sack of Security Chiefs, then the Nation is endangered and only a well thought-out policy shift within the constitutional framework will solve the problem. This can be achieved within the context of the following recommendations:

The system of government in operation in Nigeria is more unitary than federal which is not consistent with the multi- ethnic and multi-cultural make-up of the country. In recognition of the diverse value systems of the different ethnic nationalities within the nation, true federalism is the ideal that should be enthroned as a means of fostering peaceful coexistence.

The security problems arising from the activities of the Boko Haram and other militant groups coupled with the incidences of kidnapping, armed robbery, suicide bombings, political assassinations are a consequence of the people's discontent with the government for its failings. In an attempt to solve these problems, government should intensify efforts towards job creation with a view to reducing the endemic poverty of the masses.

Boko Haram phenomenon is a product of political thug gery which is characteristic of the country's politics of 'do or die'. If the Nigeria political process should lead to good governance, the process will need to be overhauled such that aspirants for elective positions who have leadership qualities should be given preference over and above any mundane considerations.

Since the activities of the Boko Haram and the manner of their operations are a pointer to the reality that they have link with external terrorist organizations, the Nigeria security network should be reorganized in a way that it will be able to anticipate and cope with the new challenges of the Nation's security problems.

Since as already noted, western education is not incongruous with Islamic education, Nigeria government at all levels should consciously intensify efforts towards the integration of *tilmiyyah* schools with the public primary schools. The recent establishment of *Almajiri* educational project by the Federal Government is a step in the right direction.

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