
Taming the Monster of Kidnapping in Nigeria in the Light of Islamic Education: An Exit from the Yoke of Underdevelopment.

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ABSTRACT

Going by the antecedent of proliferation of crime rate in Nigeria, it is obvious enough to assert that the most terrifying of all felonious acts is kidnapping. Besides being the mostly recurring iniquitous deed in the nation, it has neither regard for the young nor respect for the aged ones. Similarly, the activities of kidnapers in Nigeria like any other places in the world have no veneration for the indigent or the women folk. The scary nature of this crime sends signal to all walks of life on the need for its monster to be tamed as the next victim could be anyone. The paper expounds on some relevant terms, gives illustration and exposition of forms and cases of kidnapping in Nigeria. While unveiling the causes of kidnapping in Nigeria, the paper affirms that the increasing rate of unemployment, injustice, corruption, and above all bad governance, play fore role in this respect. Coupled with the aforementioned facts are the upsurge of arms and ammunition in the country, overzealous quest for money and inordinate desire to rule people at all cost. The pervasiveness of kidnapping in Nigeria as enunciated in the paper accounts for underdevelopment in Nigeria as it gives no breathing space for growth and enabling environment for progress of both the individual and the society. To redress the anomaly, the paper examines relevant teachings of Islam on the concept of justice, corruption, good governance, and the need to inculcate humane lifestyle as against cruelty. The paper therefore, recommends that stringent measures be put in place by the government on corrupt practices. This would serve as deterrent for others, thereby ensuring judicious utilisation of the human and material resources of the nation for developmental activities.

Keywords: Kidnapping; Nigeria; Underdevelopment, Islam

INTRODUCTION

When the egocentric trait of man supersedes his human nature, he embarks on deviant characters which at times could be vicious and indeed ferocious. The reverse is the case when man is able to live above being conceited and self-centred. This no doubt is the true reflection of man's character. For example, when man is callously inclined, he exhibits various

forms of nasty acts one of which could be kidnapping.

In a report gathered by Akuki (2013), Nigeria was said to account for 74 per cent of documented cases of kidnappings in Africa in 2012. Similarly, in the first half of the year 2013, Nigeria accounted for 26 per cent incidents of kidnapping accompanied by demand for ransom globally. The foregoing discussion notwithstanding does not encapsulate the thousands of unreported cases of kidnapping that

happened in Nigeria annually. Furthermore, in 2013, Nigeria was reported to be among the top ten (10) countries of the world where the proliferating degree of kidnapping is very alarming with over 1,000 cases reported each year. This report was firmly established and published by the Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC). This syndrome is repugnant and as such calls for attention of all reasonable minds in an attempt to redress the anomaly particularly from the Islamic perspective. For better comprehension of the discourse, an exposition of the relevant terms is considered in the following paragraph.

Conceptual Exposition.

Central to the understanding of this topic are the terms taming, monster kidnapping, underdevelopment and Islam. According to Hornby (2000) & Encarta (2009), the word “taming” is a derivative of the present continuous term which originates from the verb “tame”. Tame entails the act of domesticating something or subduing somebody by way of removing from him, the traits of wildness. In other word, it also means bringing something under human control.

Hornby (2000) sees monsters an imaginary creature that is not only ugly and frightening, but also large in nature. It also entails a person who exhibits vicious behavior that terrifies people and displays disgusting attitude. Chidi (2014) upholds that the word kidnapping evolved from “kid” meaning child, and “nap” from nab depicting snatching. Kidnapping is the act of abducting and keeping somebody as a prisoner without his consent. At times, kidnapping could be a special arrangement exhibited with the consent of the victim in order to achieve a targeted objective or goal.

Rodney (1983) upholds that the term underdevelopment denotes a country that is characterised by pervasiveness of poverty, and inequality between the rich and poor class of the society. An underdeveloped country is bedevilled with myriads of problems such as unemployment, insufficient good health care facility, portable water, food, education and housing. In economic term, it entails a situation whereby the resources are not maximally utilised to bring about meaningful socio-economic development. Consequently, the masses suffered serious marginalisation and exploitation from the rich.

