

Rethinking Muhamadu Buhari's Eight Years Presidency: The Gains and the Drains in a Distressed Nation

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Abstract

This paper is an attempt to critically assess the achievements and challenges in Mr. Buhari's eight years presidency in Nigeria. The objective is to know if Mr. Buhari was able to successfully achieve his three-point agenda in 2015 and his campaign promises in 2019 or not. Employing the method of critical analysis, this paper critically assesses Mr. Buhari's performances throughout the eight years in office to actually see how his presidency impacted on the economy, security and infrastructure as he promised during his campaigns in 2015 and 2019 general elections. Mr. Muhammadu Buhari came up with three-point agenda; to revamp the economy, to fight corruption and to curb insecurity which was raising its ugly head in almost all the states in Nigeria. Now, the basic questions that propel this work are; what has become of the promises he made eight years ago? How did he utilize the power to transform Nigeria for eight years? Has Nigeria improved since All Progressives' Congress (APC) defeated the then ruling party, Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP)? This paper argues that Mr. Buhari has spent eight years as the president of Nigeria has seen the nation wriggle through numerous challenges with insecurity, inflation and corruption at worse levels than he met them when the Peoples' Democratic Party under Good Luck Jonathan was in power. This paper argues that Nigerians were cajoled, brainwashed and deceived by APC's slogan of CHANGE and vanished with Muhammadu Buhari's purported integrity. This work submits that the way forward for good governance in Nigeria is for our leaders to be sincere, dedicated, proactive, committed, patriotic and willing to treat all citizens equal.

Keywords: Leadership, Corruption, Security, Muhammadu Buhari, APC.

Introduction

Since 1999 when Nigeria entered into democratic rule, People's Democratic Party PDP has become the ruling party over 20 years. It was this ruling party that ushered in the first democratic president, Olusegun Obasanjo in 1999. After his eight years of leadership Umaru Musa Yaradua took over power in 2007. In 2010, his vice president Goodluck Jonathan took over power as a result of the death of Yaradua. Jonathan's tenure recorded massive terrorism, ethnic crises, incessant killings, kidnappings, abduction and corruption. Most Nigerians at that point loosed confidence and trust in PDP due to their inability to curb the unrests that was ravaging the country particularly in northern states. In 2015, Mr. Buhari defeated the incumbent president and emerged as the first president to win the ruling party under APC political party which was formed by him and also the merging of other political parties.

The All Progressive Congress (APC) after its merging came up with the slogan 'CHANGE'. Nigerians were so confident and enthusiastic that this change will bring lasting solution to the sufferings, high rate of corruption, nepotism, instability and terrorism that Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) were unable to address and curb. As Festus Owete puts it;

The then governing party was plagued by internal wrangling, littered with factions, stinking of corruption and mired in leadership crises that led to its split twice in 2006 and 2014.

Thus, upon the arrival of the APC on political scene, many hoped that it would avoid the pitfalls of the PDP.¹

Now the question that is still begging for an answer is, has Buhari and APC with their change slogan able to address those challenges they promised Nigerians that they will curb, especially crushing Boko Haram

¹. Festus Oweta, "Analysis: APC, Nigeria's ruling party and its trouble" in *Premium Times*, premiumtimesng.com. Feb, 1, 2022. Accessed 9:25am. Nopage.

in six months, fighting corruption and revamping the economy? Although, these three key agenda were not fulfilled as promised, but this does not mean that the president did not perform better in other sectors. In the aspect of infrastructural development, employment, agriculture and promotion of indigenous products, Buhari performed better. But the problem with his administration was anchored on lack of continuity and corruption problems in the system. However, our main focus in this paper is to interrogate and assess the achievements of Mr. Buhari since eight years he assumed duty as Nigeria's president. This is to ascertain the extent to which he has fulfilled those promises he made and how successive administrations can build on the successes and failures of his tenure in office. This work shall begin by analyzing some keywords mentioned here for proper understanding and clarification.

Conceptualization

Leadership

In the words of Umaru, leadership is an important aspect in the life of any nation. It can make a nation to prosper or fail.² Paraphrasing Nwachukwu, Umaru avers that leadership is a social influencing process for the attainment of the goal set out by a country who provides direction, guides people's activities and) ensures that governments' objectives are attained.³ In other words while good leadership leads to stability and progress, bad leadership on the other hand leads to corruption and insecurity as seen in Nigeria's political institution. The trouble with Nigeria as Achebe echoes is “simply and squarely the failure of

². Usman Umaru, “Appraisal of Three Point Agenda of President Muhammadu Buhari” in *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* 23, no.4 (Jan. 2018): 46-47 www.iosrjournals.org/academia.edu/36820263/social-contract-and-leadership-in-nigeria-appraisal-of-three-point-agenda-of-president-muhammedu. Accessed; 1:20pm, 20thFeb,2023.

