

COMBATING INSECURITY IN EKITI: THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY AND TRADITIONAL INSTITUTION

The word 'Insecurity' in Nigeria today has become the only most recurring word in the sentences of Nigerians, whether spoken or written. The word gained its first usage popularity amidst the citizens following the emergence of Boko Haram terrorists and their attacks on public properties and Churches in late 2013 through to 2014. As a matter of fact, the word saw to the end of a federal administrative regime and the birthing of another, both of which have not been able to put an end its reign on the Nigerian lips.

The depth of insecurity in the country today has ushered the untimely end of thousands of life and livelihood, especially in the Northeastern part of the country. The diverse forms of insecurity are ravaging the country; job, business, self, legal and life, and has extensively produced an imbalanced psychosocial environment that is hostile to existence.

Life insecurity is of the greatest concern and interest in all the sectors, ministries and states of the federation, mostly resulting from communal clashes, kidnapping and terror attacks. Although in Ekiti State, according to a study ([Principal Component Analysis of Crime Rate in Nigeria: A case study of Ekiti and Osun State. Published by O. Faweya, A. Adediran and K. Balogun in 2018](#)), this is not the recurring scenario, instead, business insecurity (property thefts) and occult activities are on the rampage.

Irrespective of the type of insecurity domicile in a place, the threat to life is palpable and must be properly dealt with. Therefore, Ekiti State needs to look inwards for solutions and leverage whatever resources she has, including communities and traditional institutions.

THE ROLE OF COMMUNITIES

Communities in Ekiti state are the most well organized and confederated communities in Nigeria. They have functional and well respected community structures with age-long hierarchical strata. Each individual within the community is not alienated from the overall network of settlers in his/her residence or ancestry.

In order to ensure the maximization of this kind of community bond to fight insecurity, **public awareness via symposium or conferences** can be organized to educate and intimate the people on peace-building, peace-keeping patriotism, nationalism, the Might of the Law and its judgment for criminal acts, obstruction of justice, ‘jungle justice’ and so on.

Aside public education, the Government of Ekiti State can include community heads, including youth representatives, in its security panels or boards for the various senatorial districts and/or Local Government Areas they belong to. This will improve their sense of belonging and communicate inclusiveness in grassroots’ affairs.

Out of a highly educated, informed and included community, a cooperative society/community is born and security issues can be immediately dealt with, depending on the time of report of incidence to the appropriate authorities. This is true because the community has the sovereign ability to explain, describe or expose the origin/history of every individual.

The birth and childhood history, educational history, social history and psychological history of every individual can be dug up in his/her community of birth, residence or ancestry. Before the advent of advanced security technologies such as CCTV, DNA profiling and Forensics, every

crime/criminal can be sniffed out by deep dives into his/her suspected community of birth and childhood, residence or ancestry.

The question of the effectiveness of this kind of forensic approach cannot brood because it is written all over the history of mankind and included in the investigative processes/procedures of the Nigerian Police, Soldiers and so on, alongside some of the technological options mentioned above.

Information communities can provide in the fight against insecurity is impeccable, unparalleled and detailed. Therefore, every form of effort for **community inclusiveness** must be explored.

THE ROLE OF TRADITIONAL INSTITUTION

Traditional institutions in the Southwestern part of Nigeria is a glorious one which has amassed unchanged and ever-growing respect from all individuals in all works of life. The traditional leaders are included in educational chain of administration in federal schools as Chancellors, they play key roles in electoral processes within the communities they rule. **They have the undeniable and unprecedented loyalty of their subjects and can however advice, disprove, approve or improve their communities.**

This ancient establishment is laced with profound relevance in our technologically advanced societies. Kings and Queen make up some of the most sophisticated boards of administrators for advancement of various communities in Nigeria and abroad.

Having the traditional institute take on the communal challenges such as **dispute resolution, patrols, security of properties and individuals** and so on, the best way they can, will improve the overall security of the state.

Also, judicial surveillance and monitoring of the activities of the traditional rulers and ranks will help to keep them in a loop of effectiveness and accountability.

RECOMMENDATIONS

There are undeniable evidences of an effective security system if communities and traditional institutions are explored. These are some recommendations including those embedded within this document;

1. Public education via symposium, conferences or town hall meetings
2. Inter-community sports activities
3. Institution of security panels including community leaders/representatives
4. Establishment of security command posts/outposts in communities
5. Staging of security drills for security personnel within the communities
6. Routine patrols with local hunters
7. Establishment of community surveillance teams/spies
8. Establishment of security advisory which would include traditional heads
9. Provision of basic social amenities
10. Community border patrol/security system
11. Inter-community security-themed activities