ILLUSTRATION ON FORMS AND CASES OF KIDNAPPING

Bride kidnapping: - This is the taking away of the bride against the will of her parents but with or without the consent of the bride. When this act is exhibited with the consent of the bride, it expresses lack of interest or unwillingness to marry the would-be bridegroom, who is formally recognized by the parents as the would-be husband. Falayi (2016) reports that, on Wednesday, March 30 2016, three days to her wedding, a man named Mohammed whose age was between 23-25 years, arranged for the kidnapping of Fatimah Audu. Mohammed was said to have once sought for her hand in marriage. Her refusal to his offer accorded her such sordid experience. After the abduction, effort was made to disfigure her face with acid, but she was lucky to have dodged it but the acid content poured on her arm. According to Agboga (2016) in June 2016, Olanike a would-be bride of Ayebameru was kidnapped in front of her house along Okitipupa/Ikoya Road area of Ondo State.

Cultist motive: - This type of kidnapping has a very long antecedent as cultist

activity is not also new in the society. Kidnappers engage in the use of their victims for various purposes such as, acquisition of various forms of spiritual power and occultist practices for wealth. On daily basis several cases of this type of kidnapping are reported across the country. Among the Yoruba society, the tale of “*gbomon gboman*” meaning kidnappers, is often told by parents to their children not as a mere fiction but as factual event which happens in the society.

Kidnapping for political intent

Kidnapping is at times used by some forces or politician to terrorise, intimidate and suppress government or political opponents. This message of fear and threat is the expression of aggression over what they consider as unfair treatment in the realm of politics. A very good example is contained in the report by Lati (2009) which affirms the abduction of Professor Charles Soludo’s father; the PDP Gubernatorial aspirant of Anambra State in 2010 election. The aggrieved opponents were alleged to have carried out this heinous act on account of been marginalised by the party process in favour of Soludo. Similar incident was reported of Pa Edet, the father of the Speaker of Anambra State House of Assembly.⁸ The kidnapping of the 276 Chibok girls by Boko-Haram group in 2014 was an expression of threat to the sovereignty of Nigeria government and exhibition of might by this dreadful group.

The Rivers State re-run elections which took place in March 2016, recorded two cases of kidnapping. A former leader of Andoni Local Government Legislative Assembly in Rivers State, Elyon Ntiro Elijah was kidnapped by some unknown gunmen few hours to the commencement of the elections. Also kidnapped along with him

was a former Commissioner for Water Resources Chief Ibibia Walter. Sequel to the removal of the Chairman of Jos East Local Government, Mr. Sanda Agwom by Governor Solomon Lalong of Plateau State, in April 2016, a new transition committee Chairman, Mr. Azi was appointed by the Governor. Few days after his appointment, some suspected kidnappers abducted and killed him in Kufang, near the former NYSC Secretariat in Jos South Local Government Area of the state, Ogunjobi (2016). The increasing rate of kidnapping activities in Abia State, particularly in Aba metropolis, as acknowledged in the report of Nwogu (2008) resulted in several foiled attempts to kidnap the Abia State Governor, Chief Theodore Orji in 2008.

Economically motivated Kidnapping: -

This is another type of kidnapping exhibited based on one type of economic motive or the other. According to Chidi (2014), a total of 512 reported cases of kidnapping were recorded between January 2008 and June 2009. This affirmation was made in December 2009 by the police Affairs Minister. The report also asserts that between July 2008 and July 2009, over 600 million was lost to kidnappers in Nigeria. For example, to regain his freedom, a Kano-based multi-millionaire businessman, was forced to give a ransom of N80 million to his abductors within the said period (July 2008 and July 2009). Similarly, the sum of N70 million Naira was paid by an industrialist in Nnewi, (Anambra State) to secure his freedom from his captors.

The report, further attests that on the 11th of July, 2010, four journalists and a driver were reportedly kidnapped in Abia State on their way back to Lagos. At the initial stage, a ransom of N250 million was demanded from their families but was later

reduced to N30 million. In September 2015, Chief Olu Falae was kidnapped and his abductors requested for the sum of N100 million Naira for his release, Ojuola (2015).

FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE INTERMITTENT CASES OF KIDNAPPING IN NIGERIA.

