

AGRICULTURE AND THE QUESTION OF NATIONAL ECONOMY, DEVELOPMENT AND SECURITY: A NIGERIAN PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Agriculture has always been one of the earliest, easiest and natural activities on which man depended for survival. In the case of Nigeria, the lucrative worth of agriculture is quite undisputable. The glory of Nigeria as a country in terms of standard economy, commerce, food security, fame, etc. has always been traced to agricultural activities. But this paper finds out that the era of agricultural glory in Nigeria has gone following the one-phase economic system the country adopted since the discovery of oil in Niger Delta axis. Consequently, this has accumulated in high unemployment rate, economic valuelessness, poverty, atrocious acts emanating from hunger strike, insecurity and criminalities, etc. This paper therefore argues that Nigerians necessary have to go back to agriculture when the government must ensured provision of mechanised system and then security of farmers and their produce against terrors. The paper holds promise to analyze how both the government and the people should work with understanding to ensure the achievement of this. The paper adopts context analytical and historical methods.

INTRODUCTION

Development of a society is a collaborative effort of both the government, non-governmental organization and the citizens at large. The weakness of or negligence by one part certainly has a lot of damage on the effectiveness of others thereby bringing about backwardness in the whole system. As it concerns agriculture, the government, likewise the people have a lot to productively contribute. Agriculture, which is primarily conceived as the act of tilling or cultivating the land and the whole process of rearing animals, all aiming at food, timber and raw materials, assets and finance production, is one of the simplest and lucrative enterprise ever. It “is the oldest profession in the world which started in the time of early men as hunting and gathering”. Indeed, negligence to agriculture is negligence to employment, economy, entrepreneurship, productivity, creativity, development and literacy. “Agricultural sector ideally should promote the inter-sectoral linkages with other sectors in driving growth in Nigeria. Agricultural products serve as input into the manufacturing sector and other tradable sectors thereby stimulating growth in the economy”. Many notable countries that are counted as developed (economically, creatively, productively and otherwise) are agriculture-friendly countries that revere agriculture as the cradle and citadel upon which their general social development stood. Many globally acknowledged recorded richest men are agriculturalists and entrepreneurs. The failure of agriculture in Nigeria was a significant point where our undevelopment and economic weakness started, and today, we are suffering from this negligence and forgetfulness in every sector and institution in Nigeria. The evident consequence of this is huge food and economic insufficiency leading to inevitable importation of some products we should be able to produce on our own, like rice, milk, fish and meat and even tooth pick, cotton board etc. costing us billions of dollars annually.

As attempts to proffer solutions, many have cried out for economic diversifications from mono-economic system from oil exploration to agriculture, building of entrepreneurial skills for life independency, and investment in human resources and equally education. At this, it becomes crystal clear that Nigeria must reverse to agriculture in order to ensure a standard and strong economy, commerce, development, employment, food security, healthy living and regaining of that lost fame and curbing of criminalities. But there are factors that must be considered before the realization of this. These factors majorly border on security, provision of aids in terms of finance, farm inputs in different forms, to farmers. This is necessary following (1) the fact that it is only he who is alive farms and maximizes productivity; (2) the peculiar challenge of insecurity and life threatening situations between herdsmen and host communities, banditry, terrorism, natural disaster like flood, etc. in Nigeria; (3) the attitude of Nigerian government to neglect provision of financial and farm input support to farmers; (4) human investment to equip the people with the knowledge of technical-know-how of carrying out and managing agricultural activities.

This paper was a paper presented at the 2017 conference of the Unit of General Studies, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, titled ‘General Studies in 21st Century African Development’. It was later published as a conference proceeding by Grand-Heritage Global Communications at Nsukka in 2017. With a lot of restructuring, the paper has tried to include security discussion and other relevant issues affecting human welfare in its horizon. To start this, the paper would present a historical analysis of the worth of agriculture in Nigeria.

The Worth of Agriculture in Nigeria

An Igbo African adage says that *o ji ogu ji nju afo ya* (he who has the hoe has his (food) contentment). This is realizable in the appropriate use of hoe. No wonder why the Igbo answer *egu di uru* (hoe is lucrative). It is necessary to state crystal clear that even if other Western countries deny the reality of these sayings, America would not deny the fact that the foundation of their wealth as it is today is found on the agricultural ‘sweat’ of African slaves. Their economic growth started with agriculture; in support to this claim, we can extract this from the view maintained by Gollin, *et al.* (2002, 160-4) that economic growth and general social growth and development largely depend on how the agricultural sector of a people is developed. Be that as may, what is the big deal there if Nigeria should thus mean the economic diversification clamouring and make use of agriculture as the central focus? It has appeared ridiculous as Nigerians suddenly appears to have forgotten how they were globally recognized as the biggest groundnut producers in the 60s that in a year, 712,600tonnes were produced. They appear to have lost memories of how they were globally, the second cocoa producers with 203,600tonnes per year after Ghana and the fourth palm oil producers mainly from the Southern part, and “the plantation in the South supplied half the world’s export of palm kernels” with 407,200tonnes and 70% of palm oil with 152,700tonnes per year. May be Nigerians have also lost count of how then, the “Nigerian forest covered some 301, 800 square kilometers and produced about 1.132 million cubic meters of timber a year, for export as logs, sawn timbers or plywood shut”. This goes down well with the view Echeta, *et al.* (2013) took when they say that prior to 1970 that agriculture was the major export and major source of economy to Nigeria. No one joked with agriculture then and nobody regretted it but the case is no more the same today and Nigerians now ‘enjoy’ the consequences. Then, by mere subsistent farmers, rubber was grown, harvested and locally processed in local factories. “There was buoyant production by the ancient livestock industry of the North” and with the number of pigs reared in Kano and other states, Nigeria was among the highest pig growing countries globally. Still describing Nigerian worth and fame through agriculture, it was reported that in the 50s and 60s, agriculture saw to 60-70% of total Nigerian exportation and in early 60s precisely, it accounted for over 80% of the country’s export (Muhammad, *et al.* 2006). Still in the same view, Egbulonu, *et al.*, report:

In the sixties, the agricultural sector dominated the Nigerian economy and contributed about 80 percent of her gross domestic product. However, the discovery and exploitation of crude oil in commercial quantity in Nigeria led to the decline in economic activities in other sectors particularly the agricultural and industrial sectors. Hitherto, the agricultural sector provided sufficient food for the people, raw materials and other inputs for the manufacturing subsectors as well as foreign exchange requirements of the economy (2014, 290)

In confirmation to this, the Nigerian Federal Government (1983) as recorded by Egbulonu, *et al.* (2014, 291) recognized that the agricultural sector led among all other sectors then, served as the major sector that provided employment opportunity for more than 80% of Nigerian citizens and as well provided greater percentage of the economy. Then was when the glory of Nigeria was at the world's notice, and this attracted citizens of other African countries— Ghana, Sierra Leon, Liberia etc. to come to her in search of greener pastures. “The days of agricultural production were the hallmarks of immeasurable financial substantiality for the different regions”. Nigerians are still aware of 1970s when the Nigerian currency was too valuable that 75 kobo (not 1 Naira yet) was exchanged at U.S \$1. That was the power of agriculture and dependency on what Nigerians made. As shameful as it is today, Nigerians have suddenly forgotten the recent ranking of national economic value rate by the ‘British Government’ 2011 when Nigeria was rated 3rd in Africa and the 2014 economic value ranking by the ‘Express’ when she was the African 4th. Thus, the economy of Nigeria “on the wheels of farm cart” was very stable, valid, and prosperous and highly envied globally (Benjamin, 2012). Unfortunately, this glory began to experience setbacks as the *volta facie* with the discovery of oil in Oloibiri and other quarters in the river line areas and generally other parts of the country and making it the only source of economy. Some whose relatives could ‘fix in’, in the system changed their jobs and trooped into the oil sector which saw over 90% of the national revenue (Bitrus, 2011). This really justifies the point made by Jan (2011) that when new natural resources are found, there is the tendency of appreciating the domestic currency though the growth of manufacturing and tradable sectors are prone to be hampered. Oil boom and dependency thus replaced the pivotal position of agriculture in the economic discourse and as a consequence, agricultural exportation dropped from 43% (1970) to 7% (1974). Little wonder it is argued that “while the dispersed natural resources such as fertile agricultural land were generally beneficial to the economy, the so called “point source” resources such as oil, natural gas and some minerals often reduce long run economic growth and quality of the country’s government and institutions” (Benjamin 2012). Still sinking deep in poor state, in 1996, agricultural export saw for only 2% of Nigeria’s exportation which placed her “as net importer of food and other agricultural commodities” (Egbulonu, *et al.* 2014, 294). Exportation was replaced with importation that nothing is exported but everything imported. Major food importation (Egbulonu, *et al.* 2014, 299) took 0.88% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 1981 and 1.47% in 1990 and 3.54% in 1995; getting to its climax in 2001, it took 77.2% of the GDP. Though, in 2005 and 2009, importation was at 51.83% and 73.48% respectively. As a consequence, Nigeria now faces food security challenge as about 70% of Nigerians survive on less than #100 daily leading to hunger and poverty (Nwajiuba, 2013). This became so high that the country now becomes “deeply immersed in oil exploitation that it has so much dominated the economy that” at a sneeze of oil price fall, we are only in recession, which some insincere diplomats like former Minister of Finance, Mrs Kemi Adeosun (www.premiumtimesng.com 21/7/2016) dared blending ‘technical recession’ while lying to cover the truth declared by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) that Nigerian economy was in a mess. However, the All Progressives Congress (APC) aircraft which president Buhari started to pilot since 2015 made things hard for the citizens and consequently, everybody, in an attempt to survive, queued into agriculture by force. Therefore, Nigerians need economic diversification for their own betterment and economic development, illiteracy reduction, curbing of unemployment rate, better standard of living, etc. Nigeria is naturally blessed that natural disaster is hardly heard of, in the country, thus, giving impetus for agricultural activities. She has about 74-79 million hectares of arable land, but unfortunately, only about 32 million hectares are cultivated (Egbulonu, *et al.* 2014, 291-2). Nigerians necessarily have to go back to agriculture to regain their national dignity which is ‘the black shade’ in their coat of arm which stands for the Nigerian fertile land for agriculture. Before 2015, some families would be the few ‘poor’ ones actively participating in agriculture: uprooting grasses, clearing farms and tilling the soil, but as from 2016 when the effect of the APC led federal government became very clear, number of farming families increased. Everybody now, as a lesson and an effect, knows the road to farms. This could be seen all over Nigeria. Therefore, the earlier Nigerians go back to the root as agriculture-friendly people who have ever enjoyed the core dividends of agriculture in the past, the better for them. “The agricultural sector remains strategic for national food security, employment generation, wealth creation and poverty reduction as over 65 percent of the labour force is engaged in the sector” (Egbulonu, *et al.* 2014, 295). According to *Wikipedia*, the United States of America, in 2005, had her 9 out of 10 households’ food secured throughout. Unfortunately, in Nigeria, “the agricultural sector in Nigeria has shown unimpressive performance” yet the “Value added per capita in agriculture has risen by less than one percent annually”. Not until Nigerians do this, they will continue to ask where the Nigeria’s African ‘giantness’ is, and Nigeria’s position in the whole world in terms of agriculture, economy, security and development.

The Problems and Solutions

Of course having seen the Nigerian economic, security and development situations, nobody needs to ask if there are problems facing Nigeria. It is just clear. The paper will attempt presenting the point of departure point and subsequently proffer possible solutions.

(1) **National Farmers Association (NFA):** This is the organization binding everybody who is a farmer as an entity. This means that it is Nigerians’ own association because all Nigerians are farmers in one way and time or the other. This association should be legally and financially productive and strengthened. Unfortunately, politicization is a major challenge to proper functioning of this national body. There have been series of unhealthy and selfish politics going on in the association and this, in consequence, does no good to Nigerians as it concerns agriculture and its supposed contribution to the national economy. When unhealthy political struggles, bias and the whole influence of favouritism become the daily experience in a particular association, it would certainly and finally pave way for corrupt leaders to

emerge and assume power which would bring down, to a pitiable level, the whole system and mar the association severely.

