

# **NIGERIAN MASSES BEWARE!**



**Nigerian Masses Should Beware Of  
Ethnic, Religious, Political And Other  
Leaders Who Trigger Conflicts And  
Escape; Leaving The Masses To Be  
Killed, Maimed, Or Arrested**

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# **NIGERIAN MASSES BEWARE!**

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**WHO ARE THE VICTIMS IN THE PICTURES  
THAT FOLLOW IN THE NEXT PAGES?**

**THE MASSES OR THE ELITES WHO  
HIDE IN THEIR SUPER MANSIONS?**





**Who go on rampage and killing spree?**



**Whose dead bodies litter the streets?**



**Who get killed and get buried in mass graves?**



**Who get maimed and lose their limbs?**





**Who are left regretting the loss of loved ones?**



**Who are left in agony?**



**Whose properties get destroyed?**



**Whose children end up as destitutes in IDP camps?**





## Who are in the streets shouting the loss of loved ones?



## Who are left in internally displaced persons' camps?





**Who end up being arrested by security agencies?**



**Who are widowed and whose children are orphaned?**



**Who end up being admitted in hospitals?**



**Whose children get injured and malnourished?**





## **Part One**

### **HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES TO CONFLICTS AFFECTING THE MASSES IN NIGERIA**

Hundreds of years ago, there were inter-communal wars in this part of the World. The “benefits” were territorial expansion of Kingdoms, acquisition of slaves and seizure of the properties of the defeated foes. Commoners were taken as booties and sold into slavery locally and in far away European, American, Asian and Arabian Lands.

Around the year 1450 AD, the Portuguese introduced the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade carrying slaves from the West African Coasts to Europe and the Americas. Later on, slaves were carried via the Indian Ocean to Asia, via the Red Sea to Arabia and via the Saharan Desert to North Africa. That internationalised the Slave Trade which fully developed as a regular system of trade in about 1625 AD.

In the book, “A History Of Africa”, by J.D. Fage and William Tordoff, it was stated that between 1451 and 1870 AD, about 11,641,000 male and female slaves were taken from West Africa via the Atlantic route, about 2,065,000 via the Trans-Saharan route and about 1,320,000 via the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea routes to many parts of the World.

That made up a total of about 15,026,000 male and female slaves at a time when the whole of Africa had, as at 1800 AD, an estimated population of only 90 million people (R. Cameron 1993, P.193). The British Parliament passed a Law that abolished slave trade in 1807. The British Government then influenced other European and American countries to do the same.

Despite that abolition, slave trade thrived in West Africa for almost another 100 years, as it did not officially come to an end until the early 1900s. Commoners were the victims of that slave trade, as the medieval Kings and the “nobles” were the “Slaves Merchants”, therefore they and their families were safe!

Slave trade brought Europeans into contact with the prosperous “black” or “dark” continent of Africa, as they called the area. The agricultural and mineral resources potentials of the continent were robust and the Europeans felt that they had now found cheap sources of raw materials for their home industries. Therefore slave trade was replaced with agricultural and mineral resources trade, but on terms that grossly favoured Europe.

As that imbalanced resources trade was going on, the idea of colonialism cropped up. A conference was held in Berlin, Germany, at the end of 1894, and the beginning of 1895, where Africa and some parts of Asia were shared amongst British, French, German, Portuguese and Spanish colonialists. Those “super powers” arbitrarily created “countries” as it suited them out of African and Asian Kingdoms, Empires and Caliphates.

The creation of countries under colonialism did not take cognisance of cultural and religious diversities of the amalgamated “protectorates” and “colonies”. For instance, Nigeria was created by the amalgamation of the Northern Protectorate, the Southern Protectorate and the Lagos Colony in 1914. What the British called the “North” was inhabited mainly by Muslims of Sokoto and Borno Caliphates. The “East” was mainly inhabited by Christians and African Traditional Religionists of Igbo and Benin Kingdoms. Muslims, Christians and African Traditional Religionists inhabited the “West” and the Lagos Colony.