Injustice: - As compiled by Denne & Wodi (2010) the current upsurge of kidnapping by the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger-Delta started in late 2005 as a result of unjust treatment meted on the people of the area and their environment. This was due largely to oil exploration which resulted into gas flaring, oil spillage and many other environmental hazards without commensurate developmental projects exhibited in the region to appeal to the feelings of the people. In spite of the economic advantages realized from this area, there was gross inequity in allocation of resources which consequently subjected the people of the area to serious economic hardship. In their struggle and agitation for redress on perpetrated injustice meted on them, the youth resorted to all forms of militancy among which include vandalisation of pipeline, armed robbery, kidnapping and the like.

The report further clarifies that in a bid to express their resentment, in the year 2005, nine foreign oil workers were kidnapped in Delta State by MEND. Initially, their intention was not to demand for ransom but rather to publicise their position of long years of neglect by the government. In addition, they requested for the release of their detained leader, Mujahid Asari Dokubo, the leader of Niger Delta Peoples Volunteer (NDPV) in exchange of the foreign hostage. Instead of yielding to their demand, the Government condescended to negotiate for the release of the kidnapped people by paying ransom.

The negotiation began with inducement with some hard currency and the ransom demanded by the boys gradually increased before they later collected the dollars and embarked on the release of the hostage. This incident served as an open eye to realization of a dubious way of making hard currency through kidnapping for ransom.

In realisation of the above, Denne & Wodi (2010) report that the government came up with series of policies and agencies to ameliorate the problem of the people. They include the establishment of Niger Delta Development Board (NDDDB) in 1960, Oil Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC) 1992, Niger Delta Development Commission in December 2000 and eventually the Ministry of Niger Delta Area by late President Umar Yar'dua on the 10th of September 2008. However, the established agencies could not deliver the expected result as they continuously engaged in the acts of militancy. This could be attributed to the fact that they have been made to taste the forbidden fruit and various governmental efforts were thwarted by corruption.

According to Daniel (2016) in the first week of December 2016, it was reported that Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) revealed how N2.8billion meant for the training of ex-Niger Delta militants was allegedly diverted under the directive of the former Coordinator of the Presidential Amnesty Programme (PAP), Mr.Kingsley Kuku.

Unemployment: - It is disheartening to note that, less effort is being put in place by the various successive government to provide more employment opportunities for the teeming Nigerian population of unemployed youth. It is pertinent to recall

that on annual basis, thousands of graduates are sent into the labour market by the various tertiary institutions in Nigeria with very few of them been absorbed into the system. Adewale (2007) reports that as far back as 2007, the Director General of the National Directorate of Employment and Productivity lamented that two hundred thousand graduates with NYSC discharged certificates issued five years back (2002) were unemployed.

According to Onba (2016), as at the first quarter of the year 2016, the Nigerian Bureau of Statistic (NBS) report acknowledged the existence of 24.5 million unemployed or underemployed youth in Nigeria. In the second quarter of the year, it rose to 26.06 million. Due to lack of job to keep soul and body together, the youth become bent to series of negative thoughts and inclined to frustration on slightest provocation. Consequently, they resort to all forms of criminal acts such as kidnapping, armed robbery and thuggery against the people and society within which they reside.

The most recent 2016 Police recruitment exercise further points to the huge size of the unemployed or underemployed citizens in the country. As at the closure of the recruitment portal on 13th May, 2016, Omonobi (2016) research revealed that the applicants were said to have reached 911, 438. Out of this figure, only 338, 227 applicants were shortlisted for test meant to fill 10, 000 vacant police jobs available.

Corruption and bad governance: - Over the course of time, Nigeria is bedeviled with the menace of corruption and bad governance. For example, during the Military regime of Rtd. Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo in 1976, Onimade (1983) upholds

that the sum of N2.8 billion naira was reported to have been diverted from the account of the (NNPC) to a private bank account. Similarly, in a compiled report by Suleiman & Hamisu (2012), the Nuhu Ribadu-led Petroleum Revenues Task Force was able to uncover the sum of 2.8 Trillion Naira as the amount unlawfully withheld from the government treasury by DPR, NNPC and some major oil companies between 2002-2011.