(2) **Agricultural Research Agency:** Research as “the study of materials and sources in order to establish facts and reach new conclusion” or “a careful study of a subject, especially in order to discover new facts or information about it” is an inductive method of enquiry through which new knowledge about a phenomenon is grasped. Hence to ensure plausible and new facts about agriculture as a ‘material’ or ‘subject’, constant series of research must be intelligibly conducted and vigorously sponsored in order not to be outdated in the agricultural knowledge and practice. This is the aspect of human development pointed out here earlier before now. Agricultural research programmes should be unhesitatingly conducted and sponsored in order to ensure a sustainable growth of agriculture that is of global standard when agricultural issues are raised. On this, Prof. Igbekele Amos Ajibefun (2015) made a solemn call advising the government that there should be a “heavy investment in research and development and effective interaction between researchers and the farm households” so that there should be “agricultural productivity and poverty reduction” in the state. He noted that “Nigeria needs to pay more attention to research in sciences and on how to improve agriculture in rural area” for “this will help farmers and the nation at large”. The government should therefore know and hold to heart, the dignity and improvement of research as an academic developmental exercise and therefore encourage it. So having known this, the government should try and fund this Council/Agency so that the country will improve and develop especially as it concerns agriculture and productivity for economy. The people in this council/body should, in the other hand, make a well management of whatever fund-means the government offers to them to go on researching for the good of the country and finally come up with new knowledge for that virtually should be the end-product of every research as an epistemic activity.

(3) **Wrong Conception of Agriculture cum Poor Agricultural Systematic Practice/ Engagement:** In the minds of some Nigerians, especially, graduates today, investing in agriculture after school is just too awkward financially unworthy. In fact, it is just nothing but stress and suffering. For them, agriculture is as more than nothing as unucrative and unattractive to suit the vogue of development and civilization of these days. It is a non-worthwhile venture. They hence see agricultural investment as unprofitable, let alone talking of immediate profit making. It makes no quick returns *vis-à-vis* their ‘fast cash’ mentality. Mistakenly, they conceive the whole idea of agriculture as being concerned with crops production which must, at least, last one year before something economic could be fetched or obtained from it. They forget that agricultural practice involving animal husbandry and production like poultry farming stays just 7-8 weeks only for commercial engagement to commence on it. They forget that some animals like pigs stay only 5-8 months to grow and begin delivery and when this begins, it will make two or three consecutive turns in a year. As interesting as it could be, the number in each delivery adds geometrically and continuous in that order as nature may have it. Furthermore, they also see agricultural investment as highly capital intensive without knowing that it only needs small amount of money to start. For instance, piggery farming which is one of the most gainful and quick-returning aspect of agriculture can be started with as few as one male and one female. This alone is a company on its own and any doubt would be cleared by mere visiting the farm in a year period. Unfortunately, these wrong assumptions about agriculture degenerate in them the interest to engage in agriculture; hence the practice of agriculture is financially unattractive and economically not booming. So, in alternative to this, some of the graduates go after white-kola-jobs either by hook or crook, which they think could just fall down from anywhere, perhaps heaven. By this, they would rather choose to sit down in an office well furnished and garnished with technological devices for their working-days-24 hours-comfort for which, at the end of the month, they get paid. That is why they fold their hands and wait for *oyibo* job that only God knows when it will come. This has encouraged laziness and loss of sense of responsibility in some people. It has made them to neglect agriculture by giving no atom of attention. This may explain why many Nigerians keep dwelling in continuous agricultural poor productivity.

As against this misconception, investing seriously in agriculture will left Nigerians with the assurance of plenty food security which is all about “the availability of food and one’s access to it” or a situation in which the people “have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active healthy life” (Egbulonu, *et al.* 2014, 294-5). Agricultural investments will bring about economic diversification but the problem is that Nigerians and the Nigerian governments have refused to explore agriculture. Borrowing from Dr. V. O. Ebong:

Of course... the problem of agricultural production across the nation, state and local government levels, is inability to put in the capital that is needed in agriculture. Emphasis had always been on crude oil. In fact, efforts of the government were geared towards producing oil rather than investment in agriculture. If you look at the national budget over the years, you’ll notice that most of the budgetary allocations were forwarded into petroleum industries, rather than agriculture because that is where they considered to be the main stay of the economy (2015, 8)

It is a pity that Nigerians have refused to realize that he who dwells in agriculture, even if he lacks money, will never lack food to eat. Agriculture gives strong support for food production, financial and economic standardization when it is taken serious. Nigerians have forgotten that agriculture is appropriated to career and that he who has a career can never go hungry; even if he goes hungry, he would work for himself and with that sense of *o mere onwe ya* (I am specially doing this one for myself), his surroundings will never lack new looks of special fashioned objects. Worst as it could, even if he does not see work to do, he would sell and earn from those chaffs or particles/pieces of condemned items/objects from people to whom they could be useful. Thus, nothing in agriculture actually goes wasteful. The excreta from animals could be recycled and used to re-manure the soil for greater productivity during cultivation season.

It could also be useful to plants and resourceful to man while some could go for nutritious feeding of animals in other farms. Some animals and plants are grown as predators or to limit the negative influences of other animals and plants on our environment and us. Some have positive economic importance that are, on this context, innumerable. The drained water from fish ponds is, for the fish, no more useful but toxic to their lives. Many of those things called wastes from plant-crop productions are very nutritious for the feeding of some animals, herbally useful for human lives. The scenario presented here is a chain-like one with mutual interaction outlook where at every level, there is something to gain in the cycle. From this peculiar perspective, what is argued for, is the tendency of having no 'waste' product in the recycle form of agricultural activities. That is to say that what is considered as waste here in agricultural productivity could be edible and great source of nutrients and very economically important. No agricultural product is totally bad or waste for it will be surely useful in the other side unlike oil venture which its waste is clear and harmful and detrimental to life and brings about agricultural un-productivity.

Consequent upon this misconception of agriculture and venturing into it by some people, Nigerians only and entirely concentrate on oil thereby monopolizing the source of their economy. This leads to economic recession and dropping of price of the crude oil which results to inflation of almost 2000 Naira to 1 dollar as is real today. This is bound to occur following the fact that even though Nigerians consume the crude when processed to fuel, Nigeria does not process it hence dependency of what they do not produce which would force them to the use of the currency of those producing what they consume. Little wonder the then governor, Central Bank of Nigeria, Godwin Ifeanyi Emeziele broke silence and every executive diplomacy in February, 2016 by coming out to tell Nigerians that there is a great hard times ahead. In another important citation, Prof. Wole Soyinka (www.Vanguardngr.com, (18/20)/02/2016) said that he supported those who said that our economy is bad. But in the insincerity of some political class, Mr. President, Buhari (www.Vanguardngr.com, (18/20)/02/2016) in his political and diplomatic mind, told Nigerians that their economy is now the fastest growing economy in Africa, all in February, 2016– in the midst of recession even.

