Implication of Freezing of Bank Account and Labelling "Endsars" Protest Promoters as Terrorists in Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper examined the implications of the Federal Government and the Central Bank of Nigeria freezing the Bank Accounts and arresting the peaceful "EndSARS" promoters and even labelling them as terrorists. This draconian action taken by the government against its youthful population has riddled the Buhari led administration. A government that pampered terrorists and give them amnesty and on the other hand, peaceful protesters are declared terrorists. This paper aptly pointed out that what prompted the "EndSARS" protest was that the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) of the police had been a thorn in the flesh of many Nigerians, especially the youths. For years, the squad had engaged in the torture, intimidation, extortion and extra-judicial killings of innocent citizens. This reasons made Nigerian youths both at home and abroad to demand for the disbandment of SARS in a peaceful protest across the 36 States of the federation, especially in the Southern part of the country where the brutality of SARS was notorious. It was important to note that during the peaceful "EndSARS" protest, many Nigerians identified with the demands of the protesters. The Federal Government even granted most of their requests. The Inspector General of Police, Adamu Mohammed (2020) disbanded SARS and replaced it with Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Team. President Buhari (2020) posited that the youths had a right to protest peacefully. He invited them to a dialogue with the Federal Government and even recommended the opening of a judicial panel of inquiry across the 36 states of the federation to investigate the activity of SARS and police brutality and report to the federal government. It is surprising, amazing, astonishing and unexpected then that the same youths are being clamp-down and declared terrorists by the Buhari led administration. Meanwhile, the blackmailing of the

"EndSARS" protest started after some Northern leaders claimed the "EndSARS" protests were aimed at overthrowing the government of President Buhari. This opinion was wrong because peaceful protest is an aspect of democracy and fundamental human rights of every citizen. The study adopted the descriptive methodology. It drew upon primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include oral information and testimonies. Newspapers and magazines reports were also used in conjunction with records in government publications. Secondary sources include relevant books. The researcher also made use of direct observation method. All the information gathered were subjected to historical examination.

Keywords: "EndSARS" protest, freezing of accounts, terrorism tag, EndSARS promoters, and Nigerian youths.

Introduction

The story of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) declaring "EndSARS" promoters as terrorists and freezing their bank accounts is very disturbing, entangling and incrimination of the Buhari led administration. It is an undertone and insinuation that Nigerian youths are yet to enjoy the benefit of democracy dividend in the country. It was sad to note that the Central Bank of Nigeria had even frozen the account of "EndSARS" promoters before going to the Federal High Court, Abuja, to accuse them of terrorism financing. Meanwhile, the continued crackdown on the promoters of the peaceful protesters could spark off an uprising that would be more difficult to contain, control and check. It is sad to note that the Federal Government and the CBN as institution and armed of government had failed to identify and freeze account of sponsors of Boko Haram and other terrorists groups while finding it easy to go after the finances of peaceful EndSARS promoters. The Federal Government and the (CBN) only have strength against unarmed youths whereas they are begging Boko Haram for amnesty. When government oppress peaceful protesters like the "EndSARS" it may go underground, metamorphose and transfigure into a dreadful and fearful cult-like terrorist group. The state will find it awful and frightful to manage and control. To explain the genesis of Boko Haram insurgency in the North East, Yinka/Odumakin (2020) spoke man of Afenifere pointed out that "When Boko Haram started, they were just going about protesting until they killed their leader Mohammed Yusuf and then Boko Haram armed itself. The Federal Government are now begging Boko Haram for amnesty all over the place" in the drive to curb protest in Nigeria, the Federal Government need to learn from history lessons as history often repeat itself. It is for leaders and the ruling class to learn from historical mistakes, events and episodes. If the Federal Government make it clear to EndSARS protesters that they only have strength against unarmed Nigerian youths. In subsequent protests, they may not come bare hands. This is an early warning signal to prevent the peaceful "EndSARS" protests promoters not to go underground to confront the Federal Government and the security agencies.

Uche Achi Okpaga (2020) explained that the Federal Government was adopting a diversionary approach to the "EndSARS" protest and wondered why it was not investigating sponsors of the hoodlums that attacked the peaceful protesters. If the federal government continues this way, the implication is that, the second wave of EndSARS will come and it will be more devastating. Thus the Federal Government and the CBN should stop treating "EndSARS" protesters as terrorists, and dreadful youths. The federal government should not coerce, bully and oppress the peaceful protesters to go underground to become furious, uncouth, barbaric, vulgar and rude to the oppressive ruling class in Nigeria that have enslaved, impoverished and disempowered the youths for almost five decades.

