

ANALYSIS OF ETHNO-RELIGIOUS CRISIS IN NIGERIA: THE JOS (PLATEAU STATE) EXPERIENCES, 2001-2011

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Abstract

The Paper analysed ethno-religious crisis in Nigeria which, having taken diverse perspectives, are adjudged to constitute serious threats to the nation's unity. Included in these ethno-religious conflicts is the Jos crisis that has defied several efforts towards resolution since its emergence in 2001. Efforts to resolve the crisis through several commissions, committees, panels, and even emergency rule proved abortive. Thus, Plateau state formerly known as "The Home of Peace and Tourism" was satirized into "The Home of Pieces and Terrorism". The consequent escalation of these conflicts which became sources of concern to Nigerians constitutes the main focus of this study. Hence this study is designed to explain why the ethno-religious crisis in Jos persists despite all efforts to resolve it, and; to suggest how the crisis can be managed to ensure sustainable peace in the state. Using content analysis techniques and relative deprivation theory, the study explained that the ethno-religious crisis in Jos persisted over the years despite all efforts to resolve it because the government could not meet the demands of the deprived Jasawa people and ignored the recommendations of the various bodies established to investigate the crisis. In this light, it is argued that the ethno-religious crisis in Jos can be managed to enhance sustainable peace in plateau state through the implementation of the recommendations advanced by the various commissions of inquiry.

Introduction

Jos is the Capital of Plateau State created on 3rd February 1976 with human population estimate of 3.2 million people (NPC, 2006). The population figure comprises both the indigenes (Berom, Afizere, Anaguta) and non-indigenes (Igbo, Yoruba, Hausa-Fulani-Jasawa). The crisis started in Jos as early as 1980s but the intensity varied over the years as evident in the Darika-Tijanniya Islamic sectarian crisis over doctrinal differences in 1980; Hausa-Berom conflict over indigene-settler dichotomy in 1987; Mwanghavul-Pyem crisis over chieftaincy matters in 1987. In 1991, the crisis in Jos intensified when Jos North and Jos South L.G.As were created and a Jasawa (Samaila Mohammed) was elected as chairman of Jos North. This was against the wish of the indigenes whose traditional ruler (Gbom-Gwom) was isolated in Jasawa-dominated area of Jos town. The indigenes saw it as a grand plan by the Jasawa to dominate them. This laid the foundation for the subsequent crisis that followed like: the 1994 crisis over the appointment of a Jasawa, Alhaji Aminu Mato as Caretaker Committee Chairman in Jos North; the 1995 Mwanghavul-Rons crisis over territorial boundary; The 1996 crisis over the post of Secretary of Jos North Local Education Authority, and; the Changal crisis in 1997 over land, taxation, and subjects.

The crisis continued to build up with growing intensity and increasing frequency from 2001 to 2010 and efforts to resolve it continued to witness monumental failures with damaging effects such as: the erosion of social cohesion and intensified divisive sentiments among the people that once lived together peacefully; The loss of human and material resources: 1000 lives in 2001; property worth N3.374 million; and 250,000 displaced persons etc; the spread of the crisis to other states like Kano, Borno etc (Ostien, 2009). Against the backdrop of the

seemingly intractable nature of the crisis, this study reopens investigations into the root causes of the ethno-religious crisis in Jos, adduces reasoned explanation of the persistence of the crisis despite all efforts to resolve it, and proffers suggestions as to how the crisis can be managed to ensure sustainable peace in Plateau state.

Review of Related Literatures

Perspectives on the Persistence of Ethno-Religious Crisis in Nigeria

Ethno-religious crisis in Nigeria has been attributed to various explanations which can be viewed from three perspectives viz: the pluralist, the dialectical materialist, and the institutionalist perspectives. These schools of thought have not only influenced the perceptions of scholars on why ethno-religious crisis lingers in societies but particularly in Nigeria despite efforts to resolve it.

The Pluralist Perspective

The pluralists blame the persistence of ethno-religious crisis in Nigeria on the multiplicity of rival ethnic and religious cleavages with conflicting differences that continually compete for pre-eminence and dominance to avoid subordination (Olu-Adeyemi, 2006; Akinola, 2000; Nnoli, 1994). Hence, as long as these conflicting differences exist among the various rival ethnic and religious cleavages, the crisis endures. It is argued that in most purely divided or pluralist societies, control of the state is a central ethnic conflict objective to guarantee the survival of their identities because no group, however small, wants to die out, or is willing to let its language, traditions and privileges die or be further reduced due to the growth and development of identity consciousness (Ojukwu and Onifade, 2010; Ostien, 2009; Olu-Adeyemi, 2006; Onwudiwe, 2004; Akinola, 2000; Amin, 1972; Mosca, 1939;). Every ethnic and religious group are therefore constantly engaged in the struggle against economic, political and cultural domination (Wale, 2004; Suberu, 1997; Nnoli, 1994).

However, the contention of the pluralists is disputed because, ethno-religious differences are not always divisive but can be integrative if properly harnessed by the leading elites. Hence, the very fact that a country has different ethnic, religious and racial groups does not sufficiently make division and conflict inevitable (Osaghae and Suberu, 2005). Empirical evidence reveals that divisions are not dependent on the degree of diversity as some of the diverse countries (Switzerland, Belgium, Malaysia, Britain, America and Tanzania) enjoy relative peace and stability while the least diverse countries (Somalia, Rwanda, and Burundi) are ridden with crisis (Ojukwu and Onifade, 2010). Also, it is not holistically true to assert as this school does, that due to some inherent factors in the nature of groups or in the nature of human beings that they get into goal incompatibility. Other factors exist to exacerbate these crises which may include circumstances they find themselves (Dokun, 2005). It is further argued that varying degrees of interest among different groups may lead to crisis, yet it is not inevitable that they should collide because with better information or less misperception or more rational behaviour, such collision and crisis could be avoided (Dokun, 2005).