In addition, the North was largely made up of Hausa, Fulani and Kanuri ethnic nationalities while the South was largely made up of Yoruba, Igbo and Bini ethnic groups. The Nigerian case clearly showed that a formula that did not recognise cultural and religious diversities was applied on Africa during the 1894/95 Berlin Conference. Therefore the seeds of ethnic and religious discords that bear fruits today were sown by colonialists over a century ago in Berlin. But that was not an excuse for Nigerians (or other Africans for that matter) to continue killing themselves in the name of ethnic or religious conflicts. Allah-God has destined that the various ethnic and religious nationalities involved must live together!

## **Part Two**

### **TYPES OF RELIGIOUS CONFLICTS IN NIGERIA**

Religious conflicts are generally of two types. The first is between fundamentalists and orthodox members of the same religion (intra-religious conflicts). The other is that between members of one religion and another (inter-religious conflicts). Each of these conflicts has devastating effects on the peace and tranquillity of any community or nation. Four classes of religious conflicts could be identified in Nigeria as follows:-

1. Muslims vs. Muslims
2. Muslims vs. Christians
3. Christians vs. Christians
4. Muslims or Christians vs. Traditional Religionists

A few examples extracted from Agi (1998), Otite and Albert (2001) and Lugga (2007), will suffice to illustrate the classification of the conflicts from Islamic, Christian and Traditional Religious perspectives as follows:-

1. One Prophet Garick Braide, a CMS convert led some people to destroy traditional Igbo religious images in Enugu, Eastern Region of Nigeria, resulting in a deadly crisis. The CMS Church disclaimed him in 1916 which allowed the Colonial Government to imprison him.
2. In the 1950s, Muslims in the Western Region of Nigeria accused Chief Obafemi Awolowo's Action Group (AG) Party as being anti-Islamic. They therefore floated the National Muslim League in 1957 to counter the AG. A serious crisis with loss of lives and properties ensued, but was contained.
3. In 1972, there was a serious confrontation between members of the Brotherhood of the Cross and the Star and the Apostolic Church in Calabar, Eastern Nigeria. The Brotherhood alleged that some members of the Apostolic Church were cannibals who caused most of the fatal road accidents in the area. The government had to ban open air preaching for some time in the area due to the crisis that was consuming lives.
4. There were the Maitatsine Sect riots of the 1980s that was led by one Mohammed Marwa against Muslims, with resultant deaths of over 6,000 people and the destruction of billions of Naira worth of properties in Kano and Kaduna States.
5. Another conflict in Kano State was the 1982 Fagge crisis involving Muslims and Christians over the construction of a Christian place of worship. Several lives were lost in the crisis.
6. There was the Reinhard Bonke riot of 1991 in Kano, in which Muslims were against his coming to the city for a Christian Crusade. Many Christians and Muslims lost their lives in that unfortunate riot.



7. There was the Akaluka incident of 1994 in Kano, in which an Igbo man (Mr Akaluka) was beheaded by Muslim fundamentalists for desecrating the Glorious Qur'an, even though he was in the custody of the Police at that time.
8. Another incidence was the Shiite fundamentalists' attacks on Muslims in 1996, 1997 and 1998, in Kano, Kaduna and Katsina States respectively.
9. Some recorded Christian/Christian conflicts included the 1985 Roman Catholic versus the Assemblies of God conflict in Ifumkpa village of Akamkpa Local Government of Cross River State. There was also the 1990 internal crisis of the Catholic Diocese of Port Harcourt, Rivers State; and the 1992 Lutheran Church crisis in Akwa Ibom State. In 1996, there was the Celestial Church of Christ fracas in Enugu and the Sabbath Mission conflict in Onitsha. Several lives were lost in those crises.
10. Several conflicts had been recorded in the Southern parts of Nigeria between adherents of Christianity and African Traditional Religions (ATR). Some examples:-
  - (1) 1879 ATR/Christian "war" in Nembe capital of Brass Kingdom.
  - (2) 1898, 1902, 1904 ATR/Roman Catholic crisis in the Onitsha area.
  - (3) 1925-1930 ATR/Christian conflicts in Igboland, Eastern Nigeria.
  - (4) 1974 ATR burning of the Messiah African Church in Ohafia.
  - (5) 1987 ATR/Catholic crisis in Igbo Etiti, Enugu State.
  - (6) 1990 ATR/Jehovah Witness conflict in Arochukwu, Abia State.