Furthermore, in January 2016, Opoola (2016) report that the Minister of Information alleged that fifty-five people stole N 1.34 trillion in seven years i.e. 2006-2013. The revelation affirmed that fifteen former governors carted away with 146.84 billion naira; four Ministers with 7 billion naira, while twelve former federal and state officials also stole 14 billion naira. In addition, eight people in the banking industry were also alleged to have stolen N524 billion naira and eleven people in the realm of business stole N653 billion naira. When subjected to the World Bank rates and costs, the Minister analysed that one third of the fund stolen could have taken care of 653.18 kilometres of road, built one ultra-modern hospital in each of the thirty-six states, built 20,062 units of 2 bedrooms houses, 183 schools and sponsored 3, 974 children from primary to tertiary institution at 25.24 million naira per child.

In June 2016, the Minister of Information, Alhaji Lai Muhammaed declared that the Federal government was able to recover the sum of N15 billion from looters within one year of inception into power. This recovery he affirmed was done by the various government agencies, Wakili, Mudashir & Opoola (2016), (2016). This attests to the existence of corruption in government which is an evidence of bad governance

An audit report carried out by the Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, (NEITI) showed that \$58.07bn (about N11.4tr) was generated from the sales of crude oil, taxes, royalties and other incomes in 2013. The Minister of Solid Minerals Development who made the revelation acknowledged that, part of the amount that should have been remitted to the government treasury was either diverted or got lost due to lackadaisical attitude of the people concerned and many other reasons, Adugb, (2016).

With the increasing manifestation of misappropriation of public funds, embezzlement of government funds in government treasuries and entrenchment of all forms of corrupt practices, the government is encumbered from discharging its responsibilities. These serve as impediment as it prevents government from translating its developmental visions into action. This has translated into government's inability to alleviate poverty ridden in the society through provision of employment opportunities, good health facilities, portable water, motorable roads and stable electricity for socio-political and economic well-being of Nigerian citizens. Absence of all these prompted a emergence of a growing army of frustrated people who could no longer resist such injustice, but ultimately resorted to various criminal methods of wealth generation such as arm thurgery, robbery, kidnapping, and the like.

The inordinate ambition to rule at all cost and Proliferation of arms and ammunition: - In Nigeria, the quest for political power and desire to rule by politicians have become outrageous. This is discernible from all the electoral processes. The earlier submission about kidnapping of the father of a gubernatorial candidate in

Anambra state no doubt affirmed that, in Nigeria, power is sought for, at all cost. After the 2007 election for example, Nwagboso, (2012) notes that the Southeastern states of Nigeria witnessed series of kidnapping by youths. The culprits were young children, served with series of guns and used as thugs for the election. After the election, this group of vibrant youth was dumped by their godfathers. When they could not get the stipend from their godfather, they resorted to kidnapping innocent people to raise money. This was a confession by the few ones apprehended.

Lust for materialism: - In 2007, Denne & Wodij (2010) acknowledge that a girl in Ahoada West Local Government of River State of Nigeria, went into an agreement and arranged with her friend to kidnap her and request for the ransom of N500,000 thousand Naira from her father. Similar incident as reported by Okoli, (2016) happened in August, 2016 where a girl conspires with her boy-friend to fake her kidnap. The sum of N50, 000 was requested as ransom from her father but fortunately, the police were able to arrest the culprits on 19th of September, 2016. According to a report given by The Campaign for Democracy (CD), a rich man who was kidnapped in Nnewi (Anambra state) was forced to pay a ransom of N20million to enable him gain his freedom. After his release, he conspired with his abductors to kidnap other rich men within so that they could share with him the proceeds. He was said to have been collecting his shares before their deal was discovered, Linus (2015). It is highly imperative to note that bride kidnapping is also a form of injustice orchestrated for lust for materialism.

THE EFFECTS OF KIDNAPPING ON UNDERDEVELOPMENT.

Among the resultant effects of kidnapping is insecurity of life and properties is underdevelopment. The aftermath effect of kidnapping is detrimental to both growth and development of man and his society. The victim of kidnapping is subjected to fear, psychological trauma, and at times illness and injuries. Generally, kidnapping creates a state of insecurity thereby hindering all forms of developmental activities. Chidi (2014) upholds that between the years 2006 and 2007, 295 foreigners were said to have been kidnapped. Five of the victims were reportedly dead due to injuries sustained during their abductions while a Syrian among them fell sick and later regained his freedom before he finally died.