Factually, Nigeria is in economic oblivion, wretchedness and down-to-earth-devaluation just because they refused to diversify their mono-sourced economy. Therefore, to avert these economic recession and general devaluation, Nigerians must listen to Ebong who writes:

More than anything else, the government should make concrete efforts to diversify their interests, not just to depend solely on federal allocation, which is hugely derived from oil. They should also give attention to investment in agriculture, and encourage the masses to take active part in it. Let us not fold our arms and think that everything should start and end in the oil sector. The time has indeed come for people to go into big time farming. If we have more people engaging in large scale farming,... this state could expand its economic profile and also ensure food sufficiency for all citizens. Everyone, not just the government alone, has a task to perform in this regard (2015, 9)

Many Nigerians have advocated for the diversification of economy to other sectors especially agricultural sector. Of course it should be noted that "investment in agriculture and accompanying creation of infrastructure and institutions in other sectors constitute the mechanism for national economic growth".

(4) Organic/Compost Manure Making Encouragement: Organic/compost manure is a sort of manure made from decaying and excreta of living things. It is a type of manure made from natural things and this makes it natural manure. It has the core quality of fertility that the land needs for productivity. It encourages and inhabits nitrogen fixing bacteria and has no/little negative effects on land and crops. Therefore, in the agricultural sector, awareness on the importance of organic manure and its making and advocacy for use, should be created. Its betterment over the inorganic type should be emphasized.

(5) Provision of Farm Input: The government, when really determined to improve on the source of her economic glory through agriculture, should not allow the 'sweat' of the labourers to be in vain. Therefore, she has to provide some farm inputs ranging from some agriculturally healthy chemical-insecticides, pesticides, and some other anti-disease substances like vaccinations/medications and disease control and preventive vaccines. This will go a long way to curbing the effects of pests, nematodes, insects and diseases especially that of 'Dutch Disease' which has been described by many as 'Natural Resource-Curse Phenomenon'. Disease and pest challenge as syndrome "had perpetuated food insecurity which results to hunger, malnutrition,... low life expectancy, high crime rate, infant mortality as end result". There should be "serious investment especially in seedlings, fertilizers and appropriate technologies to drive growth in the sector". She should also provide mechanical/technological devices to the people at an affordable rate in terms of purchasing and or hiring them for storing food items thereby encouraging bulk productivity and equally prevent certain damage that could be inflicted on them when manually handled and or by diseases. Lack of these storage facilities has been a major loss to Nigerian agriculture and its economic productivity which the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Chief Audu Ogbelame lamented of, during the inauguration of yam exportation at Lagos State on 29th June, 2017. Consequent upon this, he had earlier raised alarm on the rate at which Nigerians consume 'poisonous food' as a result of lack of adequate storage devices, knowledge and system (Radio Akwaibom, 04/06/2016). More so, industrialization will never be left out in this issue. Industries producing some of these farm inputs should also be built to avoid wasting economy on importing them and other relative items that could be made in commendable quality and quantity in the county.

(6) Inadequate Market: Insufficient number of markets leads to economic wastage. Some goods and services in Nigeria have no market to be displayed. Importantly, having markets is not yet enough, but having organized and regulated markets fashionable in a way to attract international intention. Again, not just that we have insufficient number

of markets, some of these markets are built ‘out of sight’— inside bushes and worst still, is the fact that there are no roads to the site. Some of our markets are not strategically situated and structured in a way that is so organized to encourage display of goods and services there. Hence, these responsibilities are not government’s alone; the people, co-operate organizations and groups of people with good will should advocate for them and bring about the fruition of some of these things and avert the probable problems they would cause if left unattended to.