The Institutional Perspective

Taking a different dimension, the institutionalists do not see the persistence of crisis in the multiplicity of ethno-religious and social cleavages, or in the competition for economic power and access to resources, though they could generate it. They contend that crisis persists and becomes intractable in the society due to the inability of the institutions of governance and authority to enforce law and order in the country (Wilkinson, 1977). This submission implies that the competition for political power and participation in the political process by the various ethno-religious groups in Nigeria generate crisis beyond the capacity of the state institutions of governance to resolve. Thus, the character of Nigeria's federalism, fragile civil society organisations, weak institutional arrangements and inadequate strategy for regular dialogue are responsible for the persistence of ethno-religious crisis in Nigeria (Wale, 2004). The institutionalists therefore focus on structures, actors and the dynamics in terms of the

existing relationship to the institutions charged with handling issues concerning crisis resolution and management. Wilkinson (1977) articulated some conditions under liberal democracy when crisis may be justifiably persistent: one, when the basic rights and liberties are taken away by the arbitrary actions of government or its agencies; two, when one minority is attacked by another minority without receiving adequate protection from the state and agencies of law and order. But once these institutional conditions are non-existent, that is, where aggrieved groups enjoy full protection and rights of participation in a democratic state, and their enjoyment of these rights are not attacked by either the state, its agencies or rival groups, the argument goes that the crisis may not persist because there is no justification for it (Wilkinson, 1977; Wale, 2004). Why not you attempt a critique of this position

The Dialectical Materialist Perspective

The dialectical materialists on their part contend that all conflicts are resource-based, as such, until the economic undercurrents are addressed, crisis will always linger indefinitely in societies (Ake, 1982; Rupesinghe and Anderlini, 1998; Ojukwu and Onifade, 2010). The competition for economic power and access to natural resources are given more attention under this perspective because it is a key determinant of other variables. In other words, contentions over the control, distribution, and consumption of resources are ever persistent in every conflict situation either overtly or covertly; and until these economic undercurrents are addressed, the crisis persists. Hence, crisis deescalates and dissolves once economic issues are resolved (Ake, 1982; Olu-Adeyemi, 2006). This suggests that there is a strong relationship between resources endowment, access to the resources and propensity for crisis (Ake, 1982; Joseph, 1991). Thus, for any ethno-religious crisis or any of the other colouration to exist, there are bound to be strong elements of economic variables which Wale (2004) identified to include (a) contracting access to economic resources in the face of expanding fiscal space occasioned by greed in the various tiers of government; (b) expanding army of unemployed labour force who cannot operationalise basic means of existence which condition them to easily and readily become willing-participants to perpetrate crisis because it gives them the opportunity to loot property; (c) increasing polarisation of the economic class on account of their economic interests and the increasing class consciousness in the society; (d) convergence problems in the annals of public pro-poor policies, particularly in the rural areas; (e) past and present economic policies that often focused on growth with hardly any emphasis on the distribution of its gains.

The *relative deprivation theory* was first coined by Robert K. Merton in 1949. Its central thesis is that aggression is always a consequence or function of *discontent* of a kind; hence, violence occurs when the want-get gap or ratio becomes intolerable (Davies, 1972; Gurr, 1970; Berkowitz, 1962; Okanya, 1999). This *discontent of a kind* is conceptualized in *relative deprivation*. Relative deprivation refers to the perceived discrepancy between value expectations, value capabilities and value realities in the process of comparisons (Bayertz, 1999; Ellemers and Bos, 1998; Gurr, 1970; Runciman, 1966). In other words, relative deprivation implies the consciousness or awareness of a difference between the goals one expected to achieve, believes that there are capabilities for achieving them, but could not achieve those goals due to frustration.

A Critique of the Strategies for Resolving the Jos Crisis

The strategies for resolving crisis vary with the nature of the crisis and the actors involved. Generally, actors in conflict resolution have relied on negotiation, mediation, arbitration, adjudication and coercion (Ojukwu and Onifade, 2010). In many situations, there is a combination of different resolution strategies given the multi-causal nature of the Plateau crisis (Nuhu, 2004). Interestingly, these resolution strategies correspond to, and are activated by the attendant context and circumstances. In relation to the Jos crisis, the following resolution strategies have been identified: mediation and coercion. Apart from the indigenes

and the Jasawa as ethno-religious groups, there were some governmental and non-governmental actors whose involvement and actions largely shaped the Jos crisis. The governmental actors include the presidents (Olusegun Obasanjo, Umar Musa Yar'adua, Goodluck Jonathan), the Governors (Joshua Dariye, Jonah Jang) and the chairman of Jos North local governmental area (Bagudu Tardy) as well as the commissions, panels and committees of inquiry. The non-governmental actors include: Conflict Prevention and Management Centre of the African Leadership Forum (sponsored by the Friedrich Naumann Foundation, Germany), the Universities, Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Jama'atu Nasril Islam (JNI), Plateau Youth Council (PYC), Jasawa Development Association (JDA), Plateau State Indigenes Development Association (PSIDA), and the Jos Council of Ulama. In relation to coercion, state of emergency was declared in 2004, and Special Task Forces deployed to maintain law and order in the state.