³. Umaru, “Appraisal of Three Point Agenda of President Muhammadu Buhari”, 46.

leadership.”(Achebe 1983).⁴ In other words, a leader plays a vital role in ensuring stability and security in his country. When a leader fails to adhere strictly to the roles assigned to him, that nation will begin to experience failure.

Security

This can be seen as the condition of being secured and having assurance of safety from all social vices. Insecurity is the opposite of security which involves the feeling of uncertainty. Buhari, while he was campaigning for presidency in 2015 promises to curb security challenges in Nigeria. Being the ex military head of state, the Nigerians were so enthusiastic and confident that Mr. Buhari will provide lasting solution to insecurity in Nigeria as an expert in that field. Two tenures have gone, the question remains; has Buhari able to keep to the promise he made to Nigerians that he will degrade Boko Haram in three months? The answer is capital NO. Buhari's administration under the political party APC was a colossal failure as security is concerned. Insecurity under his administration worsened. Life became worse as was seen in Locke's state of nature where there was no government. The state of nature then was a state of fear:

In such condition, there is no place for industry, because the fruit thereof is uncertain: and consequently, no culture of the earth; no navigation, nor use of the commodities that may be imported by sea; no commodious building; no instruments of moving... and which of all continual fear, and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, short.⁵

⁴. Chinua Achebe, *The Trouble with Nigeria*, (Enugu; Fourth Dimension Publishing Co., LTD. 1983), 1.

⁵. William Lawhead, *The Voyage of Discovery*. (USA: Wadsworth Group, 2002), 221-222.

Corruption

This is the bane of Nigeria, and it has eating deep into the fabric of the Nigerian society today. Corruption says Umaru is a criminal misconduct by a public or private employee in the discharge of official duty.⁶ Corroborating his idea with Nasir and Sharma e tal, Umaru maintains that;

Corruption includes habitual acceptance of illegal gratification, misappropriation or conversion of a property entrusted to someone as an employee or allowing another person to do so or of obtaining pecuniary advantage, massive fraud, extortion, emblems, rigging of elections, abuse of public property, leaking of officials secrets, sale of expired and defective goods like drugs, food, electronics and spare parts to the public.⁷

The Emergence, Formation and History of All Progressives Congress (APC)

The All Progressives Congress (APC) was formed in 6th February, 2013, a product of the merger of three largest opposition parties of Nigeria, the Action Congress (ACN), the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC), the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP), and a faction of All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA), together with a faction of Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). APC as a political party in Nigeria received its approval about after five months later on July, 2013 by the National Independent Electoral Commission (INEC), withdrawing the operating licenses of these three parties aforementioned that merged. APC in 2015 general elections challenged the then ruling party PDP and won the presidential election to become the first successful merger of major political parties

⁶. Lawhead, *The Voyage of Discovery*, 47.

⁷. Lawhead, *The Voyage of Discovery*, 47.

in the history of Nigeria. In 2019 again, the party retained power following the victory of the party incumbent candidate Muhammadu Buhari

2015 General Elections and Electorate Concerns

Under Mr. Goodluck Jonathan's presidency, the masses were highly intimidated and killed by Boko- Haram insurgency. It was the inability of the PDP government under the leadership of ex president Goodluck Jonathan to curb the threat from Boko Haram, persistent compliant of corruption, along with economy that made majority to believed that Muhammadu Buhari being an ex military head of state (1984-1985), and also tough on corruption could combat terrorism and other challenges. Although, Buhari and Jonathan were not the only contestants vying for the seat of presidency, there were 14 candidates contesting in that 2015 presidential election. The 2015 election marked the first time an incumbent president was defeated and power was handed over to another party since the return of democracy in Nigeria. The electorate's concern for choosing APC was because first, APC was a new political party made up from the merger of about three strong political parties. Secondly, the masses believed and had confidence that with their slogan 'CHANGE' the party will eliminate all the atrocities, corruption and evil PDP committed, all the while the party was the ruling party. Importantly, Nigerians also had confidence that since Mr. Buhari a retired military and also a former head of state, as an experienced soldier would definitely handle the challenges confronting Nigeria and make huge difference.