- (7) 1992 ATR/Christ Saints Gospel Church crisis in Oguta, Imo State.
- (8) 1995 ATR/Christians conflict in Afikpo, Abia State.
- (9) 1996 ATR/Catholic crisis in Udi, Enugu State.

In Northern Nigeria, the vast majority of the populace are of the Hausa, Fulani or Kanuri ethnic nationalities and nearly all of them are Muslims. Those in the minority middle-belt of Northern Nigeria are of very many small ethnic nationalities and mainly belonging to the Christian Faith.

South-Western Nigeria is mainly inhabited by the Yoruba ethnic group with many of them being Muslims and several others being Christians.

South-Eastern Nigerians are mainly of the Igbo ethnic nationality and of the Christian Faith. Similar to the North, the Southern middle-belt is inhabited by very many small ethnic nationalities professing the Christian Faith. African Traditional Religion (ATR) followers could be found in small pockets all over the country, but with more concentration in the two middle-belts of the North and the South.

It is significant to note that Nigeria's ethnic and religious complexity had led to every conflict in Nigeria being attributed to either religion or ethnicity or both. Even purely political or economic conflicts were sometimes hinged on religion or ethnicity.

The recurring Jos in Plateau State conflicts, for example, had been generally labelled as ethnic or religious or a combination of both, while they were essentially socio-economic and sometimes political.



### **Part Three**

#### **THE EMERGENCE OF POLITICAL, ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS CONFLICTS IN NIGERIA**

The activities of British Christian missions in the non-Muslim communities in the Emirates of Northern Nigeria during the colonial period facilitated the establishment of inter-ethnic relations among the non-Muslim communities based on the Christian Faith thereby giving them a new identity distinct from that of their Muslim neighbours. That development created some measure of religious conflicts between the Muslim and the non-Muslim persons, thereby polarising the people of Northern Nigeria, to some extent, along religious lines (Adamu, 1976).

Despite the efforts of the First Republic Northern Nigerian Government led by the Sardauna of Sokoto, Alhaji Sir Ahmadu Bello, to insulate governance from being poisoned by ethnic and religious rivalries, some minority political parties introduced religious and ethnic division into politics.

Therefore, the grievances fuelled by colonialists that poisoned the relationship between Northern ethnic groups were further compounded by the activities of political parties in the 1960s. A typical conflict that ensued as a result of the political parties' whipping-up ethno-religious sentiments was the riots in Tivland in 1964. That pattern of inter ethnic-religious conflicts continued well into the post independence period.

The overthrow of the First Republic civilian government by the Nigerian Army in January 1966, and the banning of political parties, arrested the politically motivated conflicts in Nigeria, except those that came on the wake of the sectarian violence as a result of the coup-de-tat.

The outbreak of the Nigerian Civil War in July 1967, and the patriotic feeling that it whipped up against the secessionists, coupled with the subsequent flexibility of the military government under General Yakubu Gowon who invited many of the First Republic political leaders to join it, reduced socio-religious-political tension. With the end of the civil war in 1970, national attention was focused on the Triple “R”- Reconciliation, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction.

The overthrow of the Gowon regime in July 1975 by General Murtala Mohamed and the latter’s assassination in February 1976 created a serious tension in Nigeria. That was because the two events, particularly the assassination of General Murtala Mohamed, were given ethno-religious interpretation in some parts of the country.