According to Ezeobi, (2009) the alarming rate of insecurity in Nigeria especially since 2007, has greatly affected oil exploration and production in the country. This was as a result of the incessant kidnapping of oil workers in the Niger Delta Region which consequently affected the anticipated revenue. Also affected were the various developmental projects captured in the 2007 and 2008 budget. This militancy made it impossible for the government to embark on the construction and rehabilitation of many federal roads in the six geo-political zones. In addition, the dams scheduled for construction in the North-West and North-Central zones, construction of additional power plants in the six geo-political so as to reduce government's revenue from oil, as well as the immediate take-off of dredging of River Niger all suffered great set back due to this mayhem of insecurity. To secure the freedom of the victim of kidnapping, huge amount of money is paid to the kidnapers. This is an unjust

payment which people are forced to pay outside their personal volition and amounts to economic loss. Between 2006 and 2009, N15 billion was said to have been paid as ransom to kidnapers. In 2006, six foreign expatriates working in shell Oil Company were kidnapped and eventually the company was closed down. This amounted to loss of millions of cubic litres' of gas each day.

With the advent of the Boko Haram in 2009, the security vote for both states and federal government budgets were increased. Ezeobi (2009) laments that the money utilized to secure ransom of the victim of kidnapping, ensure security of people and huge amount of money lost in an event of closure of companies, factories and industries could have been used to bail out the nation from the yoke of underdevelopment. The closure of industries also resulted into shortfall in revenue generation and diminution of budgetary project which could have evicted the country from the yoke of underdevelopment. Although, ensuring security of a country is a prime responsibility of the government, the huge amount allocated to the security sector due to the security challenges could have been judiciously utilized to remove the country from the clutches of underdevelopment.

According to the NYA (2016) International Crisis Prevention and Responses Agency, Nigeria is considered among the eleven countries of the world with severe threat of cases of kidnapping in the world. This sad information has posed great impediment to the progress of the maritime industry especially in the Niger Delta region. Among the economic indices is the rate of investment in the country. Increase in investment therefore boosts the economy of a nation as it promotes revenue generation and provides

employment opportunities for the people. Unfortunately, this mayhem of insecurity scares away both local and foreign investors thereby resulting to underdevelopment of both the people and society. The future of a country relies greatly on the vision of the youth but unfortunately instead of having revolutionary vision; the Nigerian youth is increasingly preoccupied with destructive missions which further promote the state of underdevelopment of the country.

As kidnapping and other insecurity challenges hinder revenue generation, Nigeria is forced to seek for external loan with dreadful interest and hostile conditions in a bid to meet up the basic needs of government. Borrowing is invariably another means of subjecting the nation into self-enslavement. Okereke (2014) posits that it is widely acknowledged that excessive loan has become a major impediment to economic growth and stability in most developing countries such as Nigeria. This is because the country ends up servicing the debt with interest more than the amount of the loan incurred. This has a serious debilitating and detrimental effects on growth and development of the country. In an article titled When the call for call for cancellation of the international debt owed by poor African countries was moved years back, Okafor (nd) laments as follows:

Let's recall, at this juncture, that a few weeks ago, the New York Times called for the outright cancellation of the international debt owed by poor African countries. In making the call, the Times observes that "Right now, African countries spend four times as much on paying back their debts than they do on health care. They are trapped into making ever-escalating interest payments

that never touch the principal." Citing Nigeria as a typical example, the New York Times recalls that "Nigeria borrowed \$5 billion, has paid \$16 billion and still owes \$32 billion." It then concludes that "cancelling these debts should wait no longer.

ISLAMIC EDUCATION AS REMEDIES TO THE TREND OF KIDNAPPING AND UNDERDEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

Remedying the menace of kidnapping requires attending to the factors responsible for these glitches such as the problems of injustice, unemployment, corruption, governance, upsurge of arms and ammunition, overzealous quest for money and inordinate desire to rule people at all cost. All these problems emanated due to the spiritual weakness of the heart. The prophet (SAW) awakens the consciousness of man to the fact that all repugnant acts are exhibited by man due to the unsoundness of the heart. In Bukhari (1997: Vol. 1. no. 52., p.83) Prophet says: *There is a piece of flesh in the body if it becomes good (reformed), the whole body becomes good, but if it gets spoilt, the whole body gets spoilt, and that is the heart.* The above hadith concurs with the fact that the heart as expressed in the hadith is the fulcrum from which human thoughts emanates, therefore, when it conceives bad thoughts, it leads to self-obliteration. Equally, each and every man has devilish Jinn which do nothing except to inspire all forms of devilish thought in man. According to Muslim (2007: Vol. 7, p215, No. 7108), the Prophet asserts that.