Assessing Muhammadu Buhari and his Achievements from 2015 to 2023

Muhammadu Buhari, a retired Nigerian army major general, born on 17th December, 1942 in Daura, Katsina State was inaugurated as the president of Federal Republic of Nigeria in 29th May, 2015. His inauguration was

historic as it marked the first time in the history of Nigeria when a candidate from an opposition was taking over from an incumbent president. He joined politics in 2003, following the country's return to a democratic rule in 1999. Buhari joined the ANPP and contested the presidential election on its platform and lost to the presidential candidate Olusegun Obasanjo of Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

In 2006, Buhari emerged again as the consensus presidential candidate in ANPP and ran the presidential election in 2007 but was defeated by PDP candidate, Umaru Musa Yar'Adua who introduced the Seven Point Agenda. It was an election that was largely and strongly criticized by observers and electorates as being marred by voting irregularities. Buhari despite his consistent defeat stood again in the 2011 presidential election and lost to PDP's incumbent candidate Goodluck Ebele Jonathan who came up with his transformational agenda. Due to his desire to become the president of Nigeria by all means, Buhari decided to merge his party with other political parties in 2014 in order to ensure that he defeated the incumbent president by all means. Good Luck Jonathan's regime was characterized by high level of corruption, massive destruction and bombing masterminded by the Islamic set known as Boko Haram. Boko Haram's attacks and destructions increased in magnitude, killing and injuring many Nigerians in northeast and north-central targeting on Christian churches, mosques, schools, government properties, police, military etc. The incessant killings, bombing and destructions by this sect made people to lose confidence in Good Luck. Buhari's reputation for being incorrupt and his military background made him an attractive candidate. The APC trumpeted that Buhari as an incorruptible, sincere and disciplined leader would easily bring solutions to the myriad of problems bedeviling the country under Good Luck's watch.

To further reassure Nigerians, the APC presents Prof. Osinbajo as a senior advocate of Nigeria, a university lecturer and a pastor in Redeemed Christian Church of God as Buhari's running mate. So, with Yemi Osinbajo beside Buhari in the presidency, Nigerians were assured that the rule of law would be obeyed and nobody would be above the law. Not only that, the APC only assured Nigerians that with Osinbajo beside Buhari, that the nation would be economic buoyant, as it was noted that he was formally Lagos State Attorney General under Bola Tinubu between 1999 and 2007. Many believed and hoped that he will effectively handle the security threat caused by this Islamic sect. As Ayokunu buttresses;

Under Buhari's tenure, I expect to see nothing less than a total reform of the Nigerian military. First, professionalism, meritocracy and discipline need to be reinstated. There should also be better recognition and incentives, including superior training, access to modern technologies, and cutting-edge research and development in intelligence gathering.⁸

Buhari's Three Point Agenda in 2015

In his campaign promises in 2014, Muhammadu Buhari made promise and assured Nigerians that if elected to replace Jonathan would revamp the economy, curb corruption and improve security in Nigeria, which he reiterated in 2019. In addition to his three point agenda, Buhari assured Nigerians that he would make Nigeria one of the fastest-growing economies in the world, promising that Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product growth index would improve by 10-12 percent every year. Importantly, Buhari assured Nigerians also that he would provide five

⁸. Ayokunu Adedokun, "Nigerian Elections in 2015: What Should be on Buhari's Agenda?" in *Our World*. May,2,2015, unu.edu/en/Nigerian-elections-2015-what-should-be-on-buhari's-agenda. No page, accessed 11:53am 20th Feb,2023.

million new jobs, fund small and medium scale enterprises, invest in agriculture, infrastructure, information technology, manufacturing, entertainment etc. based on these promises, many Nigerians came out en masse in 2015 and voted for Buhari. He defeated the incumbent polling a total of 15,424,921 votes to defeat Jonathan who polled 12,853,162 votes.

Mr. Buhari on Security and the Level of Violence in Nigeria

Buhari in his 2015 inaugural speech had declared that “I belong to everybody and I belong to nobody”, promising to unite and fight insecurity in Nigeria. Despite this promises, Buhari's regime remained dogged by allegations of nepotism, corruption and insecurity. The high level of insecurity in Nigeria since 2015 APC took over is worrisome. It has gone from worse to worst. The insurgency that was raising its ugly head basically in the northeast region has gone round almost all the states in Nigeria with different names and mode of operation. The unknown gunmen which operate in the southwest and southeastern part were known for killings, targeting government properties and officials. This group resurfaced again into kidnapping and killing the economic elites in that part of the country. Bandits that operate basically in the northern part of the country are known for kidnapping for ransom, attacks on security officials and breaking of jails, burning and destruction of people's farmlands, mosques, churches and houses, abduction and killing of clergies and school children. The farmer/herder clashes have left many Nigerians in pains and agony. Here are the analyses of these attacks beginning with mass abduction of school children;

Boko-Haram terrorists in February, 2018 kidnapped almost one hundred and ten school children in Dapchi town of Yobe State. Suspected gunmen in December, 2020 attacked Government Boys Science Secondary School in Kankara L.G.A of Katsina State abducting over 300 students.