The early 1980s, up to the late 1990s, saw a great deal of upheavals. Those two decades witnessed the flaring up of ethnic and religious conflicts in an unprecedented manner, both in terms of their frequency and their ferocity.

Then Nigeria witnessed the most devastating attack on her economy with the Niger Delta militancy vandalising the nation’s main foreign exchange earner - crude oil. Nigeria depended almost 80% on oil to derive her economy; and at one point in 2015, Nigeria’s oil production was brought down from 2.2 to 0.8 million barrels per day as a result of the Niger Delta militancy that had an ethno/political toga.

A most devastating religious crisis emerged as Boko Haram insurgency led to the death of over 100,000 people, the displacement of over 2.5 million others and the destruction of properties worth over N4.6 trillion.



## **Part Four**

### **THE MENACE OF POLITICAL, ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS CONFLICTS IN NIGERIA**

A pluralistic society like Nigeria is bound to experience one form of conflict or another due to her heterogeneity with competing interests struggling for resources of various descriptions. However, this is not an excuse for the rising wave of insecurity and violent conflicts. For example, the first one year of the Obasanjo civilian administration (May 1999 to May 2000) witnessed twelve major violent conflicts with resultant losses of over 1,466 lives and the destruction of billions of Naira worth of properties. Those 12 major conflicts were:-

1. On the day of the swearing in of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo (29th May 1999) the Itsekiri and the Ijaw of Delta State clashed over the location of a local government headquarter and left over 200 people dead.
2. The Yoruba attacked the Hausa in Shagamu, Ogun State as a result of a Yoruba cult activity on 18th July 1999. Over 60 lives were reportedly lost.
3. As a spill over of the Shagamu crisis, the Yoruba were attacked severely in Kano on 22nd July 1999 with a resultant loss of over 70 lives.
4. Several people lost their lives during a clash over land matters between the tribes of the Ijaw and the Ilaje in Ondo State on 5th August 1999.
5. It was reported that over 200 lives were lost when the Chamba and the Kuteb of Taraba State clashed in August 1999.
6. The Oodua group was believed to be responsible for an attack on “settlers” at the Lagos Apapa Port on 9th September 1999 where 16 people were killed.

7. A fight over a piece of land between the Okrika and the Eleme people of Rivers State left 30 people dead on 4th October 1999.
8. The Nigerian Army was alleged to have killed over 60 people at Odi village on 21st November 1999 as a revenge for the alleged murder of 12 policemen by the local residents.
9. A conflict over market stalls between Yoruba and Hausa in Lagos claimed over 100 lives in November 1999.
10. The New Year opened with violent and bloody clashes between Christians and Muslims in Kaduna City on 21st February 2000. Many lives were reportedly lost.
11. The infamous Ife and Modakeke conflict reared its ugly head again and took away 30 lives on 27th February 2000.
12. The other infamous conflict in Nigeria, the Muslim and Christian clashes in Kaduna reoccurred on 20th May 2000 and claimed over 700 lives.

Since the return to civilian political rule in 1999, socio-politico-religious conflicts seem to be on the rise in Nigeria. Human Rights Watch website of May 16th 2011 reports on this phenomenon as follows:-

*“... More than 15,700 people have been killed in inter-communal, political, and sectarian violence since Nigeria returned to civilian rule in 1999. In Kaduna State, at least 2,000 people were killed in sectarian clashes in 2000 sparked by Christian protests against the proposed introduction of Shari’ah Law in the State. Two years later, sectarian violence sparked by Muslim protests linked to the Miss World beauty contest left some 250 people dead. The human cost of such violence has been particularly high in Plateau State, where it was estimated that more than 3,800 people have been killed in inter-communal and sectarian clashes since 2001, at least 1,000 of them in 2010 alone”.*

On the April 2011 post-presidential election violence, Human Rights Watch website of May 16th 2011 reports as follows:-