4.1 The Jasawa Demands and the Dariye-Jang Responses

The Jos crisis became more intense in the regimes of Joshua Dariye and David Jonah Jang as the governors of Plateau State. Joshua Dariye was elected in 1999; re-elected in 2003; suspended in May 2004 when state of emergency was declared; arrested in London in September, 2004 on charges of embezzlement, money laundering; jumped bail and came back to Nigeria; he was re-instated as Governor in December, 2004 when state of emergency ended; he was later impeached and removed from office by the Plateau State House of Assembly in November, 2006. Later, he was re-instated in April 2007 when Supreme Court sustained his challenge to impeachment; then went out of office in May 2007 when he handed over to David Jonah Jang who was elected Governor. Jang had earlier served in the Airforce but was involuntarily retired in 1990 by Ibrahim Babangida which he believed was because he was a Middle-Belt-Berom-Christian rather than a Northern-Hausa-Speaking-Muslim (Ostien, 2009). Jang is said to hold his sacking not only against Babangida, but also against all Muslims. As a Christian who holds Bachelor of Divinity degree from the Theological College of Northern Nigeria, Bukuru, earned in 2002, Jang evidently believes in the theory that Nigeria's northern Muslims, perhaps in coalition with other Muslims around the world have the wish or determination to conspire and dominate Nigeria, and claim its territory as much as they can for themselves (Ostien, 2009). Consequently, Jang wants to see Christians resist Muslim advances everywhere, fight back and push them out; but above all, not to let their powers expand in any direction (Ostien, 2009).

Meanwhile, within the period under review, the Jasawa sought to be recognized and integrated as Jos indigenes while the former governor, Joshua Dariye and his successor, David Jonah Jang, along with other indigenes vehemently fought the requests through various actions as will be identified hereunder.

The Jasawa demanded as follows:

1. A Jasawa Muslim should be picked as a Deputy Governor
2. A District for the Jasawa Community in Jos (North Central) should be created. This would comprise about 8 wards of Ali Kazaure, Sarkin Arab, Garba Daho, Ibrahim Katsina, Naraguta "A" (Nasarawa), Naraguta "B" (Angwan Rogo, Angwan Rimi), Gangare, and Abba Na Shehu.
3. A Jasawa Chief, *Mai Angwan*, should be appointed to rule the district to be created.
4. The *Mai Angwan* should be issuing *Indigene Certificate* on the bases of the Jasawa district.
5. Include them as indigenes because they have been in Jos for a long time, have made crucial contributions to the development of all facets of the socio-economic and political life of the state, and know no other home to call theirs.

In response to these demands, the indigenes through the governors (Dariye and Jang) maintained as follow:

1. The land of Jos North belongs to Beroms.
2. The Jasawa don't have land to be given a district.

3. The Jasawa are not the only settlers who have lived long in Jos, and made meaningful contributions towards the development of the state; hence, they should not be given preferential recognition unlike the Igbos, and Yorubas etc.
4. It is not possible to pick a deputy governor from the Jasawa settlers, else other settlers can be accorded the same privilege.
5. On no account should *indigene certificate* be issued to the Jasawa.
6. Relocation of Jos North Headquarters from the Jasawa dominated area thereby reducing their presence and access to the council is essential.
7. Buying of houses and lands surrounding the Gbong Gwom's palace which all belong to the Jasawa who are not willing to sell.
8. The land where the Central Mosque is located which the Jasawa claim belongs to the Beroms.
9. The indigenes should not sell lands any longer to the Jasawa; the government should not allocate lands again to the Jasawa; the execution of all documents of title related to pending land transfers has been suspended (i.e., no issuance of Certificate of Occupancy).
10. All local, State, and Federal government institutions within Plateau State will be headed by indigenes.
11. The Jos main market rendered useless by fire in 2002, will not be rebuilt but will be turned into a shopping mall where all shops will be allocated to only indigenes. (In other markets, the Jasawa have been put on notice that they are to be relocated whereas other non-indigenes like the Igbos, Yorubas, etc that are not of Jasawa are not included).
12. The Jos Master Plan as prepared by J.D. Gomwalk shall be partly implemented. Part of this involves widening a number of roads in the city which mostly would go through Jasawa neighbourhoods and would mean destruction of many of their buildings while compensation would be paid only to those who have statutory documents of title to prove ownership. Unfortunately, the Jasawa do not have such documents of title because they occupied the place before it was introduced; besides, the government no longer issues *certificate of occupancy* to the Jasawa.

Contentions over the identified issues between the indigenes and the Jasawa have continually generated the crisis that bedevilled Jos as will be recounted hereunder with the mediation strategies applied.

The Jos Crisis and Resolution Strategies

From 2001 to 2010, there had been several outbreaks of crisis in Jos which attracted the establishment of various commissions, panels and committees of inquiry by both the federal and state governments. They include: the Niki Tobi Commission (2001), Peace Summits (2002), Peace Conference and the emergency rule (2004), Abisoye Presidential Panel (2008), Ajibola Gubernatorial Panel (2008), and the Lar-Kwande Presidential Committee (2010). These Commissions of Inquiry were set up to: look into the crisis, find out its genesis, recommend ways of avoiding future re-occurrence, and recommend appropriate action against those found guilty of causing the mayhem (Niki Tobi Report, 2001). These terms of reference remained the same for all the commissions, committees and panels, and logically suggest that they have not made any significant impacts on resolving the crisis.