Suspected bandits in February, 2021 abduct 27 students at government Science School in Kagara, Niger State. The federal government under the leadership of Muhammadu Buhari knew about these incessant abductions by these terrorists, but was too reluctant to proffer a lasting solution to end this menace and at the same time provides and equips security personnel with arms to protect these school children. Instead, these children especially the female ones were left long with these terrorists and were raped, deflowered and impregnated by these terrorists inside the bushes. The brutal killing of over forty worshippers in a church at Owa, Ondo state in the southwest and the murdering of a female student, Deborah Samuel by the mob in northwestern Sokoto State after being accused of blasphemy were facts to prove the total failure of Buhari to provide security for Nigerians. The most unforgettable and worrisome attack was the attack at the Nigerian Defense Academy (NDA), these terrorists invaded and attacked the NDA in Kaduna, killing two officers and abducted the senior officer. For these men to invade the NDA and succeeded shows the inability of the federal government to equip the armies with enough arms. As if that one was not enough, the cases of prison breaks were another attack carried out by these marauding hoodlums sine 2020 till date. These armed groups have freed more than 5,000 prisoners. The painful part of it is that this happens in the Federal Capital Territory where Mr. Buhari resides. These armed men succeeded in carrying out their attacks without being arrested by the security men. Another deadly attack was the Kaduna train attack which also left many dead and those kidnapped were taken to the forest, where they were seriously tortured for some months before they could be rescued with huge ransom paid by the victims' families. Ten months later, another attack was launched by these bandits in the Igueben Train Station in Edo state, kidnapping 20 passengers. All these attacks on innocent citizens together with police brutality which led to EndSars protest were not properly addressed by the president. Still all these bandits were not

arrested and brought to justice. Instead, they were all labeled unknown gunmen.

Rash of Prison Breaks in Nigeria under Buhari's Watch

More than 10 jailbreaks have occurred during Buhari administration, with over 6000 inmates escaping various Correctional Centres across Nigeria. According to Anthony Ailemen, the first major jailbreak during Buhari administration occurred at the KotonKarfe correctional Centre, Kogi State, on June 19, 2016, with about 13 inmates escaping from the facility.⁹ In August, the same year says Ailemen, 15 fled the Nsukka Correctional Centre, Enugu following an attack on the facility by gunmen.¹⁰ Other attacks on Correctional Centres were, Medium Security Correctional Centre in Tunga, Minna in 2018, Oko and Benin Correctional Centres in 2020, Okitipupa Correctional Centres in Ondo where 58 inmates regained freedom. In April 2021, Owerri Correctional Centre was attacked and about 1,844 inmates were freed in Imo state. The deadly attack at Kuje prison break left some assailants dead during the exchange of gun fire and at least, 64 Boko Haram terrorists escaped from the facility. All these prison breaks and the release of these terrorists contribute to high level of insecurity in Nigeria. Failure to equip the armies and negligence by the government is the major cause of these attacks.

Mr. Buhari on Curbing Corruption

Integrity and incorruptibility were presented to Nigeria as Buhari's most prominent selling points. Of a truth, Buhari's regime presented widespread prosecution. His anti-corruption fight was described by

⁹. Anthony Ailemen, "Rash of Prison Breaks on Buhari's Watch" in *Business Day*, July, 11, 2022. <https://businessday.ng/big-read/article/rash-of-prison-breaks-on-buhari's-watch>.

¹⁰. Ailemen, "Rash of Prison Breaks on Buhari's Watch", no page

many Nigerians as unsatisfactory, as several corrupt persons afflicted with the government were seemingly untouchable. For instance, as *The Punch* Newspaper carries it, Mr. Buhari's regime on a number of occasions traded corruption trial for political favours. This is exemplified when the regime in 2019 withdrew charges against a former governor of Gombe State Danjuma Goje, who was on trial for alleged N5bn fraud, after he later dropped his ambition to become the senate president in concession for the APC's arrangement to have Ahmed Lawan as the Senate president.