(7) Favourable Agricultural Policies: ‘Many of the agricultural policies and programmes are ad-hoc, inconsistent and lack continuity’. In other words, there should also be ‘inconsistency in government monetary and fiscal policies, food security preparedness, research and development among others’. However, for government policies to benefit farmers and enhance productivity, any agricultural policy should not be too rigid in terms of practice and accessibility to agricultural related issues. Favourable policies on the easy accessibility to plots of land by farmers, loans and good species of and on agricultural products should be made. Favourable and accessible policies on anything that encourages productivity and development should be a big concern to the government to encourage farmers for farming and general economic growth. However in relation to agriculture, a good agricultural policy starts with reflection on the funding of agriculture because without it, agricultural continuity is really in doubt. Funding of any project/sector/institution means the continuity of it. Lamenting about the effects of negligence to agricultural funding in Nigeria, Prof. I. A. Ajibefun (2015) made it clear that “it is obvious that agriculture faces a lot of challenges in Nigeria” and this, obviously, is because “the government is not paying enough attention to agriculture which is facing a lot of challenges, despite being one of the country’s most important sector” which had been Nigeria’s dependable and sole pride to economy in the past. The case of Nigeria and agriculture is not the one of living in old glory but the one of ‘have-even-left’ the old glory. “But rather than addressing this problem, our government spends so much money on food importation”. However, Nigerians may recall that Chief Audu Ogbe clearly lamented on this very issue telling them that some of these imported foods are not even healthy for pigs and other animals let alone human beings; yet, they spend more than \$100 billion yearly on imported agricultural products. Little wonder the then Nigerian Senate President, Abubakar Bukola Saraki (www.Punchng.com, 08/06/2017) termed rice smuggling an act of sabotage. The truism of this revelation was manifested in the spoilt imported chickens in Port-Harcourt which the custom people found and buried yet Nigerians went there, excavated the products and sold them to the general public. Nigerians import urine made outside but gold made in Nigeria is neither encouraged and patronized nor exported outside Nigeria. Still stressing on the necessity of ensuring good agricultural policy, but regretted government’s negligence over it, the former president, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo (2016) pointed out that “in the past, the bane of agriculture in Nigeria was lack of continuity and consistency in government policy”. Disappointedly, he left no stone unturned as he regretted the government’s failure and use of the same agriculture to steal and dupe the people of their national treasures. In his own words, he noted that “where in recent time, the government leaders have made government to go into agricultural production; it has been with interior motive for stealing”. Thus, having seen the necessity of coming up with favourable policy on Nigerian produced goods and services for economic and industrial growth, the senate president A. B. Saraki (www.DailyPostngr.com, 01/03/2016) told Nigerians that there is, inevitably, need to reconstruct Nigeria’s laws and policies especially as it concerns commerce to attract foreigners for development. On ‘Talk Your Own’ radio programme (Wave Fm, 2016), it was revealed that there is no favourable policy on exportation to help the whole issue for tax and revenue on the producers when they want to export Nigerian Made Goods. Instead of responding to this problem, the kind of policy and legislation made in Nigeria, even in the midst of insecurity/insurgency and economic dwindling, is the policy of importing Grasses from Brazil and procurement and maintenance of foreign dogs with #600 million by the police. At this, one may wonder if one at war goes after beauty. It is only in Nigeria that certain national disgraceful things like this can ridiculously happen. The truth, as natural as it is, keeps resurfacing and being seen by people like Prof. W. Soyinka (www.Sunnewsonline 20/02/2016) who suggested to the government to call for Emergency Economic Confab because the lack of favourable and accessible policies by the average Nigerians ha seriously dwindled the people’s economy. Responding to Soyinka, the National Assembly (www.Vanguardngr.com, 21/03/2016) told Nigerians that the ‘Economic Round Table’ session/confab will be critically used to sort things out and solve the problems which are now affecting Nigeria’s economy negatively. Still rendering her own advice to the government, ‘Labour’ (www.Punchng.com, 21/03/2016) alerted and warned that Nigeria’s economy has stopped working and has become earnestly bad as Soyinka has earlier warned and therefore, President Buhari should use the Round Table Discussion/Conference to revive Nigeria’s ‘dead’ economy. Surprisingly, after all these and the bid to positively consider them, what Nigerians see in the national budget (after all the ‘forgetfulness’ to some submitted proposals to propound the bill and the whole saga of ‘budget stolen’ (by ‘budget mafians’), ‘budget paddings’ and ‘grey hair content’ and other historic terrible stories behind the whole process to make the proposals a budget which was finally signed by Mr. president on 6th May, 2016 after a full year of running a budget-less government) is nothing to write home about. In the so called ‘Appropriation Bill’ which is now ‘Budget of Change’ A. K. A. ‘Zero Budget’, what Nigerians saw in the Part A (Statutory Transfers) read thus:

(i) **National Assembly**= #115,000,000,000 and this does not include their daily #46,000.00 for press which each member receives, the whole exhortation and ‘give me my own share’ in contracts in their different constituencies as National House of Assembly members including the exotic car proposal for each member and each car at billions of naira.

(ii) **National Judicial Council**= #70,000,000,000 with the exclusion of the whole bribery and corruption of judiciary and high cost of paying them in kind and cash for legal actions which has deterred attainment of justice in the legal system refusing to emulate Ghanaian Government that sacked 9 corrupt judges the other time.

(iii) **Niger-Delta Development Commission**= #41,050,000,000 and this is not with the inclusion of all the proceeds from bunker and illegal activities that sabotages the exploration of the natural resources in the region.

(iv) **Universal Basic Education**= #77, 110,000,000 which is a taproot department that sees for good and quality education in the country. The department for strong and visionary future which makes manifest through the type and quality of education Nigerian children receive. This is incomparable to the UNESCO's 26% standard recommendation for global funding to education even with the Federal Ministry of Education having #369,556,376,895 though in 'Recurrent Expenditure'.

In the part C (Recurrent (Non-Debt) Expenditure) of the so called 'Appropriation Budget' equally known as the 'Budget of Change', Nigerians saw things like:

(v) **Federal Ministry of Interior**= #145,282,766,543

(vi) **Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports Development**= #70,816,387,061

(vii) **National Security Adviser**= #57,730,068,052. Hopefully, that money would not be managed in Rtd. Colonel Sambo Dasuki's way.

(viii) **Police Formations and Command and Police Service Commission**= #283,091,240,698 and #700,450,292 respectively with the exclusion of all the *aka azu* (bribery and corruption), *ima mmadu* (IM) (mediocrity following from knowing somebody) and the whole 'pay backs' leading to the entire idea of 'patronage appointment-promotion-recruitment' saga in the sector. Also, the whole exercise of *wey your papers?* or *wetin you carry?* or 'find something for the boys' are excluded; nor the patronage with drivers'/passengers' cans of water, banana & groundnut, Nigerian crunches like gala & chin-chin, loaves of bread, oranges, pure water sachets, *ukwa-na-aki*, mineral drinks, hawk-able food items like *okpa* & moi-moi, sugar & apples and actually different notes/papers like 'white' or 'green', 'Awolowo head or One H', 'Abubakar head or Two H', 'Zik head or Five H' and finally 'One K' can actually and finally correspond to or stand for, included.

(ix) **Presidency**= #19,969,489,292 where only barbing of hair of Mr. president takes #100,000,000 because his head is diamond or perhaps ore spiritual than physical; his wardrobe allowance takes #70,000,000 among other luxurious lifestyles yet with the whole acclaimed asceticism.

(x) **Secretary to the Federal Government**= #45,379,169,534 where perhaps their clerical materials- pen, pencil, book, table, chair, carbon papers, etc. are all made of diamond.

(xi) **Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal**= #1,794,596,920 and #434,319,234 respectively.

(xi) **Federal Character Commission**= #2,092,188,005 perhaps for them to be more energetic to continue their secrete, tribalistic and 'most favoured' recruitment exercises.

(xii) **National Population Commission**= #4,946,786,028.

(xiii) **Revenue Mobilization, Allocation and Fiscal Commission**= #2,082, 591,633 with the exclusion of employing illiterates, touts and *agboro/agbero* and their character bullies and jungle justice means of forcing taxes from the citizens, *awoof* and *wuru-wuru* allocation exercise in dealing with the people's fund. Surprisingly, out of all these allocations in the so 'Budget of Economy Diversification' from the agricultural sector, Nigerians saw.