The 2001 Jos Crisis and the Niki Tobi Commission of Inquiry

The crisis that erupted in Jos on September 7, 2001 had economic, political and religious undercurrents. In April 2001, there was conflict between the Taroh and Burum people over who should harvest locust bean trees in Nassarawa village of Wase; there was also the Quaan Pan local government conflict with the Tiv over farmland (Sani, 2007). Also, the Jos indigenes had expressed grievances over the appointment of Alhaji Muhammed Mukta-Usman, a non-indigene, as coordinator and chairman of the Jos North Monitoring Committee

of the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) on 20th June, 2001. Eventually, on September 7, 2001, the crisis was triggered off by the insistence of a Christian woman, Rhoda Nyam, on passing through a road barricaded by Muslim congregation in preparation for their Friday Juma'at Prayer at the Congo-Russia area (Nkanga, 2011). The crisis lasted a week and claimed about 1000 lives, displaced several persons, with loss in property valued at N3,369,716,404.95 (Nkanga, 2011).

In view of the crisis, the Plateau state government inaugurated a 10-member commission of inquiry headed by Justice Niki Tobi who was then the presiding Justice of the Court of Appeal, Benin City, and later, a Justice of Supreme Court. The commission was however criticised especially by the Jasawa for two main reasons: first is that the membership was Christian-dominated; second is that the chairmanship being a civil servant did not guarantee adequate independence; third is that it was likely that the chairman would empathise with the indigenes having suffered similar crisis as a minority in his state, and as such, the commission's neutrality was not assured. Nonetheless, the mandate was essentially the same with that of the Fiberesima Commission of 1994 (Nkanga, 2011). In its findings, the commission declared, "history seems to be repeating itself here", noting that the 2001 and the 1994 crisis "are very similar" (Nkanga, 2011). It was glaring that the government had failed in its constitutional primary role of ensuring security and welfare of its citizens. Nkanga (2011) went further to state the commission's declaration thus:

For some reason which is not altogether clear to us [the commission] or for no reason at all, the government neither issued a white paper on the [Fiberesima] report nor implemented any of the [Fiberesima] commission recommendations.... if the recommendations of the Fiberesima commission had been implemented by government, the crisis of September 2001 would have been averted.

Meanwhile, the Niki Tobi Commission fully adopted and recommended the implementation of the Fiberesima Commission's Report which observed that the remote cause of the crisis was traceable to the creation of the Jos North and Jos South Local Government Areas which was "totally against the wishes of the Berom, Anaguta and Afizere communities" (Nkanga, 2011; Ostien, 2009; Osaghae and Suberu, 2005). With the creation of Jos North local government area in 1991 the indigenes found themselves in Jos South local government area while the Jasawa community was left to enjoy numerical dominion in Jos North local government area where Jos metropolis is located; the communities saw this arrangement as a grand plan by the Hausa-Fulani to seize Jos town from them. They also resented the pattern of the newly-created LGAs because it left their paramount ruler, the Gbong Gwom, isolated in an enclave of the Hausa-Fulani in Jos municipality (Nkanga, 2011). The major recommendations the Fiberesima commission made to the government and strongly upheld by the Niki Tobi commission include sanctioning "all individuals, groups of persons, and organisations indicted by our inquiry"; but they were never implemented (Nkanga, 2011). The government's inaction led to sporadic communal clashes for the five years that followed, culminating in the 2001 crisis (Garuba, 2011; Akuma, 2011).

As contained in Tell (March 21, 2011:53), the Niki Tobi Commission recommended as follows:

1. L
and Ownership: (a) Government should provide grazing area and permanent routes for Fulanis to feed their cattle; (b) Hausa-Fulani Community should be encouraged to dialogue with other communities and accept ownership of Jos by the Afizeres, Anagutas, and Beroms. Anything short of this will not make for peace.
2. S
ecurity: (a) laws should be respected and enforced; (b) Alhaji M.D. Yusuf, state Commissioner of Police during the September 2001 crisis should be advised to retire or be dismissed for alleged bias for Islam and against Christianity; (c) Urgent steps to be taken to fish out illegal aliens who are said to be in large numbers in the state; (d) Religious fanatics should not be posted to head police commands....fanaticism should

- be defined as a senior police officer being Christian or Muslim with extreme beliefs or behaviour in that religion or shows total bias for that religion.
3. P
olitics and Reconciliation: (a) Government should take recommendations seriously in order to discourage perpetrators from a repeat performance; (b) Government appointments should be made only after wide consultations with stakeholders to avoid disaffection and misapprehension.
 4. R
eligious Issues: (a) use of loudspeakers on external walls of churches and mosques should be made illegal by the Plateau State House of Assembly; (b) Indiscriminate construction of places of worship in residential areas of Jos and other towns to be outlawed by the state government; (c) Alhaji Tijani Abdullahi's Mosque at Congo-Russia, Jos where the crisis started should not be rebuilt; (d) Government should monitor the establishment of private schools and their syllabi to detect and eliminate religious fundamentalism.
 5. J
os Local Government: Restructure electoral wards in Jos North local government to correct imbalance.
 6. T
reatment of Suspects: (a) All suspects as detailed by the commission should be handed over to the police to be investigated and prosecuted; (b) Unless those found culpable are punished, they will not be deterred and would do it again.
 7. C
ompensation: Commission collates damages to be worth a total of N3.36bn but observes that the state government does not have the financial means to pay compensation or damages to victims.