More so, Buhari's regime took the nation by surprise in 2019 when he granted presidential pardon to former governors of Plateau and Taraba States, Joshua Dariye and Jolly Nyame respectively. These governors had been convicted and sentenced to prison for embezzling N1.1bn and N1.6bn public funds respectively. Again, in 2015 when Buhari took power from Jonathan, Nigeria occupied number 136 spot on the Transparency International's corruption perception Index, which captured 174 most corrupt countries. Despite Buhari's acclaimed incorruptibility, Nigeria, as of 2022, ranked 154 out of 180 countries assessed by TI on its corruption perception Index. Rule of law under the regime of ex President Buhari was totally abused. There was no respect for the rule of law, and this gave much room for abuse of power and more corruption basically among the political elites at the corridor of power. Kabir describing the level of corruption in Nigeria stresses that Nigeria is among countries that have serious corruption problems and are at their lowest level in the decade He further avers that the global average remains unchanged for the tenth year in a row, at just 43 out of a possible

100 points, and Nigeria's points remain less than 30 despite multiple commitments.¹¹

2023 General Elections under Buhari's Watch

The 2023 general elections served as an eye opener for the masses to actually see the type of leader President Buhari is and the agenda of APC. The elections were described by many Nigerians as a total failure because it was massively rigged despite the promises made by president Buhari and the INEC chairman Prof. Yakubu Mamoodu. The introduction of the almighty BVAS was a confirmed technique used to rig the election as it failed woefully despite the huge amount of money wasted to purchase the device. In fact, Nigerians were brainwashed, deceived by president Buhari's fake promises to give Nigeria the best election, only to find out that the BVAS introduced was a means to deceive Nigerians to remain in power, and never to organize a free, fair, transparent, credible and violence free elections that will usher in an incorrupt leader that will salvage the country and give the masses justice and hope they have been longing for. What actually transpired in 2023 general elections is an indication that APC party never wanted inclusion and stability in Nigeria.

Unstable Economy

In his flagship report for 2022, Hillary Essien notes that Nigeria's economy under Muhammadu Buhari administration is worse than 10 years ago.¹² He reports that the hike in food prices could amplify the

^{11.} Kabir Yusu, "Timeline: Nigeria's Alarming Trend of Mass abduction of School Children" in *Premium Times*. Feb 27, 2021, premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines445582-timeline-nigeria-s-alarming-trend-of-mass-abduction-of-school-children.html. Accessed; 8:00pm, 20th March, 2023.

^{12.} Hillary Essen. "Nigeria's Economy Under Buhari Worse than 10 years Ago" in *Global Economic Prospect*. Jan,2022. [Gazettengr.com](https://gazettengr.com). Accessed 11:00pm Sun, 2023. No page.

negative impact of increased poverty on economic growth.¹³ These scarcities and hike in prices of things in Nigeria began when Buhari ordered for the closure of borders to avoid the importation of foreign goods in the country. The closure of land borders by president Buhari in August 2019 was a major driving force for the upward of the inflation rates in the country. This closure of borders has led to rise in prices of food items and other things, leaving millions of Nigerians to untold hardship. Again, borrowings during Buhari's administration have soared. In 2014 before ex president Mr. Buhari became the president, Nigeria's external debt was \$28,628,765,478.(macrotrends.net) The Organization's recently released financial statements, Nigeria is the fourth most country, with \$13 billion debt as June, 2022. This shows that every Nigerian will be owing N384,864 each when Buhari leaves office in May, 2023.

According to Punch Newspaper, the administration met a debt of N12.12tn on June 30, 2015, but it increased to N42.84tn by June 30, 2022.¹⁴ The statistics obtained from the DMO has it that the increase represents 253percent growth over the period. Out of the N93.453tn budgeted from 2016 – 2023, a total N67.4tn has been committed to recurrent expenditure. A breakdown shows that ex president Buhari presented a budget of N6.061tn in 2016. The budget, however, heralded Nigeria's first recession under the regime. The budget was increased to N7.44tn in 2019; and N10.8tn in 2020. The budget for 2021 and 2022 rose to N13.6tn and N17.126tn respectively. However, the estimates presented to the National Assembly for 2023 put the figure at N20.51tn. in other words, Nigeria's debt rose by N30.72tn between July 2015 and June 2022. Despite the high increase in debt, still the government plans to