There is no one among you but Allah has appointed a companion for him from among the jinn.' They said: 'Even you, O Messenger of Allah?' He said: 'Even me, but Allah helped me

with him, and he became Muslim.

Enslavement of Nigerians to all forms of devilish inspirations such as the inordinate desire to be rich or rule people at all cost has continuously subjected the nation into underdevelopment. Abdication from this heinous trap depends on the readiness of the people to heed to the Islamic solution as provided by the Qur'an and *Sunnah*. Islam is an all-inclusive religion as it provides healings to every ailment of the heart and solution to all human problems. Man's attention is drawn to this fact by Allah (SWT) in the Glorious as it says: *O mankind! there hath come to you a direction from your Lord and a healing for the [diseases] in your hearts, - and for those who believe, a guidance and a Mercy. Q:(10: 57).*

For example, the various forms of injustice which precipitate the menace of kidnapping such as misappropriation of funds meant to provide good health facilities, portable water, stable electricity, motorable roads and alleviate poverty through provision of employment opportunities are all against the teachings of Islam. Also prohibited in Islam is all forms of unfair play in political processes as it is adduced in the Glorious Qur'an, Allah (SWT) says:

O you who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even though it be against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, be the rich or poor, Allah is a better Protector to both. So, follow not the lusts, lest you may avoid justice; and if you Talwu or Tu`ridu, it, verily, Allah is Ever Well-Acquainted with what you do. Q: (4:135)

In his explanation of the above hadith, Ibn Kathir (2003) elucidates that in

an occasion, the Prophet sent Abdullah bin Rawahah to the Jews of Khaybar in order to collect the tax on the fruits and produce from them. In an attempt for soft landing, they offered him a bribe. He turned down the offer and acknowledged that in spite of the fact that Prophet is dearest of the creation to him while the Jews are more hated by him, he would not be infatuated to behave unjustly with them. The Jews were astonished and affirm that justice is the basis which the heavens and earth were created

The above verse teaches that justice must be upheld by a person irrespective of the degree of affinity of a party to the judge. Similarly, taking a person into hostage is a form of injustice and mischievous act seriously frowned at by Islam. Since power belongs to the creator who apportions it according to His will, Nigerian must be ready to acknowledge this supremacy so as to eschew the idea of seeking for power at all cost. The desire to be rich at all cost as exhibited by some Nigerians in their lifestyle must also be checkmated as the world is temporal. In Tirmidhi (2007: Vol. 4., No. 2323, p357) Prophetic makes an exploration of the magnitude of the world in comparison with the hereafter as follows: *The world compared to the Hereafter is but like what one of you gets when placing his finger into the sea, so look at what you draw from it.*

In the following verse of the Glorious Qur'an, precautionary message is sent to those who embrace the luxuries of world as it is ephemeral and detriment to the hereafter, the life of eternity.

And on the Day that the Unbelievers will be placed before the Fire, [It will be said to them]: "Ye received your good things in the life of the world, and ye took

your pleasure out of them: but today shall ye be recompensed with a Penalty of humiliation: for that ye were arrogant on earth without just cause, and that ye [ever] transgressed. Q: (46: 20)

The above verse is a description of the unfortunate situation awaiting those whose ultimate goal in this world is for self-enrichment, power acquisition, and dazzling by the merriments of the world to the detriment of the hereafter. For being obstinate to the laws of Allah at the expense of worldly merriment, they are made to face great torment and subjection to extreme indignity in the hereafter.

Leadership is also a trust as a leader is entrusted with both human and material resources. The two are expected to be managed judiciously so as to make life meaningful for all. Doing this requires being responsible and accountable. To this effect, in Bukhari (1997: Vol. 9, No.7138, p166.) Prophet says:

Every one of you is a guardian and is responsible for his charges: The Imam (ruler) of the people is a guardian and is responsible for his subjects; a man is the guardian of his family (household) and is responsible for his subjects; a woman is the guardian of her husband's home and of his children and is responsible for them; and the slave of a man is a guardian of his master's property and is responsible for it. Surely, every one of you is a guardian and responsible.