The 2002/2003 Jos Crisis and the Plateau State Peace Summit

The 2002/2003 crisis in Jos environs resulted from political, economic and ethno-religious factors (Sani, 2007): there were the PDP local government congress crisis (between rival PDP groups in Eto-Aba and Anguwam Rukuba wards) over contestations for party executives in Naraguta ward "B" of Jos North and rescheduled primaries; the Yelwa-Shendam crisis sparked off by illicit love affair between a Hausa youngster and a female indigene in Yelwa town which the indigenes had long frowned at; the Fulani-Berom crisis in Barkin Ladi over farmland; the Hausa-Taroh crisis in Yelwa town of Shendam local government area over the agitations of Taroh for the creation of a separate local government of their own to be called Kadarko L.G.A./the directives by CAN that young female Christians should not have anything to do with their male Muslim counterparts while the Muslims retaliated by prohibiting their adherents from buying foods sold by Christians; the Juma'at Prayer crisis in Dilimi over a girl attacked by Muslims for trying to cross a road they barricaded during Friday Juma'at prayer; the Barkin Ladi crisis; and the 2003 invasion of Kadarko village and Wase town. In all, about 400 persons were killed, 300,827 persons displaced, and several property destroyed (Sani, 2007).

Consequently, one-day peace summits were convened by the governor for: (a) elders, religious leaders and government officials; (b) youths, student groups, trade unions and others; (c) traditional rulers, religious leaders and community leaders; and (d) chairmen and members of transition committees and leaders of the six political parties (Plateau State Peace Summit, 2002). The communiqué issued afterwards is mostly platitudes; Ostien (2009:15) detailed them as follow: "conflict is counterproductive"; "the panacea for peace is the pursuit of justice"; "architects of violence should be apprehended and be prosecuted"; "the spread of rumours, hearsay, gossip and suspicions should be discouraged". But sometimes it comes more to the point: "Plateau people must sustain their accommodating nature and create room for other people to co-habit"; "Other Nigerians who have chosen to live in Plateau State

should not violate the hospitality of their hosts and not sabotage or demean such hosts”. And these warnings: “The growing appetite for war by the youths should be discouraged and extinguished by the elders, traditional rulers and religious leaders”. “Societies or groups that perpetrate violence or whip up sentiments of war will have violence visited upon them”. Observably, the opinions of the Peace summit were more or less advisory and in form of peace education; but further efforts were not made to sustain the process of building peace through such education or implement their submissions.

The 2004 Jos Crisis: The Plateau Peace Conference and the Emergency Rule

The 2004 Jos crisis had economic undercurrents. It erupted between Muslim cattle herders and Christian farmers over land and cattle, lasted for four months (February-May). The crisis left in its wake more than 1000 people dead, about 258,000 persons internally displaced and property worth billions of naira destroyed (Global IDP Project, 2005; Osaghae and Suberu, 2005; Ostien, 2009; Nkanga, 2011). This led to the Plateau Peace Conference of 2004 organised within the period of the emergency rule to proffer solution to the Jos crisis. The Plateau Peace Conference met in Jos from 18 August to 21 September, 2004. All indigenous “ethnic nationalities in the state”, “pegged at 54”, were invited to send two representatives each; 48 indigenous groups responded (Nkanga, 2011:1). Other major Nigerian ethnic nationalities resident in the state, namely, the Fulani, Hausa, Igbo, people from the south-south (Urhobos, Ijaws and Yorubas) were allowed one representative each, although in the end, the Fulani and Hausa each had two. Some interest groups were also represented: women (one from each local government), various civil society groups and the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and Jama’atu Nasril Islam (JNI), representing Christian and Muslim interests. For more than a month, this large group discussed issues of the Jos crisis in exhaustive detail. Its 167-page communique published in the Plateau State Gazette, summarised the discussions and the resolution adopted. Although there were several issues of interest in the report, section 7.2.1 entitled “*Indigeneship Issues: Perceived Discriminations and Denial of Rights politically and socially*” is very relevant in this context.

- i. The Conference discussed the problem of Jos and re-affirmed the conclusion of [the 1994 Fiberesima Commission] which identified the true indigenes of Jos as Afizere, Anaguta and Berom.
- ii. Delegates also advised that all peoples should learn to be proud of where they come from and to associate themselves with their places of origin.
- iii. The Conference felt that with proper understanding of one another, integration and assimilation will ultimately come without any intimidation and antagonism.
- iv. [T]he 1999 Constitution...recognises that every citizen has the right to contest for any elective position...but appointive positions anchored on representation should be done within the ambits of [the federal character principle based on indigeneship].
- v. Local Governments should only issue Indigene Certificates to indigenes of the respective Local Governments in Plateau State, as defined by the Conference.
- vii. Other Nigerians who may be non-indigenes in a place of residence should be issued with Residence Certificates backed by an enabling law.
- viii. The Federal Government should include [a] definition of an indigene in the Constitution.... Such a definition should be mindful of minority rights...as well as consistent with the principles [of federal character].
- ix. Non-indigenes should desist from making frivolous demands on issues that are not their heritage, but the exclusive preserve of the indigenes, notably traditional rulership and traditional rites of indigenous communities.
- x. To allow for effective integration, assimilation and development, indigenes are not to discriminate against other Nigerian citizens, but should embrace them.

Not satisfied with this outcome, the Jasawa delegates to the Plateau Peace Conference refused to sign the conference report, as did the representatives of JNI. The only concession they seemed to have gotten was the acknowledgement that every citizen has the right to contest for any elective position (Ostien, 2009).