To curb treating "EndSARS" protesters as terrorist in the recent history of Nigeria, spokesman of the Middle Belt Forum, Dogo Isuwa (2020) warn that, "the CBN is not a security agency and cannot, it should not call the "EndSARS" protesters terrorists. The CBN has not been able to find the sponsors of Boko Haram for such a long time. So, how have they been able to find out the sponsors of "EndSARS" sponsors within such a short time?" Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) describe those who are labelling promoters of "EndSARS" as terrorist should stop that. Thus CAN condemned the freezing of bank accounts and arrest of some "EndSARS" promoters. Also, serving overseer of the Citadel Global Community Church (CGCC), Pastor Tunde Bakare (2020) posit that Nigerians cannot afford to keep silent while youths face the same "beasts" those in his generation faced as undergraduates.

According to Bakare (2020) the youth of a nation are the trustees of prosperity. Bakare (2020) decried the backlash being meted out to some of the young Nigerians who participated in the "EndSARS" protests against police brutality. To curb the menace of peaceful "EndSARS" protesters the federal government should avoid deception, cock and bull story, falsehood, figment, frame up invention and lie; to embrace truth, authentic and accurate information as well as the correct details in a bid to calm the youths. .

Meanwhile, the influential New York based Human Rights Watch has condemned the ongoing crack down on EndSARS protesters, the freezing of bank accounts belonging to its alleged ring leaders and sponsors and fines imposed on three of the country's independent media. Thus, criticizing the action of the federal government and its agencies like the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Directorate of State Security (DSS) and National Broadcasting Commission (NBC), it warned that they amount to the abridgement of fundamental human rights on freedom of speech and association. The human rights organization which made its stance known in a press statement titled "Punitive financial

moves against protesters", called on the federal government to unblock the freeze accounts and to withdraw the fines imposed on Channels Television, Arise TV, and African Independent Television (AIT) for allegedly fueling the violent protest by airing unsubstantiated personal video recordings of the Lekki Shootings by military men.

In a press statement written by Saturday Sun Nov. 14, 2020:3, the human rights watch condemned Nigerian authorities use of financial coercive measures to suppress the protest stage against police brutality. According to Anietie Ewang (2020) a Nigerian researcher at Human Rights Watch "Any attempt to suppress legitimate protest and genuine calls for accountability by arbitrarily blocking funds would be a gross abuse of power." Infact, such action would indicate a wider problem of malfeasance and impunity that threaten democracy, human rights and fundamental freedom". (Ewang, 2020).

The Human Right Watch hinges its reactions on findings from (8) eight Nigerians participants in the protest, it claimed to have interviewed between October 23 and 27, 2020. While seven of them, including representatives of three organizations. It interviewed through telephone and secure messaging apps claimed that their accounts were frozen after receiving or disbursing funds related to the protests, the eight person, a protest organizer said that he and other organizers had received reports from over 10 vendors and donors confirming that their bank accounts were blocked after receiving or donating money to support the protest. The Human Right Watch (2020) noted that "those affected said the bank accounts were frozen without any prior notice or legal proceedings and in all cases banks staff had said that the restrictions were based on Central bank directives.

The Human Rights Watch listed the affected organizations and individuals to include: Feminist Coalition, a civil society group which allegedly received donations, N25 million (about US & 55.000), to support the protest through a fund set up by a Nigerian online payment processing company. Flutterwave and Adewumi Emoruwa of Gatefield, a Nigerian Public and Communication firm which provided financial support for Independent Journalists and Citizens to document the protests, through an existing initiative called Gatefield impact. The initiative, the statement noted, is aimed at supporting independent journalism in Nigeria. It stated: "As of October 15,2020, Gatefield had disbursed funds to 23 Journalists and sent airtime for phone internet access to about 100 people documenting the protest out of a total of about 30 journalists and 260 other people it planned to support.

The Implications and Dangers of Freezing of Bank Account, Arresting and Terrorism Tag on the EndSARS Peaceful Protesters in contemporary Nigeria

The EndSARS protest at the beginning was well coordinated by Nigerian youths. It was the government that mismanaged the protest when hoodlums were deployed by the state to hijack the peaceful "EndSARS" protest. In order to give the promoters of the protest a bad image and name. The "EndSARS" demonstration have remained peaceful across the country in spite of the provocations in some places. The EndSARS demonstrations were reflections of discontent over the state of affairs in Nigeria as the trust gab between the youths and the government was at its worst position.