(xiv) **Federal Ministry of Agriculture**= #29,752,546,639 only. Nigerians should at this point use their tongues to count their teeth. But this is a country that clamours for economic diversification majorly from agricultural activities. This was just a budget of 2016, the most recent before the first publication of this paper as a conference proceeding after the 2017 conference where it was presented.

But as has been a common tradition by experience that Nigeria gets deteriorated on daily basis, the insincerity of political class gets more visibility in subsequent budgets most recent and worst of which is the 2024 budget called 'Budget of Renewed Hope' of total expenditure of 28,777,404,073,861 trillion Naira. In the budget is a clear display of expenditure that shows what hopelessness could mean and imply in anybody's life.

On 29th March, 2016, the President promised Nigerians that he would make agriculture to be attractive by funding it, and examining this whole budget, Nigerians would ask themselves if that actually was the promised attractiveness! Perhaps, that was how he would fulfil his reiteration in his farewell speech (Radio Akwaibom, 06/07/2016) to the Sweden Ambassador when he assured Nigerian that he would continue to welcome foreign support and investment plans in the country especially as it concerns agriculture to reduce dependency on oil having known that Nigerians operate a mono-sourced economy.

(8) Agricultural Transformation Agenda: Transformation is an intellectual exercise/influence through which a total change is brought about in a person or something especially for the best improvement. It is a knowledgeable process that aims at bringing about positive change. To this end, there should be good and standardized agenda for the transformation of agricultural sector in the country. These agenda should be holistic as they are expected to extend to all outreaches of agricultural sector. This change should also be impacted on the people controlling the sector in the country in order to transform them mentally from the worst stand of conception of things to an improved level of conceiving certain things. Perhaps, as a means towards this mental change, this is the rationale behind the Federal Government's move (www.PreminnTimes.com, 30/05/2017) to begin corpors' posting to farms. In doing this, people would have their intellect opened to see that it is not out of Bacon's 'idol of the cave' to say that Nigerians' agricultural products particularly, are better and qualitative than their Western counterpart so that they should stop making their country a

place where their inferior goods should be dumped in and sold off and even expensively; or store up for the ‘ignorant inhabitants’ (Nigerians) to consume and at once create health serious problems unknowingly for themselves. Standing on this light, Uzoewulu has before now lamented on this very issue when he writes:

Africa is simply viewed as a market for the dumping of a lot of foreign products, thereby looking down on similar goods produced locally. An African does not realize that the cerelac has no nutritional advantage over pap fortified with soya beans. The Nigerian will prefer foreign rice from America to the one locally cultivated at Abakaliki, not minding that the foreign rice has been polished and is deficient in Vitamine B. Shoes and shirts made in Aba will only sell if they carry labels of “made in China” or “made in London”...the African simply has been made to develop inferiority complex against his own products (2002, 17)

Nigeria’s economic independency has now put Nigerians in a state where they tell lies provided their products are sold. They now have ‘Nigerian China’ or ‘Nigerian London’ made products. This is indeed a mockery. Does it mean that even if a Nigerian is sincerely told that this is a Nigerian made product that s/he would not be interested to patronize his/her own county-made goods? Must the Nigerian be deceptively forced/persuaded or even told lies before s/he now patronizes or commercially compensates productivity/invention/entrepreneurship in his/her own country? This is, in fact, the reason Nigerians are always economically dependent which has subsequently pushed them to borrowing from even some countries; they are, on a normal state, supposed to lend financial help to. Of course, they should remember that having seen this, the Managing Director of International Monetary Fund (IMF), Miss Christine Lagarde (2016) has warned them about this; and Sen. Ben Murray Bruz of Bayelsa East in his ‘I Just Want to Make Common Sense’ ideology/movement where he enlightened Nigerians on the very necessity of patronizing productivity/entrepreneurship in the country, reiterated that if Nigerians are not careful, they would become a ‘borrowing country’. He once told his experience from meeting a former Minister of Agriculture in Nigeria who was then the President of African Development Bank that Nigeria was really missing a lot in terms of agriculture both economically and nutritionally. For instance, Nigerians then go for tin tomatoes instead of the local fresh ones, foreign– ‘plastic’ rice and ‘sour-able’ rice instead of the local Abakaliki/Ofada/Adani rice and others, spices-canned fishes- geisher, sardine etc; ground meat/fish instead of the delicious, nutritious local prepared dried/smoked fish, *azu chi* or *azu okpo*, *okporoko*, beef and goat meat and raw-extracted crayfish and other species of fishes from the natural rivers, ponds and streams; chemically prepared (with certain preventives) spices like ginger, garlic, curry, pepper sachets etc instead of the Kaduna natural ginger, garlic, bulbs, nutmegs, etc; macaroni, spaghetti, indomie instead of *akpu/fufu*, garri, yams and cocoa-yams in their various species, potatoes, *ji ejiri* (a specie of yam surrounded with thorns and with thorny stems), *ji oko* (a specie of Igbo plantain), *ona*, *ēdi/ēdù*, *mimi-iyogwu* (a whitish root-tube got when cultivating a plot of land that has stayed up to 5-6 years it is last cultivated, signifying a well matured land with nutrients), garden eggs/leaves, bitter leaves and other natural vegetables, they have left *mmanu Ojukwu* (the Igbo herbal local palm-oil) for groundnut oil with its frying method; chemicalized beer drinks (stout, star, hero, life, etc.) for *nkwu enu/ocha* (the natural palm-wine with its yeast content for eye-cleansing), and many innumerable cases of such. Asking why such deviation from cultural and natural food items, you hear: ‘some of our food items are bitter’, and others would say that they require long and stressful method to be prepared, and for others, ‘they are now archaic and no more in vogue to the reigning Western food items that are simple and fast in cooking and are ‘sweeter’’. Some of the health problems ranging from miscarriage, heart/kidney failure, infertility, blindness, high rate of death, among others that Nigerian-Africans suffer from today, are all encouraged and perpetuated by this very attitude of neglecting their own local goods (and services) and their nutrients. Little wonder then, the Minister of Agriculture (State Affairs) lamented on the health and economic menace posed on African communities which has now become a dumping ground of poisonous food for the Euro-Western man (www.Vanguardngr.com, 23/04/2016). A kinsman who resides in America once told how a Nigerian agricultural product *okpa* (cowpea) was confirmed and cherished in America. He returned from America and when going back, he took some quantity of *okpa* along. There, he cooked it and invited some African fellows who could not even allow the food to be fully done before they mounted on it from the pot and with this enthusiasm, attracted some American friends who wondered what ‘the hell’ was the type of food that these fellows are rushing like this, and testing it, critically examined to be of good health (even in terms of digestibility and nutriment). Latter, they required for more which was sent. Exportation always started from such encounter. Again, on a radio programme titled ‘Africa This Week’ (Wave Fm, 2016), Mr I. Anyaele and Mr E. Ezenteje, the President and Public Relations Officer of the organization of Nigerians residing in South Africa respectively, made it known that Nigerian food are highly cherished and daily consumed in South Africa and many other African countries like Cote d’voire, etc. because of their high nutriment, digestibility and deliciousness/taste. It is only when Nigerians are transformed that they could realize the dream reiterated by Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) (www.Sunnewsonline, 2016; www.Sunnewsonline, 2017; www.Punchng.com, 2016) and Chief Audu Ogbe that in 2018 and 19 respectively, that Nigeria will begin rice and yam exportation, just as Ibekachukwu promised Nigerians that by 2019, fuel importation will stop. However, tackling these problems must be one of the first steps to take if Nigerians really mean the agricultural transformation agenda because importation of foreign rice (products) will discourage the local farmers who can never compete with foreign farmers. In the first place, agriculture overseas is mechanized, and the farm inputs and export incentives are highly subsidized. Yet, the importation of these products into Africa are encouraged with attendant flight of foreign exchange, and depression of local production incentives (Uzoewulu, 2002, 18)