Notably, while the Plateau Peace Conference was still in progress, state of emergency was declared on Tuesday, May 18, 2004 on the ground that the Jos crisis constitute threats to law and order, the security of Plateau State and the neighbouring states, and the unity of Nigeria in general (FRN, 2004). Having exhausted all possible avenues to help the state government ensure security of lives and property, and cognisant of the inability and incompetence of the Governor to maintain security of lives and property in the state and particularly in Jos, Plateau State, there was no alternative than to resort to the last constitutional option to ensure peace and security in Plateau State (Obasanjo, 2004; Agba and Abimaje, 2011). Consequently, by the virtue of section 305 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999), a state of emergency was declared in Plateau State. By the declaration:

1. The Governor and his Deputy were suspended and relieved of their executive duties in Plateau State.
2. A retired General, Chris Ali was appointed as an administrator to manage the affairs of Plateau State.
3. The Plateau State House of Assembly was also suspended as the formal legislative body of the state on the contention that having a State Assembly under emergency rule is incongruous and may not allow for the expeditious actions that the administrator will need to put back the state back into a situation of peace, harmony, security for all, and maintenance of law and order throughout the state.
4. Elected officials below the state level were not suspended.
5. It is hoped that the administrator will not need new laws for the administration of the state. But if he does, it will be in the form of regulations, which he will submit to the President for consideration by the Federal Executive Council and promulgated by the president for the state.

Essentially, the magnitude of the crisis situation in Jos constituted sufficient threats to public law and order for emergency rule to be declared, but it was not worthwhile for two main reasons: first, other crisis resolution strategies had not been exhausted as to resort to the last option. This is because mediation processes (the Plateau State Peace Conference and dialogue by government officials/politicians, as well as Christian-Muslim Dialogue for Peace in Plateau) were still in progress when the emergency rule was declared thereby truncating the efforts (Kuka, 2004). Second, the crisis is organic and historical, as such, cannot be resolved through repressive means like the emergency rule strategy (Dokun, 2005; Kukah, 2004). Furthermore, the emergency rule declared on Plateau State was criticised for not meeting the demands of the principles of legality and proportionality.

In terms of legality, the constitutionality of the emergency rule is questionable because the constitution does not empower the president to suspend the constitutional organs of the government (of Plateau State) by mere executive instrument as that constitutes a subversion of the federal system (Nwabueze, 2004; Adudu, 2004). Importantly, the clause “extra ordinary measures” was ambiguously misinterpreted and misapplied to justify the former president’s arbitrary actions whereas it refers to the denial of some non-derogable rights (Nwabueze, 2004). The state of emergency declared was therefore rather seen as a ploy by the former president to settle political scores. The principle of proportionality also did not apply in state of emergency declared because only Yelwa, Langtang and Wase local government areas of Plateau State were affected in the 2004 crisis, whereas a blanket invocation of the rule was made to cover the whole of the State (Odiaka et al, 2004). Other arguments advanced against the emergency rule in the Jos crisis is that it eroded the people’s confidence in the ability of civil authorities to resolve such crisis and may inadvertently

become an invitation to undemocratic forces to again intervene in the nation's politics (Otuchikere and Abimaje, 2010).

Based on the aforementioned reasons, the emergency rule could not resolve the Jos crisis and may not be capable of resolving similar crises that are organic and historical in nature because they deal with issues and interests that are scarcely negotiable. Expectedly, while the emergency rule was able to enforce momentary stoppage of the crisis in the affected areas, it clearly could not bring a permanent solution to the problem.

The 2008 Jos Crisis and Abisoye vs Ajibola Panels of Inquiry

The November 2008 Jos crisis was partly attributed to political factors, religious variables and economic reasons (Gwamna and Amango, 2010). The crisis began after a state-wide local government council elections. It was while awaiting the announcement of results that trouble broke out at the collation centre which had been moved to Kabong outside the headquarters of Jos North local government council earlier opposed by the Jasawa in Jos (Gwamna and Amango, 2010). The crisis lasted four days within which several lives and property were lost.

In view of this, the federal government set up a presidential panel of inquiry headed by retired Maj. Gen. Emmanuel Abisoye to investigate the crisis; but the panel was engulfed in controversy as the Plateau State Government insisted on setting up its own panel headed by Justice Prince Bola Ajibola. In other words, there was intergovernmental strife over which panel was properly constituted to investigate the crisis and make reports. Meanwhile, The Ajibola led gubernatorial panel sat and submitted its reports towards the end of 2009 shortly before another crisis on 17th January 2010 while the Abisoye led presidential panel had not. The Ajibola-led gubernatorial panel upheld the Plateau Peace Conference report of 2004, the Niki Tobi led commission report of 2001 and the Fiberesima Commission report of 1994 (Ostien, 2009). Thus, the Bola Ajibola Commission made the following recommendations:

1. *Land Ownership:* Government should address illegal land acquisition and mapping out of slums.
2. *Security:* (a) There should be security around recognised flashpoints; (b) there should be relocation and provision of improved security at Bauchi Road Motor Park; (c) Provision of emergency response outfits and enforcement of regulation; (d) investigate the allegations against the armed forces of excessive use of deadly force, extra-judicial killings and dereliction of duty; (e) check illegal migration of aliens and mercenaries.
3. *Politics and Reconciliation:* (a) Government should set up a reconciliation commission to allow adversaries meet and resolve their differences; (b) those who embrace reconciliation may be granted amnesty from criminal prosecution; (c) there should be publication of previous reports of commissions, issuance of government white papers on the reports as well as gazetting of same; (d) putting into motion an implementation committee that will look at means of implementing previous and current reports; (e) government should relocate slum marjets such as Katako, Kasuwa and Nama to safer locations, which should not be delineated along the lines of apparently belonging to any given ethnic grouping; (f) market stall allocation should reflect the religion and ethnic spread and should not be predominated by any particular group... [if done] this way, whole market will not be ready targets because it belongs to a particular ethnic group.
4. *Religious Issues:* (a) Outlaw any anti-social religious acts of using loudspeakers, road blockages and indiscriminate development of churches and mosques within residential areas; (b) ban blocking of streets during worship and enforce this.
5. *Jos Local Government:* (a) State government should pursue re-delineation of electoral wards according to guiding criteria and based on population figures within the area; (b) evidence before the commission leads to the inevitable conclusion that the ward

delineation within Jos North local government area allowed fewer registered Hausa/Fulani voters to have more wards.