In Muslim (2007: Vol.3., No. 4502, p1018) Prophet (SAW) says: *A ruler who having obtained control over this affair of the Muslims does not strive for their betterment*

and does not serve them generally shall not enter paradise with them.

Whoso from you is appointed by us to a position of authority and he conceals from us a needle or something smaller than that, it would be considered as misappropriation {of public funds} and will {have to} produce it on the Day of Judgment. Muslim (2007: Vol.III, p1020. No. 4514)

Similar to the above, in Bukhari (1997: Vol. 9, p166, No.7151) Prophet says: *If any ruler having the authority to rule Muslim subjects dies while he is deceiving them, Allah will forbid Paradise for him.*

When leaders become responsible as emphasized in the above teachings, the country shall be freed from the yoke of underdevelopment. By implication, there will be no corruption and good governance shall take precedence in all spheres of human facets. This would in turn translate into availability of funds for provision of employment opportunities, portable water, motorable roads, good health care facilities, and stable electricity for promotion of socio-political and economic activities. Application of the lessons in the aforementioned prophetic teachings would no doubt guarantee public accountability which is the cornerstone of good governance.

The support and cooperation of the well to do members of the society is also paramount in a bid to emancipate the country from the clutches of underdevelopment. This is an aspect of complementing governmental efforts in provision of the above socio-economic activities. The Glorious Qur'an say: *And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression.... Q:(5:2).* Moreover, a popular aphorism holds that *united we stand divided we fall.* The

plight of the poor is given due consideration as Allah (SWT) says: *And in their wealth and possessions [was remembered] the right of the [needy,] him who asked, and him who [for some reason] was prevented [from asking]. Q: (51:19)*

They perform [their] vows, and they fear a Day whose evil flies far and wide. And they feed, for the love of Allah, the indigent, the orphan, and the captive, - [Saying], "We feed you for the sake of Allah alone: no reward do we desire from you, nor thanks. Q:(76:7-9)

And those in whose wealth are a recognised right. For the [needy] who asks and him who is prevented [for some reason from asking]; Q: (70:24-25). The following prophetic traditions corroborate the didactic teachings of the above verses on poverty alleviation and humanitarian services.

According to Ibn. Majah (2007: Vol. 3, No.2419, p.384,) Prophet says: *Whoever would like Allah to shade him with His - shade, let him give respite to one in difficulty, or waive repayment of the loan.*

With the teachings of the above prophetic traditions, remarkable effort should be made by the well to do people in the society to emancipate the country from the yoke of underdevelopment. From this perspective, funds could be generated from these philanthropists to execute developmental projects which would assist in poverty alleviation and promotion of the welfare of citizenry.

Suka (2016) reports that in recent time, the trend of kidnapping in the country has drawn the attention various states of the federation to come up with stringent measures on kidnappers. For example, in 2015, the Rivers State Governor, Nyesom Ezenwo Wike signed

into law that criminals convicted for kidnapping and accessories to kidnap will forfeit their assets, funds and proceeds from kidnap. The Lagos State House of Assembly approved death penalty for kidnappers whose victims died in their custody. Equally the bill stipulates life imprisonment for anyone who attempted to kidnap another person. In Kano State, a bill affirming life imprisonment for kidnappers was endorsed by The Kano State House of Assembly. In Delta State, the law provides that a kidnapper be sentenced to death though the Governor Ifeanyi Okowa, recently wrote to the Assembly seeking for a reversal of this provision which he opines is a breach to human right to life and torture.

The report further affirms that prior to the end of his tenure, Governor Adam Oshiomole of Edo State appended to the law which prescribed death penalty to all stages of kidnapping and whether the victim dies in captivity, in the process of being kidnapped, or while being rescued. Demolition of premises where the victims of kidnapping were rescued also featured in the bill. In Ogun State, Governor Ibikunle Amosu signed into law a 25-year jail term for convicted kidnappers while in Enugu State, the Leader of the Assembly, Ikechukwu Ezugwu, lamented that the law which stipulates that property used for kidnapping be demolished is not stringent enough to serve as deterrent. Umoru & Erunke (2016) narrates that on 5th May 2016, Senate began a process for the enactment of a law that would prescribe death penalty for kidnappers across the country. All these are affirmation of the worrisome nature of the crime in Nigeria. Although the promulgation of capital punishment for a grievous crime like kidnapping was realized by man in recent time, obviously, this has been prescribed

over fourteen centuries back where Allah SWT says:

The punishment of those who wage war against Allah and His Apostle, and strive with might and main for mischief through the land is: Execution, or crucifixion, or the cutting off of hands and feet from opposite sides, or exile from the land: That is their disgrace in this world, and a heavy punishment is theirs in the Hereafter; Q: (5:33)

In his explanation of the above verse, Ibn Kathir (2013) opines that “Wage war” mentioned here means those whose disbelief, blocks roads and spread fear in the fairways and mischief in the land and exhibit various types of evil. Inferentially, kidnapping being an act of terrorism is a typical example on which the above law is applicable. In Islam, life of each and every individual man is sacred, except where the need to recompense as life is taken for life, while taking away a life unjustly is as massacring the entire humanity. The life of a victim of kidnapping is subjected to threat and difficulties. In some occasions, the kidnapped person is killed or seriously injured. The *shariah* court determines the *ratio decidendi* in accordance with the gravity of the crime. If the crime involves seizing of money and murder, the sentence may be killing and crucifixion. If it involves only threats, taking of money or property without life, it may be amputation of hand and leg from opposite sides. If it involves murder without money been collected, it may be execution. If it involves threatens without money been collected, it may be punished by exiling the culprit. Beside the capital punishment, ordained in the Qur’an, Islam seriously frowned at the act of murder as the Qur’an says: *On that*

account: We ordained for the Children of Israel that if any one slew a person--unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land--it would be as if he slew the whole people: And if any one saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of the whole people. Then although there came to them Our Apostles with Clear Signs, yet, even after that, many of them continued to commit excesses in the land. Q: (5:32)

While commenting on the verses, Ibn Kathir (2003: Vol.2, p158) laments that:

The Ayah states, whoever kills a soul without justification -- such as in retaliation for murder or for causing mischief on earth -- will be as if he has killed all mankind, because there is no difference between one life and another. (and if anyone saved a life...) by preventing its blood from being shed and believing in its sanctity, then all people will have been saved from him, so.

The following prophetic traditions show how Prophet seriously frowns at the act of murder:

Ubaidullah b. Abu Bakr said: I heard Anas b. Malik saying: The Messenger of Allah may peace be upon him talked about the major sins, or he was asked about the major sins. Upon this observed: Associating anyone with Allah, killing of a person, disobedience to parents, Muslim (2007: Vol. 1, No. 160, p52)

...and whoever puts the people into difficulties, Allah will put him into difficulties on the Day of Resurrection ... Bukhari (1997: Vol. 9, No.7151, p166).

CONCLUSION

Kidnapping a life-threatening scenario is becoming one of the greatest security challenges in Nigeria in recent time. Effort to tackle the glitches seems not to yield positive response. This is because, the root causes of the problem such as increasing rate of unemployment, injustice, corruption, and bad governance, are yet to be redressed. Similarly, the upsurge in arms and ammunition in the country, overzealous quest for money and inordinate desire to rule people at all cost are hitherto prevalent in the society. Consequently, the country is faced with insecurity which hinders development. In spite of this, a very stringent measure is yet to be adopted on criminals across the country. The various Islamic teachings buttressed earlier would assist greatly in redressing the anomaly thereby evicting the country from the yoke of underdevelopment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- a. The fight against corruption by the government should be intensified without recourse to affinity of the culprit to the government. This would prevent diversion of funds meant to ensure provision of employment opportunities, good health facilities, portable water, motorable roads and stable electricity for socio-political and economic well-being of Nigerian citizens. Consequently, it would assist towards reducing the growing army of frustrated people who often resort to various criminal methods of wealth generation such as arm thuggery, robbery, kidnapping, and the like.
- b. All political processes should be sincerely supervised by the authority concern to make it free from any form of law breaking and criminal act.
- c. Government should rise up to their responsibility of ensuring provision of employment opportunities, and the requisite amenities for socio-economic and political activities.
- d. The well to do (affluence) people should complement government effort through rendering of financial support to various developmental projects and activities.

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