¹³. Essen. "Nigeria's Economy Under Buhari" No page

¹⁴. Odinaka Anudu, "Buhari's Regime Borrows N31tn to Leave N39.12tn debt for Successor" in *Punch*, Oct, 2022

borrow more N8.4tn in this 2023.¹⁵

Sadly, all these debts the government under Mr. Buhari was even meant for salaries, gratuities and emoluments of civil servants and legislators. In other words, Nigeria borrows to consume and not to produce, that is why Nigeria is still wallowing in poverty and hardship. This is because; the productive sector which supposed to be the major area the government invests on is being neglected. The implication of leaving this sector leads to collapse of many industries and unemployment. Reacting to the ugly state of the nation's economy, a professor of economics Nwogwugwu cries out, lamenting that the N93tn budget for eight years had made little impact, looking at the budget assessment in three ways: the accounting or statistical, the impact and administrative perspectives.¹⁶ He also laments that some citizens of the country have not been paid their salaries, yet the government borrowed for that purpose.

Now the question remains; how then will Nigerians expect growth when those leaders at the corridor of power are for their egoistic interest? So, in Buhari's administration, nothing really changed. There are lots of leakages, corruption and cases of embezzlement of public funds and injustice. The former Emir of Kano Lamido Sanusi at the seventh edition of Kaduna Economic and Investment forum Laments that the previous and present government had left a heritage of debts for the unborn generations of Nigerian. He however stresses that the cost of servicing debt in Nigeria is N2.597tn, whereas revenue was N2.4tn in the first half of 2022.¹⁷ In other words, debt servicing in Nigeria is now 108 per of

^{15.} Anudu, "Buhari's Regime Borrows N31tn" No page

^{16.} Charles Ogwo, "Analysis: Buhari's Education Revitalization Promise Fails Expectation" in *Bussiness Day*. Feb 2023, businessday.ng. no page: Accessed by 11:00am, May 13, 2023.

^{17.} Ogwo, "Analysis", No page

revenue. Indicating that for every naira the federal government earns goes to servicing debts. Sanusi summarily concludes that we are leaving a mountain of debt for our children. They (children) might curse us because we are taking all the money borrowed to subsidize petrol and enjoy it cheaply.¹⁸

Buhari's approach to the Exchange Rate and Persistent Increase in Petrol Price

As of January, 2015, Exchange Rates.org.uk has it that, US Dollar to Nigerian Naira official exchange rate was 183.5912, in black market it was 265. In 2016 it went up to 199.3478, whereas in black market it ends at 495. In 2017, US Dollar exchange rate climbed to 308.0258, in black market it was 499. In 2018, it got to 358.5091, whereas, in January 2019, it also went up to 363.0796. It kept increasing every day by day. In 2023, US Dollar Nigerian Naira official rate reached 460.4946 for a dollar on a relatively flexible spot market window, but as of May, 2023, on the black market, it has reached 738 and above.

The price of fuel as where the previous government of Goodluck Ebele Jonathan left it was N86.80. In May 2016, Buhari increased the pump price of petrol from N86.50 to N145 per litre. From N145 to 170 and N185 per litre respectively in 2020. In 2022 and 2023, petrol price changed, there was no fixed price again, and filling stations all over the country were selling petrol at N500, N450, and N400 per litre depending on states. This was against the official pump price of N185. This ugly and persistent rise in petrol price really affected the poor masses and economic sector as prices of things in the market kept skyrocketing on daily basis. As it stands, the dollar price is above eight hundred naira, and this is survival of the fittest.

^{18.} Ogwo, "Analysis", No page

Education Institution under Buhari's Watch Since 2015-2023

The state of education sector in Nigeria today is really perturbing and also a cause for concern. Buhari's second tenure has ended; education system in Nigeria is still far from being globally competitive. It is quite unfortunate that under Buhari's administration education which supposed to be the number one priority and focus was totally neglected and abandoned. The education sector under president Buhari was totally rocked by incessant strikes. Students that were supposed to be in the class rooms reading and learning were seen roaming the streets and causing nuances. The typical example is the 2020 and 2022 prolonged strikes that left many students useless and unproductive. Many students because of this incessant strikes, insincerity and failure of the government to provide a well playing field for effective learning have engaged into many illicit and injurious jobs like yahoo, prostitution, occultism, kidnapping etc. The Academic Staff Union of Universities ASUU were starved and denied their salaries for complete eight months and nothing was done to dialogue with the ASUU. The worst the ex president could do was using hunger weapon to fight the academia. For his two terms of fours in office, ex president Buhari did not attain up to fifteen percent of the annual budget allocation for education which is seen as a critical unit of the economy. Ogwo however agrees that Buhari did not make substantial investments in the training of teachers at all level of the system.¹⁹