6. *Treatment of Suspects:* Persons named as being involved in alleged criminal acts should be investigated and prosecuted.
7. *Compensation:* (a) Government should set up a compensation scheme to alleviate the sufferings of victims by paying compensation if not in whole at least in part; (b) Government should seek support from the Federal government in this respect (*Tell* March 21, 2011: insert page??????).

The 2010 Jos Crisis and the Lar-Kwande Presidential Committee

The Jos crisis of 17th January 2010 began two weeks after the Abisoye Presidential Committee started sitting at the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPS) in Kuru, Jos. There are three versions of the immediate causes: (i) that one Alhaji Mohammed had gone to Nasarawa Gwon to reconstruct his house demolished in the 2008 crisis. He had mobilized youths to assist him with the work at the site. Some other youths came and stoned them to stop work. The efforts of soldiers keeping watch over the security area failed. (ii) that it was a group of Muslim youths who stormed St. Michael's Catholic church in Nasarawa Gwon while the church service was on and unleashed terror on members of the congregation. This version was conveyed by the police commissioner, Mr Greg Anyating. (iii) that violence developed from a minor argument among Christian and Muslim youths in a local football match on Saturday, 16th January, 2010. The arguments and name-calling continued till the next day and degenerated into a major religious crisis.

These isolated disagreements in Nasarawa area launched Jos into major crisis that later spread to Bauchi, Kano, Kaduna, Nasarawa and Gombe states (Gwamna and Amango, 2010); while other states of Ondo, Oyo, Benue and Nasarawa sent buses to transport their students and other citizens to their home states. The number of casualties were estimated at 326-362; while 150 dead bodies were pulled from a village well at Kuru Karama, and 8000 refugees in Toro local government area of Bauchi (The Nation, Jan. 24, 2010:8; The Nation, Feb. 6, 2010:51). Consequently, a presidential committee co-chaired (because of Jasawa allegations of Christian dominance in previous mediatory bodies) by Chief Solomon Lar and Alhaji Kwande was set up to look into the causes of the crisis and proffer solutions towards averting future occurrence. However, the Christmas Eve bombings by Islamic extremists touched off tit-for-tat violence that killed more than 200 people in Plateau state. Nevertheless, the Lar-Kwande Commission made the following recommendations:

1. *Land Ownership:* (a) Committee observed that previous reports ascribed ownership of Jos to the native tribes of Afizere, Anaguta and Berom but the Hausa community challenged it in court; (b) Committee recommends that government should set up a forum for continued consultation and dialogue to promote accommodation, mutual respect and rights of citizens as well as allay fears.
2. *Politics and Reconciliation:* (a) Federal Government and the National Assembly should expedite action to give practical effect to the constitutional provision regarding citizenship rights and indigenship; (b) pending the constitutional amendment, the extant policy approved by the Plateau State government should be enforced; (c) a committee of government and stakeholders should be put in place to examine recommendations contained in the past reports with a view to determine their relevance especially in the interest of promoting the peace process; (d) establishment of a truth and reconciliation commission, which will provide an avenue to re-enforce the peace process in Plateau State; (e) constitute a joint implementation monitoring committee comprising representatives of Federal, State and Local governments as well as relevant stakeholders in Jos.
3. *Religious Issues:* There is need to organise and promote inter-religious education and establish a religious code in order to regulate religious activities and practices.

4. *Jos Local Government:* The creation of Jos North local government should be revisited by the Federal government in consultation with the relevant stakeholders and communities to create additional local governments and electoral wards taking into cognizance the tradition, geographical contiguity and affinity of the areas (Tell Magazile, March 21, 2011: Page??????).

The Jos crisis is said to persist because the recommendations of the various mediatory bodies were not implemented; as a result, the conflicting ethno-religious groups committed themselves to rationalising vengeance for losses suffered in the past which have not been addressed. The conditions under which crisis occurs and persists as identified by Wilkinson (1977) manifested in the case of Jos: the indigenes foresaw that their rights and liberties were threatened with the creation of Jos North local government area against their wish in 1991; in the event of the crisis that ensued, neither the state nor the federal governments at the time showed enough commitment to resolve the crisis given that none of the recommendations of the high-powered commissions of inquiry ever since the crisis began in 1994 has been implemented (Niki Tobi Commission, 2001; Kukah, 2004; Plateau Peace Conference Report, 2004; Osaghae and Suberu, 2005; Ostien, 2009; Nkanga, 2011; Tell, 2011). The increased intensity of Jos crisis gravely affected the non-indigenes such as the Igbos, Yorubas, Urhobos etc as shown in the table below:

Jos: Human and Material Losses by Non-Indigenes (1994-2011)

Non-Indigene	Number of persons Killed	Value of Material Losses
South-West (Yoruba)	630	N450 billion
South-East (Igbo)	604	N410 billion
South-South	430	N110 billion
Total	1,664	N970 billion

Source: Smart Irabor, Spokesman of Coalition of People from South-East, South-West and South-South resident in Jos; in *Tell, March 21, 2011; p.53*

These losses compelled the respective state governments to repatriate their indigenes for safety while in some states like Kano, Muslims resorted to vengeance against the Christian non-indigenes while the Christians saw it as a direct affront on their faith. Due to the huge losses in human and material resources that cannot be atoned for, and the failure of the government to address the crisis, the indigenes and Jasawa settlers resorted to attacks and counter-attacks in retaliation, and to protect its members. Hence, as the ethno-religious groups took up arms against one another, it provided basis for cyclical future retaliations and reprisals. Consequently, the indigenes (Afizere, Anaguta and Berom) and the Jasawa settlers faced interminable and infinitely repetitive process of vengeance in atonement of their losses in previous crisis.