The threat of the government and the Central Bank of Nigeria freezing accounts, arresting and labelling the "EndSARS" protester as terrorism means that the federal government do not want a Nigeria that is peaceful; a Nigeria whose youths are progressive. The idea of tagging the EndSARS protesters terrorists makes the Nigerian youths an enemy of the state. No Nigerian youths need to leave in a terrorized society. This is also true for every father and mother with children. The role of government is to protect lives and property citizens. Not to terrorize and oppressed them over their legitimate rights. The "EndSARS" protest was for the good of every Nigerian, it was the awakening for every Nigerian leader to do the right thing, to think of the wider good of the Nigerian people and to realize that a trouble country will born through every barrier of class, tribe and religion.

The act of freezing accounts of EndSARS protesters is sadly and it point to the government that the system has deprived Nigerian youths the voice to express discontent in a civil manner, and this instigate the drive for dictatorship in a democratic Nigeria. The EndSARS protest was also good to police officers who are mostly poorly paid, poorly trained, and poorly motivated. The "EndSARS" protests put forward the demand for reform of the Nigeria police force with increase in salary, modern training, and reward motivation to service delivery to protect lives and property of the citizenry. The "EndSARS" protest by the Nigerian youths was to ensure also a well-funded, well equipped and highly professional Nigeria police force in line with international best practices. The overall objective of the protest against police brutality was aimed to reform policing architecture in order to deepen the country's internal security. Above all the "EndSARS" protest was designed to curb police brutality, extortion, intimidation, torture and extra-judicial killings of Nigerians, especially the youths.

Just like the EndSARS protest was mismanaged, the government also mismanaged the post – EndSARS project by freezing the accounts of organizers of the protest and tagging them terrorists. The danger was that it threaten peace building confidence between the youths and the state. Moreso, in the process of arresting, torturing and jailing the youths or forcing

them into exile, banishment and refugee will drive out and ostracize our brightest youthful population that would help develop the nation. Furthermore, labeling the EndSARS protesters as terrorists, while bandits, killer Fulani herdsmen and Boko Haram terrorists are pampered, coddled, high fed and spoilt, instead of punishing them was disturbing. Crackng down on the protesters was an abuse, neglect and lopsided ill treatment of the youthful population. The act was capable making good citizens to indulge into vices that the state abhors.

The original EndSARS protesters whom the Nigerian state were clamping down were largely peaceful, friendly, gentle, non-violence, unwarlike, and calm. They protested with the national flag "green, white, green" and sang the national anthem as a symbol of patriotism and love for Nigeria. And called for their leaders to address them; in order to curb the problem of "SARS" brutality and extra-judicial killings of the youths. Trouble started when statehired hoodlums hijacked the peaceful protest and turn it into destruction and looting of state and private properties across the federation. The original endSARS protest for the weeks they protested police brutality they were peaceful, they were coordinated, amongst themselves, they were enforcing discipline (Aguiyi, 2020).

The youths were exercising their democratic rights under section 40 of the 1999 Constitution, the demand of the EndSARS protester were justified, acceptable, allowable and explicable under a democratic rule; as the citizens have the legitimate right to protest what they feel is unlawful in the society.

In a democracy, it was lawful for the police to guide and maintain peace and order amongst the protesters so that hoodlum do not hijack the peaceful protest. But the government failed to do the proper thing to address the agitation of the protesters in the right time. There was delay on the part of the Buhari administration to address the EndSARS protesters. The demand of the EndSARS protesters were justifiable, valid and reasonable; even the president's daughter and the vice president's daughter reportedly endorsed the protest. Can we declare these kids were terrorists and terrorist's sympathizers and enablers? (Aguiyi, 2020).

During the peaceful "EndSARS" protest, Nigerians witness how things began to go awful, dreadful and hideous, the moment rival-state protesters were recruited and unleashed attacks on the peaceful protesters. For example, in in Apo, Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) over two hundred cars were razed down. Who did it and under whose supervision? Why is the state not investigating the Apo peaceful protest? Why are they hunting down perceived leaders of the peaceful protest, labelling them terrorists, arresting

and detaining them, freezing their accounts and forcing them to flee into exile? (Aguiyi, 2020).

In the recent history of Nigeria, it is important to note that those who burnt down properties in Lagos and other places are not the peaceful protesters? And those who looted and burnt properties in Abuja, threatened to burn down the Central Bank and Christian Ecumenical Centre were hoodlums recruited to counter the largely peaceful EndSARS protest powered by patriotic youths? There videos are there in the public. Such evidences should be reviewed by the law enforcement agencies.