Nigeria's Academic Staff Union of Universities ASUU, have disclosed that the ex president Buhari led administration has failed in repositioning the education sector. This led Ogunyemi in a press briefing to call Mr. Buhari to declare a state of emergency on the country's education

¹⁹. Ogwo, "Analysis", No page

system.²⁰ Nigerians do not need soothsayers to tell them that Buhari administration has only succeeded in playing lip services to challenges faced in Nigeria's education sector. Ogunyemi adds that the challenges of insecurity faced by the country would be on the increase if the government fails to fix education sector.²¹ From all indication, it is quite true that virtually all the problems Buhari met upon assumption of office 8years ago in the area of education have remained unresolved, yet he wants to forcefully put Nigeria again into another mess by brainwashing and deceiving Nigerians with his fake promise during the 2023 general elections that the introduction of the so called almighty BVAS will help to reduce election malpractices. However, it is really sad that matters concerning education in Nigeria have not got the kind of attention they deserved from Buhari administration under APC. The neglect of education sector which supposed to be the number one priority is an indication that Buhari administration was a colossal waste in the key three agenda he promised to tackle.

Buhari's Successes on Infrastructural Development and Agriculture

In as much as the ex president did not fulfill his 3 key promises, he still recorded successes in these two areas; infrastructures and agricultural development. In infrastructural development, the ex president did not just focus on new infrastructures, he equally tried so much in rehabilitating the existing assets and completion of the longstanding projects that have failed to gain traction under previous governments. For instance, it was in Buhari regime that the long awaited Second Niger Bridge was finally completed; the rail ways that were long abandoned

²⁰. Ibrahim Ramalan, "Buhari Administration has Failed in Education-ASUU-"in *Daily Nigerian*. Sept 10,2019. Nigeria's Academic Staff Union of Universities dailynigerian.com. <https://dailynigerian.com/buhari-administration-has-failed-in-education-asuu/> Accessed: May 14, 2023, 5:57am.

²¹. Ramalan, "Buhari Administration has Failed in Education"

were all rehabilitated in his regime. Also, some roads that were abandoned by the past administrations were rehabilitated again. Ojeifo Recalled that Buhari Administration established the Presidential Infrastructure Development Fund (PIDF), in 2018, to fast-track the completion of critical infrastructure projects and in 2019, signed Executive Order 7 (the Companies Income Tax Road Infrastructure Development and Refurbishment Investment Tax Credit Scheme), which is aimed at attracting PPP financing for Road construction across Nigeria.²² It was through this laudable scheme that infrastructure funding is sourced from the Sukuk Bond. Projects being funded under PIDF include the Second Niger Bridge, construction of the 375km Abuja-Kaduna-Zaria-Kano Expressway and its transformation to a six-lane configuration; reconstruction of the Benin- Ofusu-Ore- Ajebandele-Shagamu Expressway; the Enugu- Port Harcourt Expressway, and the Kano-Maiduguri Expressway. Also, the Loko- Oweto Bridge, linking Benue and Nasarawa which was started by Goodluck was completed by the ex president Buhari. On the railway infrastructural development, three major rail projects inherited by Goodluck regime were completed. These are Abuja Metro Rail, the Kaduna Rail, and the Itakpe- Ajaokuta-Warri Rail, started in 1987, and was completed in 2020 under Buhari administration. These achievements in infrastructure show that there was a tremendous success in that sector.

Scorecard of Agricultural Development under Buhari's Regime

In 2015, the ex president Buhari launched the Anchor Borrower's Programme (ABP), an initiative formulated by CBN which aimed to provide farmers with credit support, increasing growth and productivity of farmers and create opportunities for local producers in domestic

^{22.} Ojeifo, Sufuyan, "Buhari Impact on Nigeria's Road and Rail Infrastructure" in *Guardian*. 2021, guardian.ng/ Accessed: June 9, 2023 ,3:22am

market. The government intension was to promote the indigenous produce which will then curb the rate of importing foreign products. This gave room for the appointment of Hameed Ali, a retired army colonel, as Comptroller General of the Nigeria Custom Service. He restricted the importation of 41 essential items. The reason was that the products could be produced locally and would relieve the pressure on the Naira. Some of these banned items were agricultural finished products like Rice, Fertilizer, Sugar, Meat, Fish, and Poultry. The question remains, how successful was this initiative? The ex president might have good intension in bringing this initiative, but the way he started by banning foreign products without first producing those things in large quantity showcased that the ex president lacked good advisers. This seriously led to the suffering, hunger, poverty and hardship the masses are passing through in Nigeria. Those items banned; rice, fish, poultry etc., the prices at the market have skyrocketed to the extent that they are no longer affordable and available. Farmers on the other hand faced a lot of challenges of insecurity and ravaging flood that they have not recovered from.