Of a truth, the industrialization of Nigeria is paramount by using Nigerian farm products and commercially exchange them with other parts of the world and not dumping them and keep encouraging others by consuming their products to the detriment of theirs. It must be done because “without industrialization, the gap between the developed and the

developing nations will continue to widen. And while the North swims in abundance; the South will continue to languish in penury, hunger and disease” which characterize the state of undevelopment in a country.

(9) **International Donour Agencies and Organisations:** The negative influence of these agencies/organizations on Nigerian agricultural and economic growth is clear and alarming. They have eaten to the fabrics of Nigerian economy as trillions are cyclically spent and ‘dashed or freely given’ to them. Consequently, the government should be aware that it mars pitifully, the economy. These organizations/agencies are obviously and undeniably barrier to Nigerian agricultural and economic growth.

(10) **Agricultural Development Programmes/Plans (ADPs):** The ADPs are completely dead. They really need life once more. They are corruptly handicapped because of the failure and mismanagements therein hence, the rejuvenation and rehabilitation need for the improvement of the economy and food security

(11) **Good Road Networks (GRN):** As language is spoken, understood and written to make meanings, so do roads identify and create public awareness of homes/destinations by actually leading to them. They are one of the major aspects of development and sort of significance of a good government in a society. Good connective roads that link one or major areas to others for easily mobility and transportation of the citizenry and the agricultural and general-country-made products, are really necessary for modernization and the question of globalization, civilization and transportation/trans-migration within and without the society. Again, some “roads that link the urban and rural areas are in a bizarre condition to the extent that products from the hinterland hardly make it to where there is demand for them” hence, the need to maintain the ones Nigerians already have.

In a more critical note, let Nigerians thus stretch the trend down to subject/personal blame. Some people would not still function well and adequately consistent to the productivity of the agricultural sector and economic growth even after the government might have provided some of all these enumerated and elaborated agricultural technological/mechanical machines and devices; or have solved some of these problematic factors and challenges obstructing good, quality and standardized practical system of agriculture and its productivity and economic progress.

(12) **Farmers Management of Agricultural Products:** It has been divulged as one of the reasons the agricultural productivity is not augmented, being how the farmers manage some agricultural products. The mismanagement, mishandle/miscarry of agricultural products by our farmers is indeed influential to the whole agricultural system/sector which has consequently led to the economic destabilization. It has caused quick decay of some agricultural products leading to their less usefulness.

Again, being serious with agriculture must not leave out the issue of national infrastructure because the “state of infrastructure are at poor state, (just) as roads, communication technology, electricity and water are all in deplorable conditions, while the agricultural storage facilities and processing plants are few”. Indubitably, proper storage of farm products brings about agricultural-products-management and moderate share of them during scarcity. Unfortunately, lack of storage facilities and subsequently, storage system/knowledge has, enormously contributed to poor agricultural productivity for a lot of food items have been lost to that. It enhances more productivity in the next season of cultivation. It also shows the extent of the carefulness of the farmers with their prestigious occupation. It encourages government-support in all corners to the farmers for agricultural activity. In a nutshell, agriculture is not all about getting and selling immediately agricultural products for immediate money making, rather, it is all about good and adequate management for any well built wealth has a strong foundation. Wealth is built. So is the case in the wealth from the whole agricultural practices.

(13) **Famers’ Human Temperament:** Just as the aphorism goes that ‘all fingers are not equal’, so is it among the farmers. Unequally, some farmers are naturally industrious and hardworking while others weak. While the agricultural sector grows faster and well in the industrious farmers’ side, it flops and declines productively on the side of the weak farmers. Enlightenment is thus paramount to liberate some of these farmers to make a U-turn.

(14) **The Act of Animal Production/Rearing:** Animal production is a major category of agriculture which centres on animal management ranging from the shepherd, rearing/breeding, feeding/grazing and sustenance system. It is a major source of food (meat and other animal edibles), economy, manure to the land, feed to animals and also agricultural productivity with the ‘animal power’. It is one of the easiest agricultural aspects, very lucrative and enhances animal rearing and helps in industrial works. Be that as it may, the issue of rearing animals in Nigeria is indeed very troublesome and becoming enigmatic. In this regard, it is indeed indubitable that animal rearing has turned out bloody in Nigeria following the pattern through which it is practised. The way and system through which Nigerian herdsmen carry out their grazing is abnormal, disdainful, discriminatory, intimidating, psychologically worrisome, war-motivating, immoral, illegal and socially abnormal, atrocious and criminal. It poses threat to societal peace, inhumane and life-disregarding, economic wasting, social polluting and disease-dispersing and therefore, all round condemnable. It is nationally obvious that ‘Fulani herdsmen and farmers crisis is one long conflict that has caused a reduction in output and income of farmers, disease outbreak, erosion, loss of lives and properties, and loss of farm products in storage’ among other negativities. An Igbo-African adage goes that *okpa aku anaghi emebi nke nwanne ya* (a wealth seeker does not destroy his/her neighbours’ wealth) because it will never be, no matter how it may be coined/bent, justifiable especially as it is obtainable in the Nigerian situation. But regrettably, in Nigeria, and as it regards this very issue, this adage has