A people oriented and driven democracy and governance should be sad of the evil of the now disbanded SARS. Government should distance itself from the bloodletting and extra-judicial killings of the police and military. Nigerian leaders and ruling class should have learnt from the blood soaking history of SARS and the Nigerian/Biafra Civil War so that the government can better manage the citizenry under a democratic dispensation in the 21st Century. The voice of the Nigerian youths during the EndSARS protest should not be suppressed, crushed, overpowered, silence, stifled, and subdued. Their complained should be heard and positively responded to. Intimidation and oppression of the "EndSARS" protesters may boomerang if the Buhari government do not treat this matter with care.

The "EndSARS" protest by Nigerian youths is a symbol and warning that all is not well with Nigeria. But the ruling class is pretending in deception with the youthful population of the country that all is well with Nigerian youths, who are impoverished, unemployed, disempowered and oppressed by their aging leaders who are re-cycling themselves in the corridor of power. Things are not good. The youths have had enough of impurity, corruption, and mismanagement of the ruling class and the protest to come out of the brutality of police is just the beginning of the liberation struggle in Nigeria. The youths, the moral army of the people through the EndSARS protest have said enough is enough. It is either we build a better Nigeria based on fairness, justice, egalitarianism or we give way. The Nigerian youths are depleted, dog-tired, drained dry, sapped, squandered, worn out and used up with failed promises by a succession of failed leadership (both military and civilian rule) that did not provide them with the much needed safety, employment, security, poverty reduction, social amenities, functional education, and economic self-reliance.

Consequences of Clamping Down on EndSARS Protesters Bank Account by Federal Government

This paper has comfort with the following consequences on clamping down on EndSARS protesters account and labelling them terrorists, which include:

1. Clamping down on EndSARS promoters bank accounts and labelling them terrorists by the Federal Government is another move to cut short the benefit of democracy amongst Nigerian youths.

2. It is disturbing that in a democratic dispensation peoples accounts be frozen because they support EndSARS in a peaceful manner, especially as SARS was a scourge to the society.

3. It is also distrustful and unreliable to Nigerian youths who protested EndSARS/police brutality as government fails to listens to the cries of its youthful population lamenting under torture, and extra-judicial killing by the SARS that supposed to protect them, but clamping down on the peaceful protesters by Federal Government, this may spear head another civil unrest or protest.

4. Clamping down on EndSARS peaceful protest promoters is a punitive and vindictive move by the Federal Government which is not only abhorrent but ridicules what human rights stands for in the recent history of Nigeria.

5. Clamping down on EndSARS promoters accounts is unfortunate and evil. This goes to reveal how dictatorial the Buhari government has grown to become undemocratic, rather than embracing the virtues of democracy. The move should be condemned and reversed immediately to free the democratic space of freedom in the country.

6. The clamping down of EndSARS promoters account and labelling them terrorists is a misplace priority in a democratic dispensation, where people have a right to peacefully protest.

7. The freezing of EndSARS promoters account has the consequences of shedding more light to how tyrannical the Buhari government is.

8. The clamping down on the EndSARS promoters account by the Federal Government is barbaric and a medium of frustrating and intimidating the

Nigerian youths. The EndSARS protest was peacefully carried without any hidden agenda but was hijacked by hoodlums and bad politicians.

9. The EndSARS protest was peaceful and the clamping down on the protester was undemocratic. If the authorities consider the EndSARS protest evil and illegal then the government should also freeze everyone's account who supported the protest, including the president and the vice president daughters who supported the protest as a welcome development.

10. The clamping down on the account of EndSARS promoters was draconian, terror and unacceptable. The youths were just performing their basic fundamental human rights by trying to attract the concern of the yeaning of Nigerian youths, which is security, food, shelter, employment and a better welfare packages. It is a shame to Nigerian democracy that the youths are tormented for protesting peacefully. The Federal government should clamp down on the hoodlums and evil politicians that hijacked the protest and bring them to book.

Conclusion

The Federal Government should divert its energy from freezing the bank account of "EndSARS" protesters, to speed up the process of providing jobs for the ever-increasing number of youths in the country, it will curb the high rate of crime and other acts of youth restiveness. The EndSARS protest by Nigerian youths have further shown that most Nigerian youths were not gainfully employed or involved in any positive activities to take care of their needs. The statistics given on youth unemployment put at 55.4 percent has not decreased but rather has increased. The Buhari administration should arise to the necessary duty of fulfilling its promise of generating jobs as one of its cardinal projects to empower the youths and make them productive for the advancement of the wellbeing of the youth population in Nigeria. Not to waste time in freezing the account labelling the youths of EndSARS protest as terrorists. (Akinola, 2020). The recent "EndSARS" protest by Nigerian youths was a pointer that reveals a generation of Nigerian youths that was growing up under peculiar and unusually stressful circumstances; which is a sign of government failure to cater for its youthful population.