The Way forward to Ending Leadership Crises in Nigerian Politics

Of a truth, eight years is very long enough for a determined, committed and dedicated leader to restructure and fix his country. It is long enough for Nigeria to reverse negative trends and become a successful country. If the ex-president Mr. Buhari had the will and passion to better Nigeria in eight years of his presidency, frankly speaking, he had all the power to accomplish whatever he had for Nigeria. But the question is, did he? It is high time Nigerian politicians realize that politics is not a do or die affair. It is basically meant for those who have what it takes to salvage their country. For anyone to embark in politics, the individual must within himself be conceived that his motive is to willingly serve and protect his country and not to use it as a means to achieve his selfish and egoistic

interest.

While rethinking why some African countries became progressive, Olariwaju explains that in eight years, between 1983 and 1991, Flight Lt. Jerry Rawlings the late Ghanaian president, transformed his country's economy and reversed the slide in his homeland. As a result of the production of Economic Recovery Program (ERP) by Rawlings, Ghana was able to lower inflation through stringent fiscal Monetary, and trade policies, increase the flow of foreign exchange; restructure her economic institutions; restore production incentives; rehabilitate infrastructure to enhance conditions for the production and export of goods; and increase the availability of essential consumer goods.²³

Again, in five years as president of South Africa, Olariwaju explains further that Nelson Mandela strengthened the country's economy. He introduced the Reconstruction and Development Programme(RDP), which was a socio-economic policy framework meant to address the immense socio-economic problems brought about by apartheid. Through this the Mandela administration alleviated poverty and corrected the massive shortfalls in social services across Africa.²⁴

Olariwaju also recalls that in 1994, Rwanda was thrown into a genocidal ethnic crisis that left about eight hundred people dead. By 2020 when Paul Kagame took over as president, the country had become a failed state; trust was gone, treasury was looted, facilities were run down, economy was dimmed. But by 2008, Rwanda had become a better country and Rwandans more united than ever before. The country moved from being

²³. Olarewaju Sulaimon, "Buhari Presidency 2015-2023:Prologue:The Power, Promises and Possibilities of eight years" in *Nigerian Tribune* May 17,2023 <https://tribuneng.com/buharipresidency-2015-2023-prologue-the-power-promises-ans-possibilities-of-eight-years/> assessed: August 16, 2023, 2:32am.

²⁴. Sulaimon; Buhari Presidency 2015-2023

tribally divided to being nationally united.²⁵

In conclusion, from what this essay has assessed so far, it is very clear that Buhari's presidency since 2015-2023 was a colossal waste. It was in Mr. Buhari's administration that one realizes that there is nothing basically wrong with the Nigerian land. The trouble with Nigeria as Achebe in four decades ago laments is “simply and squarely” a failure of leadership.²⁶ Nigerian leaders since our colonial masters left us have not been fair with their citizens. That copied culture of imperialism still revolves. As Ihuah rightly puts; Our cultural demands of individualism are too extreme...The many wars, discriminations, disharmonies and injustices as well as the ethnic cleansing against the Tiv of Nigeria and the Fulani war against other ethnic nationalities in Nigeria and the terrorist activities of Boko Haram in the North Eastern Nigeria has been perpetrated because we have banished others from our group and therefore from our circle of concern.²⁷

Unless Nigerians produce transformative and action leaders who will take the burden and challenges facing Nigeria so serious, there can never be peace, justice, stability and harmony in Nigeria. Those progressive countries of the world became stable because their leaders had the passion and desire to move their countries forward.

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²⁵. Sulaimon; Buhari Presidency 2015-2023

²⁶. Chinua Achebe, *The Trouble with Nigeria*. (Enugu:Fourth Dimension Publishing Co, LTD., 1983)

²⁷. Alloy S. Ihuah, “Of Seeking the Whole from the Units: A Discourse Analysis of Aristotle's Essence, Asouzu's Ibuanyidanda and the Tiv Ayatutu Ontology” *Appon Philosophical Quarterly*. 1,no.1 (2022),108. <https://acjol.org-> Accessed: August 14,2023. 1:00pm.

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