Bayari (2011) substantiated this submission when he noted that the recent mishap was caused by failure of both the Plateau State Government and the Presidential Committee on Jos Crisis to clearly address the losses of the Fulanis in the past crises. According to him, had it been that each of the aggrieved ethnic groups enjoyed full protection and rights of participation in a democratic state, and their enjoyment of these rights are not attacked by either the state, its agencies or rival groups, the crisis could not have persisted because there is no justification for it. Meanwhile, the struggle for political representation became instrumental to advancing, protecting and preserving the interests, rights and privileges of the advantaged ethno-religious group at the expense of others.

Essentially, the factors which militated against the implementation of the published recommendations to resolve the Jos crisis included: controversies over the credibility of the mediatory bodies and resolution processes (Otuchikere and Abimaje, 2010; Ostien, 2009); sabotage and partisan roles by some security agents (Idegu, 2011; HART, 2011; Katung, 2011); external influences and supports through mercenaries (Tell, 2011; Sani, 2007; Global IDP, 2005), and elite manipulations for selfish gains (Sani, 2007; Otuchikere and Abimaje, 2010).

In view of the fact that the indigenes and the Jasawa have not collectively accepted the outcomes of the mediation processes partly because they were more or less government-imposed and they felt alienated, there is need to incorporate the mediation techniques that are indigenous to the communities. It is believed that the incorporation of the indigenous mediation techniques which had helped to maintain peaceful co-existence among the people prior to this period of crisis will go a long way in resolving the current crisis that appears insoluble (Gwom, 1992). This entails the use of council of elders, traditional rulers, and religious leaders who have been the basis by which judgement were carried out and law and order maintained in addition to the fact that they know their people, customs, traditions and cultures better. Thus, this option implies:

- (a) Setting up decentralised internal peace committees to mediate over disputes arising in their assigned areas and report any unusual development. The peace committee members who should be held responsible for any crisis arising in their areas should include the paramount rulers, religious leaders, land officials and chairmen of local government councils.
- (b) Setting up another central mediatory body independent of both the State and Federal governments, and charged with the responsibility of implementing previous recommendations, receiving reports from the internal peace committees, investigating such reports, and prosecuting the culprits.
- (c) This central mediatory body and the internal peace committees shall collectively map out, chart, and delineate Plateau State into “crisis flash-points areas” for easy identification, recognition and quick responses.
- (d) The internal peace committees shall harmonise, monitor, and report when necessary, all the activities overlapping one area to another.
- (e) The communities residing at the border areas must be made to know the boundary areas which are exclusively the responsibility and possession of the traditional rulers, as well as the jurisdiction of local government council leaders.

In all, the causes of the Jos crisis as identified in *Tell* (March 21, 2011) include the following:

- (i) Ownership of Jos;
- (ii) Indigeneship of Jos;
- (iii) Efforts at islamisation;
- (iv) Delimitation of electoral wards;
- (v) Blockage of roads during worship;
- (vi) Indiscriminate use of Loud speakers;
- (vii) Fulanis trespassing on Farmlands;
- (viii) Alleged discrimination against Muslims by government; and
- (ix) Non-implementation of previous reports.

Summary and Conclusion

Generally, based on the foregoing expositions, it is observable that:

1. The remote cause of the crisis has remained the same, and it is traceable to the indigene-settler dichotomy and supremacy contest (the ethno-religious groups claim superiority over each other).
2. The immediate causes of the crisis varied from economic, political, and religious factors at the different times.
3. The recommendations of the various mediatory bodies (commissions, committees, panels, Peace summits and conferences) have not been implemented by the governments.
4. Subsequent crisis in Jos could have been avoided if the government had implemented the recommendations of the preceding commissions, committees, and panels of inquiries.

5. State of emergency rule cannot resolve an organic and historical crisis of this nature except the remote causes are addressed; it can only suppress it only to resurge later.
6. The Mediation Strategy may not be regarded as ineffective given that the various mediatory bodies confirmed and attested that if the earlier reports and recommendations had been implemented, the succeeding crisis would not have occurred or at least the intensity could have reduced. Thus, it is still a reliable alternative to resolving the Jos crisis.

One could rightly submit that the Jos crisis persisted over the years despite all efforts to resolve it because attempts by the Jasawa people to realise their expectations of being accepted as “co-owners” of Jos in order to access the desired economic resources and opportunities are constantly resisted by the indigenes. Importantly, the objects of the conflict (economic needs, identity needs, and political needs) sought by the Jasawa people are core values that are scarcely negotiable on the part of the indigenes. Hence, if the indigenes and the Jasawa people continue to maintain their extreme positions without concessions, the crisis may still persist with growing intensity. Nevertheless, the intensity and effects of the crisis can be minimised to enhance sustainable peace in Plateau state by reviewing and implementing the recommendations of the various reports of past mediatory bodies. Although this may not completely end the crisis, it will largely minimise the discontents arising from the attendant relative deprivations.

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