Instead of the Buhari regime to label "EndSARS" protester as terrorists. The nation's leaders of the recent history of Nigeria should take decisive, meaningful action to protect the youths, which are leaders of tomorrow. Fairness and justice should be serve to the youths across the six-geopolitical zonal of the country. This will help build the trust and confidence of the youths back to the Nigerian state. It was sad to note that in Lagos after hoodlums hijacked the peaceful endSARS protest, over 300 hoodlums vandalized the

Nigerian Ports Authorities (NPA) building, destroyed 60 vehicles (Usman, 2020). The EndSARS will awaken political will in leaders. Meanwhile, the EndSARS protest was unpopular in North whereas protest was very popular in the South. In a democratic dispensation, peaceful protest is legitimate, whereas violent protest, looting, vandalization, destruction of lives and properties is condemnable and unacceptable.

It is believe that the judicial panels of inquiry set across the states in the federation by the Buhari administration will go a long way to investigate the EndSARS protest/police brutality, rather than to be a ploy to witch-hunt genuine peaceful protesters. Arresting and labelling the EndSARS protests as terrorist may frustrate witness and investigation of the inquiry of the judicial panels to do a decent work free of bias and intimidation.

Recommendations

This paper has come forth with the best recommendations how to ensure a better relation between the people, youths, police and the government, so that peace, unity and nation building will prevail in Nigeria.

- To settle the "EndSARS" protest/police brutality amicably and peacefully it would be an opportunity to awaken political will in our leaders to address all the other ugly problems bedeviling the Nigerian state which gave rise to the built up frustrations of the youths (Aguiyi, 2020).

- One of the best strategy that should help curb the gulf and gap between the people and police, is that the government and police need to earn back the peoples trust and confidence.

- The police need general reform and improved welfare to help protect lives and properties in the Nigerian state.

- Creation of state police and restructuring the false federal system to a true federal system remains a key factor that will address most of the problem underlying the EndSARS protest/police brutality. Restructuring of the political system will ensure progress, peace and unity in Nigeria, rather than the unitary system disguised as true federal system.

- To curb police brutality in Nigeria, the mentality of colonial police force should be replaced with a friendly and people oriented driven police.

- The "EndSARS" protest should not be seen from the perspective of tribal sentiment or ethnic and religious divide. We are one big Nigerian family that should live in peace, love and unity for the police to protect lives and properties of one another in a law abiding society.

- Nigeria need fairness and justice for the police, government and the people to live together.

- In 2023 general elections, the youth should use their voting power and oneness in love to vote and elect leaders with global, economic and political experience. Nigeria need young experience leaders, who are decent, selfless, sincere, resourceful, and highly productive, who have the integrity and outstanding character to end the trust of fellow citizens. Nigerians should begin to see themselves as a people, not as an ethnic group full of bias, bigotry, favoritism, nepotism, one sidedness and unfairness.

- The EndSARS protest engineered by some youths across the country was one national event that would remain epochal in the recent history of Nigeria. Even though, the protest caught the federal government napping and shook the foundation of the nation in such a way that rattled the citizens and government. If the government honestly address the demands of the youths who protested, Nigeria will be a better country. Nigeria need national rebirth, which include: security, good governance, inclusion of youth population in governance and even distribution of wealth among Nigerians.

- The EndSARS protest should not perceived to be ICT fraudsters or yahoo boys protest, who had predominantly fallen victim in the hands of SARS operatives or a protest politically motivated by the other ethnic groups or opponents of the Buhari led administration. The protest was a general consensus, unanimity, and unity by Nigerian youths (both home and abroad) that something urgent needed to be done to safe guard the nation from the verge of total collapse. The EndSARS protest brought a common front among diverse Nigerian youthful population together, from the North and South and civil societies groups. The EndSARS protest was a concurrence, consent, and verdict that Nigeria needs urgent restructuring and national rebirth to pacify Nigerian youths who feel cheated and excluded from governance. The idea of the government in freezing the account of some of the EndSARS protesters and promoters is a wrong direction the Buhari government and CBN have taken. It may cause a repetition of another wave of

violent protest by a section of disgruntled, discontented and irritated Nigerian youths again. The government should use dialogue to settle the EndSARS protest issue with the Nigerian youths rather than tagging them terrorist and freezing their bank accounts.