*“... Deadly election-related and communal violence in Northern Nigeria following the April 2011 presidential voting left more than 800 people dead. The victims were killed in three days of rioting in 12 Northern States. Nigeria's States and Federal Authorities should promptly investigate and prosecute those who orchestrated and carried out these crimes and address the root causes of recurring inter-communal violence. The violence began with widespread protests by supporters of the main opposition candidate, Muhammadu Buhari, a Northern Muslim from the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC), following the re-election of incumbent Goodluck Jonathan, a Christian from the Niger Delta in the South, who was the candidate for the ruling Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) ... Relief officials estimate that more than 65,000 people have been displaced”.*

Human Rights Watch further reports that, according to the Christian Association of Nigeria, the umbrella organisation representing the majority of Christian Churches in Nigeria, at least 170 Christians were killed in the post-election riots, hundreds more were injured, and thousands were displaced. The organisation also reported that more than 350 Churches were burnt or destroyed by the Muslim rioters across 10 Northern States. According to Muslim and Christian leaders interviewed by Human Rights Watch, in the predominately Christian towns and villages of Southern Kaduna State, including Zonkwa, Matsirga, and Kafanchan, the post-election clashes left more than 500 dead; with the vast majority of the victims in these areas being Muslims. Human Rights Watch estimated that in Northern Kaduna State, at least 180 people, and possibly more, were killed in the cities of Kaduna and Zaria and their surrounding suburbs. According to media reports and journalists interviewed by Human Rights Watch, dozens of people were also killed during riots in the other Northern States.



## **Part Five**

### **THE MONUMENTAL NIGERIAN INSECURITY**

The biggest threats to Nigeria's corporate existence today are conflicts of monumental dimensions. They include religious, ethnic, political, and communal conflicts. These conflicts have been heightened by the Boko Haram insurgency, Niger Delta militancy and livestock rustling. Some other challenges facing the Nation include political assassinations, kidnappings, oil bunkering, corruption, disregard for law and order, disregard for human lives and properties, armed robbery, electoral malpractices and a host of other ills. These security and allied challenges are making Nigeria to be utterly broken, gravely ill and speedily losing her status as an entity that is united in diversity and even threatening her corporate existence.

The last few years in Nigeria have witnessed an alarming spate of conflicts, insurgency, militancy and all forms of security challenges and human rights violations. As a result of various crises in Nigeria, over 40,000 killings were reported between 2011 and 2015 alone (Premium Times quoting US Council on Foreign Relations, Nigeria Security Tracker, May 2011 to September 2015). The North-East Recovery and Peace Building Assessment Team stated that public and private properties worth over \$9 billion (which at the current parallel market exchange rate is about 4.6 trillion Naira) were destroyed in the North-East between 2011 and 2015 (News Agency of Nigeria quoting Senior Special Assistant to the President on Internally Displaced Persons, Dr Mariam Masha, on 31st March, 2016). This figure is almost equal to the whole of the Nigeria's Federal Government budget of 4.65 trillion Naira for the year 2015!

Several Local Governments once fell to the insurgents where they declared the areas as their “Caliphate”. These happenings are beyond conflicts, they are a national catastrophe that has retarded the socio-economic development of the Nation thereby making poverty to be on the increase and life to become unbearable for the vast majority of Nigerians.

Without any iota of doubt, the Boko Haram insurgency had been the most devastating security challenge in Nigeria’s recent history. The Governor of the epicentre of the insurgency, Borno State, Alhaji Kashim Shettima, released grim statistics of deaths and material losses suffered due to the Boko Haram insurgency at the annual Murtala Mohammed memorial lecture held at Abuja on Monday, 13th February, 2017. The Governor stated that:

*“The Boko Haram insurgency has led to the deaths of almost 100,000 persons going by the estimates of our community leaders over the years. Two million, one hundred and fourteen thousand (2,114,000) persons have become Internally Displaced as at December 2016, with five hundred and thirty seven thousand, eight hundred and fifteen (537,815) in separate camps; 158,201 are at official camps that consists of six centres with two transit camps at Muna and Customs House, both in Maiduguri. There are 379,614 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) at 15 satellite camps comprising Ngala, Monguno, Bama, Banki, Pulka, Gwoza, Sabon Gari and other locations in the state. 73,404 persons were forced to become refugees in neighbouring countries with Niger Republic having 11,402 and the Republic of Cameroon having 62,002. We have an official record of 52,311 orphans who are separated and unaccompanied. We have 54,911 widows who have lost their husbands to the insurgency and 9,012 have returned back to Ngala, Monguno, Damboa, Gwoza, Dikwa”.*

## **Part Six**

### **WHO THEN, ARE THE VICTIMS?**

Ethnic, religious and political crises seem to be recurring decimals in Nigeria for several decades now. The constant increase in the rates of the conflicts and the astronomical rise in human casualties and material losses call for grave concern and action by the authorities and the citizenry. The Nigerian Nation and indeed all other Nations of the World cannot afford to watch the lives of their citizens and their properties being callously wasted due to all sorts of crises!

Between 1451 and 1870 AD, about 11,641,000 male and female slaves were taken from West Africa via the Atlantic route, about 2,065,000 via the Saharan route and about 1,320,000 via the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea routes to many parts of the World.

**Who made up that total of about 15,026,000 male and female slaves, the Medieval Kings and “nobles” or the ordinary citizens? Certainly, the ordinary citizens were the slaves!**

About 15,700 people have been killed in religious, ethnic and political violence between 1999 and 2011. For example, in Kaduna State, at least 2,000 people were killed in sectarian clashes in the year 2000 sparked by Christian protests against the proposed introduction of Shari’ah in the State. In Plateau State, more than 3,800 people have been killed in ethno/religious clashes in 2001. The April 2011 post-presidential election violence left more than 800 people dead and an estimated more than 65,000 displaced from their homes. Boko Haram insurgency resulted into over 100,000 deaths, over 2.5 million people displaced and over 4.6 trillion Naira worth of properties destroyed!



**Who were the victims in all those crises, the religious, ethnic and political leaders or the ordinary citizens? Certainly, the ordinary citizens were the victims!**

Since the escalation of religious, ethnic and political crises in Nigeria from the late 1970s to date, no President, or Governor, or Minister, or Senate President, or National Political Party Chairman, or Army General, or Inspector General of Police, or Multi-Billionaire Businessman, or persons of similar nomenclature and status, or any member of their families, has been killed in the ensuing crises!

**Who then were maimed or killed, arrested or persecuted by security agents? Certainly, the ordinary citizens were the victims!**

**Finally ... and most importantly:**

Nigerian Ordinary Citizens who are drafted as political thugs or religious and ethnic militia; should stop allowing themselves to be used as gunpowder.

Religious, ethnic and political leaders and elites normally trigger the conflicts from the comfort of their fortress homes and woo ordinary citizens into battle.

Those who get killed, maimed or arrested by security agents are the ordinary citizens, as the planner-leaders and elites and members of their families never take part in the actual “war”; therefore would never be victims!

In all cases, those leaders and elites who trigger conflicts always disappear to foreign lands with their family members using stolen money from public funds and “enjoy” themselves at the detriment of the “masses”!

**If those who trigger conflicts sincerely believe in what they are doing, let them answer the following questions:-**

- 1. Why do Imams and Pastors not come out, join and lead in religious conflicts?**
- 2. Why do Political Leaders not come out, join and lead in political conflicts?**
- 3. Why do Tribal Leaders not come out, join and lead in ethnic conflicts?**
- 4. Why do Leaders and Elites push Ordinary Nigerians and their children to the war-front and take themselves and their children away from the actual battlefields?**

**A Word Is Enough For The Wise!  
NIGERIAN MASSES BEWARE!**

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