- The EndSARS protest symbolized that in Nigeria the time has come for the federal government to be pragmatic in tackling all the multifaceted problems confronting Nigerian youths. Government should support youths with funds to encourage self-employment and self-reliance through training by Small and Medium Enterprises Agency (SMEDAN) and National Directorate of Employment Schemes (Aluko, 2020).

- To nip the vice of hooliganism, violence protest and riot in the bud among Nigerian youths, the federal government should reconsider the establishment of Education Bank for the youth from poor backgrounds to have access to acquire education in Nigeria, with this, cases of ICT fraud (yahoo boys), robbery, kidnapping, banditry, arson, and looting would be curbed during peaceful protests, like the endSARS protest that was hijacked by hoodlums to loot private and public properties. (Babalola and Aluko, 2020).

- Looking at the way the "EndSARS" protest went, Tunde Barkare (2020) augured that contrary to the opinion that the youths are the problem of Nigeria; rather he apologized to the youths that the ruling class did not hand over to the youths a nation that can meet their needs; whereas, the founding fathers handed over a promising nation to them. The pastor explain that graduate in the 60s, 70s, 80s had cars waiting for them the moment they graduated. Regular jobs and opportunities were everywhere. Furthermore, looking at the way the "endSARS" protest went, many youths think their fathers and the ruling class have failed them, therefore they can do better. Hopefully, the best solution to the problem in Nigeria is that both the old and the young need each other for Nigeria to overcome the "EndSARS" protest challenges. Nigeria need the energy, drive, efficiency, fire, forcefulness, in working, the power, spirit and vigour of our youths and at the same time, the country also need the insight and wisdom of our trusted elders, not the corrupt and wicked elders. Nigeria, need selfless and honest leaders the youths can bank on, entrust and count on in other to surmise mistrust and suspicion that have been built over the years that erode and eat away confidence between the leaders and the youths. The ruling class and leaders of Nigeria need to apologize to the youths to give way for national rebirth, rather than the federal government labeling the peaceful endSARS promoters terrorist and freezing their bank

accounts in an evil drive to chase away the youthful Nigerian population out of the country into unemployment, frustration, poverty and exile.

- Nigeria need a lot more by sitting on a table of brotherhood affiliation, love and forgive ourselves of past mistakes, so that we can provide space for national healing and reconciliation; so that we don't destroy the future destiny of our children – children yet unborn. The clampdown on the "EndSARS" protesters and advocates has given the Buhari administration a bad name and image. Many Nigerians perceived it as victimization and intimidation of the advocates for freedom of expression. This is because the freezing of account of 20 supporters of the EndSARS campaigners was disturbing in a democratic dispensation, many Nigerians wondered why those whom the federal government publicly acknowledge were peaceful protesters are accused of crimes bordering on terrorism and regime change. Many Nigerians also expressed worry that the Central Bank of Nigeria which should be bothered by the shaky status of the economy, and rising food prices was engaging itself on clampdown of protesting Nigerian youths by freezing their Bank Accounts, looking at the way the EndSARS was mismanaged and government clampdown on peaceful protesters has shown that the Buhari administration is hostile to dissent, unconcerned with the suffering of the youths and opposed to the calls for good governance. It also reveal that the Buhari regime has abandoned its fight against terrorists and bandits to go after peaceful protesters.

- According to Abiola Owoaje (2020) Federal Government clampdown on EndSARS protester means that the Buhari administration had descent into tyranny. The government which wants Nigerian youths to trust it with the establishment of the judicial panels of inquiry has at same time adopted surreptitious plots capable of eroding trust to "Lend credence to allegation by Nigerians that the Buhari administration thrives on misinformation, lack of transparency and propaganda. Meanwhile, the government suppose allay fear and mistrust among Nigerians; to build in trust between the youths and the police/military. Since the youths are future leaders of tomorrow. Those calling for end of police brutality are frustrated as their rights to good living is intimidated and oppressed. The government should not stifle, dampen, muffle and strangle the democratic space and freedom of the Nigerian youth in the 21st Century. Competent Nigerian youths should have more access to leadership in the new Nigeria. The older generation should handover the mantle of leadership of Nigeria to the younger generation to enhance nation building.

- The End SARS protest symbolized that the youths who were once called lazy had woken up from their slumber. They have woken up to the fact that the Nigerian ruling elite and the security agents has failed them and there is a need for swift and prompt redress of the abnormalities in the Nigerian state. The End SARS protest reveals that the youths were now rising up to demand their due from the political leaders. (Bankole, 2020). Nigeria must be restructured without delay to address perceived imbalance in the polity. The political class must go back to the drawing board to fix the various ills within the Nigerian system. This is a time when the Nigerian think, tank must come together and ensure that the obnoxious 1999 constitution which has been giving us various problems is fixed. This is a good avenue for us to realize that this country may not be able to continue like this unless it's restricted. Rather than the government and CBN freezing the bank account of the End SARS promoters and even labeling the peaceful protesters as terrorists.

- It is unfortunate that the current leaders came to power using restricting as a campaign propaganda tool only for them to turn a blind eye to it when they got the mandate to occupy the seat of power. The End SARS peaceful protest is a pointer that shows that the ruling class could no longer continue to take Nigerian youths for granted. However, the researcher condemned the activities of hoodlums who hijacked the peaceful protest to wreak havoc on innocent Nigerians and their property across the nation. The activities of the hoodlums symbolized the failure of the ruling class to provide to the welfare of the people as many Nigerian find it difficult to feed, clothe themselves and provide shelter for their families. Meanwhile, the researcher recommend that looters of private and public properties should be brought to book. The researcher also sympathized with the families of the police officers and Innocent Nigerians murdered and injured during the violent. The government should improve the welfare of the police for guiding lives and properties of fellow Nigerians. People that are still hoarding some palliatives donated by the federal government and the private sector to reduce hunger caused by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic should share the welfare package to the masses and people urgently.

  People who support the clamping down of bank account of endSARS promoters are enabler of dictatorship and anti-democratic forces. It is shameful and illegal to clampdown on account of peaceful protesters. It is wrong for government to undermine and violate the fundamental human rights of Nigerian youths expressing their anger through peaceful means and to express their concerns and grievances peacefully. It is sad for the federal government to clampdown on

genuine agitations for freedom of association and expression; because what goes up must come down. Protest is part of democratic culture in every part of the world.

- Yahaya Ndu (2020) argued that why it is that it is easy for government to uncover and freeze account of supposed supporters of EndSARS protest but the same government in five years has not uncovered and frozen the account sponsors of Boko Haram. EndSARS protest is a pointer to reveal that there is something fundamentally dysfunctional in the governance mechanism in Nigeria. The protest is also a pointer to reveal that we need to restructure and rework our governance mechanism and make them mass participatory and all inclusive so that we can move forward together as one in true federal system and genuine democracy. Clamping down the on bank account of peaceful EndSARS promoters is tyrannical, injustice and fascist like approach to oppress Nigerian youths. Clamping down the account of EndSARS protesters is what is obtained in autocratic regimes and not in a democratic government. In a democracy, Nigeria youths have legitimate right to peaceful protest against issues and problems that the government is doing that is not right. It is allowed in Nigeria Constitution for people to protest peacefully. Any government going against the Constitution of Nigeria is going against democracy in the land. Whether he is a governor or a president.

- Clamping down bank account of peaceful EndSARS protesters gives an impression that the government is not willing to address the issues raised by the EndSARS protesters. It is a symbol that the Buhari administration sees any raised voice as dissident voice, disagreeing voice, discordant voice and rebellions voice and thus will ensure that no voice speak, up against any wrong going in the society. It is sad that in the recent history of Nigeria, no patriotic Nigerian will buy any story linking the EndSARS peaceful protesters with acts of terror. The federal government should treat the EndSARS protest with care, regardless of what the ruling class say to protect their selfish interest against democracy and true federalism. The ruling class in Nigeria should stand up to protect the rights of Nigerian citizens and not to play to the gallery to betray the citizenry. The young men and women that champion the EndSARS protest stated their five points and reasons. So the federal government should make sure it does what is right. So that we don't have a second wave of the protest from the unemployed Nigerian youths who are poor, hungry and excluded from power. There should be widespread government reforms along the path of true federalism and genuine democracy to accommodate Nigerian youths. The court should grant bail and free the EndSARS

protesters. The message of the EndSARS cannot be killed by terror but by dialogue and reform. The federal government should avoid divisive and repressive measures and steps to settle the EndSARS crisis. The Nigerian government should use the EndSARS protest as a lesson and means to ensure national healing and make people oriented reform to include the young people in governance and nation building. The youths are leaders of tomorrow so it is evil to exclude them in the seat of power in a democratic dispensation.

- Prof Pat Utomi and Femi Falana (2020) pointed out that "the EndSARS campaign would have made the Buhari led administration (2020) adopt a more realistic approach to solving the problems confronting this country which led the youths to go on peaceful protests but the reverse is the case. It is unfortunate that rather than developing trust and confidence in the youths that their complaints would be convincingly addressed as promise when the protests were on, the government has embarked on victimization and witch hunting of sponsors of the protest by seizing their passports, arresting, and detaining them. Sometimes, with spurious, bogus, and mocked charges and freezing the accounts of the said sponsors." The elongation of the "EndSARS" protest was a symbol to sadly reveal that the government is not trusted by the people; which led to the long period of the protests. Furthermore, by clamping down on the protesters the government is undermining the peoples trust in them. Hence, there is a clear betrayal of trust and breach of good faith in the negotiation with the EndSARS youths. It is important to note that it was the promise to look into the complaints of the youths that made patriotic Nigerians counsel an end to the protest. The recent clamping down on the bank account of the protesters by the government is a reinforcement of the lack of trust the youths have about government that partly explain the cause of the protest from the onset. Following the track down on EndSARS protest in the recent history of Nigeria, it is certain that the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) lacks the locus to trigger such anti-democratic process in the context of the EndSARS campaign. In a corrupt society the courts are being manipulated by those who feel threatened by the awakening of the youths. The judiciary is expected to protect the right of individuals and youths this period of social re-engineering of the country by treating cases in a pragmatic manner. The crackdown of the EndSARS bank accounts and labeling them terrorist symbolized that dictatorship is obviously being slowly but obdurately unwrapped in Nigeria.

- Utomi and Falana (2020) condemn the victimization efforts of the Federal Government on the EndSARS protesters in totality. They urged maturity on the part of the government and stop the adoption of undemocratic and in human method on dealing with the aftermaths of the EndSARS protesters. Protest is a constitutional and democratic right which cannot earn the kind of victimization going on the youths. Whereas, no amount of intimidation or harassment will work as it will only exacerbate tensions in an otherwise fragile polity. Cracking down the EndSARS protester will force the youths to exile as in the NADECO days. The youths of Nigeria should not be forced into exile just for speaking up neither must they come to harm in the country. The ruling class that are clamping down on the youths should not turn them into "zombies", stooges, sycophants, and puppet rulers in the future. The youths are the assets, blessing, strength and virtue to the nation's working force. They are the future leaders of tomorrow the state can dream of and glory of the country. The ruling class should give the youth courage, hope and a voice and a chance to recapture what we have lost as a national mistake. Restructuring of Nigeria along the path of true federalism and genuine democracy will ensure a higher standards of justice, state police, better security and progress for all Nigerian youths and people. Restructuring will improve the quality of Nigeria's federalism and democracy and also ensure peaceful-coexistence and curb insecurities in the federating units and communities within the regions. Nigeria is in a dire need of restructuring to improve security and provide jobs for the youthful population. Not to crack down on EndSARS protesters bank account which is not a panacea for solutions. EndSARS peaceful protesters and promoters should be free to go about their business without any intimidation, arrest, hindrances, restrictions or freezing their bank accounts; while security agencies continue to discharge their duties peacefully to forestall breakdown of law and order.

- The EndSARS campaign was a well-planned, coordinated and funded uprising that fed-off a genuine grievances against elements of Nigerian police and the faulty structure of the Nigerian state. Unfortunate, its management showed a shocking lack of awareness of the environment and an unforgiveable level of political sophistication. The use of "carrot and stick approach" by freezing the bank account of EndSARS protesters undermined the intelligence of the Federal Government to manage the peaceful protest. It also symbolized that the Buhari led administration was not good enough to settle the legitimate grievances of Nigerian youths through a peaceful manner to avoid further violence protest. The youths need programmes and policies that will reduce poverty and graduate unemployment drastically. The government should prioritize anti-poverty

policies. For poverty and insecurity among the youthful population is disturbing. The federal government should honestly invite the Nigerian youths to a dialogue. It was important to note that during the peaceful EndSARS protest. The president acknowledged that citizens have the right to protest. The president added: "our government will not lift a hand to stop or suppress you" Therefore, it is clear that the freezing of bank account of EndSARS promoters contradict the Buhari led government towards the youths rights to protest. It expose the universe persecution of EndSARS leaders to the public, which is a threat to democracy. The federal government N75 billion youth investment fund to help lead enterprising young Nigerians out of poverty is the right way to go by the Buhari administration. President Buhari should be seen as paving the way for the youths to take control of the destiny of Nigeria through a restructured true federal system and true democracy. Not to be persecuting the peaceful EndSARS leaders and protesters.

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