been conceived by the herdsmen to have overgrown its reality/truthfulness. Today, mostly in Nigeria, if one does not spoil one's neighbours' belongings on the process of searching for greener pasture (wealth and one's own progress) one does not count the whole attempts successful. "Fulani herdsmen and farmers crisis is one of the devastating crisis/conflict in Nigerian history". According to the 2016 current ranking by Global Terrorism Index, the Nigerian Fulani herdsmen/farmers crisis is placed at the fourth position of deadliest crisis. Of course, it has claimed thousands of lives; properties worth of quadrillions of dollars have been damaged, societies disarrayed and persons and families torn apart, degraded and displaced, leading to high number of Internal Displaced Persons. People no more sleep with their eyes closed in Nigeria because of fear of Fulani attacks in this regard. All the Fulani people in African have taken Nigeria as their home. They have sworn to Islamize Nigeria their 'fulanization agenda' which is actively ongoing just as it happened in mose East African countries and Mid-East where Christianity began (Ugwu, 2020, 223-51; Ugwu and Abah, 2020, 287-318). "The conflicts have demonstrated high potential to exacerbate the insecurity and food crisis particularly in rural communities where most of the conflicts are localized, with reverberating consequences nationwide". To this end, 'the incessant attacks' as reported by 'Mercy Crops', "have a drastic effect on food security and have caused a loss of \$14 billion in three years". As an inherent attribute following the environmental effect on the how these Fulani pastoralists were brought up, they can be rude, aggressive and fierce in their mentality and thus, are ever ready to fight and stand to justify their evil act of killing, if that becomes the only way to prove their strength. This is expressed in their responsive utterances and body languages like *you no fit do anything* (you cannot do anything), *we no see am* (we did not see it), *we no know o!* (we did not know!), or even *go hold the cow wey spoil your thing, na me do am?* (go and hold responsible the cow that has spoiled your property, am I the one who did it?) to people whom they spoil their crops and other economic belongings. In their strong conviction, they are ready to fight physically, diabolically with charms (oṣunigara or acha/eto ere), by commanding the animals, or even arms ranging from iron-made dagger, knife/jack-knife, sword, machet, pistol, guns, axe and other dangerous iron or wooden stick. And these have been defended as mechanics for self-defence (www.guardian.ng 15/02/2022; www.Punchng.com 04/04/2019). Their conviction on arms carrying was confirmed in the judgment of the Attorney General of Delta State (Dream Fm, 22/05/2016) who convicted two herdsmen of illegal arm possession. It was again recorded that the police (www.businessdayonline.com, 03/08/2012) arrested some terrorist herdsmen with sub machine guns. It should also be noted that one of the Ruwa Fulani Pastoralists in Zamfara State once submitted his arms to the police and subsequently encouraged others to do so. As more evidences to herdsmen terrorism, it is known how one of the herdsmen (www.Sunnewsonline, 07/05/2016) revealed how security and some conscious citizens disrupted and averted their plan to continuing attacking Kogi citizens. In another attack by the herdsmen, it was told how APC Youth Leader and many others (www.Vanguardngr.com, 05/04/2016) were killed in one of the incessant massacres in Benue State; and in response, the state governor (Gabriel Suswan) (www.Vanguardngr.com, 08/05/2013) lamented that the attacks especially that of Agatu Community have left many homeless and high number of casualties especially on children and women generally. In Ekiti state (www.nigeriavillagesquare.com, 21/03/2010) a police corporal and villagers were massacred and injured; just as it is the case in Adamawa Community (www.thelightnews.com, 25/01/2016) where a DPO was massacred and others ransacked, all by these herdsmen. In Ogun State (www.Informationnigeria.org, 21/11/2012), a newly wedded lady was raped by these terrorists just as such rapping occurrences are taking upper hand in Enugu State and other States. An eldest man and *Ozọ* in one community in Ngwo had his head blown off with gun by the herdsmen in March/April, 2015 and the case was brought to 9th Mile police station. At atakwu- Awgu- Enugu State, we know how an Imo indigenous seminarian in Enugu Diocese together with an old woman and pregnant woman were massacred by these herdsmen. On the issue of kidnapping, that of His Royal Majesty Aka-eze Edward Ofuele of Obolokwu Kingdom, Aniocha South Council, Delta State (Madonna University Fm, 07/01/2016), together with his driver, along Igbodo Obio road by a six man pastoralist gang is an instance. Of course, that of former secretary to the Federal Government, Chief Samuel O. Falae (www.Vanguardngr.com, 2015) and his manager, Bruno, on his 77th birthday on 21st September, 2016 by a set of herdsmen is another kidnapping instance. Some schools have been turned to 'ranches', everywhere polluted and some facilities— fence, sports items, scientific equipments etc. damaged just as it is the case in many communities. As of 2017, these were only few popular instances out of both popular and unpopular instances of herdsmen terrorist activities in Nigeria.

Having seen all these, one may be forced to ask himself who arms/funds these herdsmen? How are they trained/influenced to use the sophisticated weapons seen with, having seen that they cannot even, in English language say who they are? Who/what gives them guts to carry out and keep doing all these atrocities even in another man's land? Could all these be traced to the cattle owners— Alhajis or the herdsmen's backgrounds? Importantly following these, what do these Alhajis, for whom these herdsmen pasture these animals, do/have done on hearing these insurgent activities involving their workers/employees to justify themselves and strongly condemn the acts? However, asking of what is the possible cause of massacre, the herdsmen would argue that the host community poison the grasses, rivers/pond, burn the bushes and then use a kind of scare-crow and other means to scare their animals away from the grazing site (the people's farm). On the other hand, the farmers with their heavy heart argue that the herdsmen destroy their crops and economic trees, properties, pollute and disperse diseases all over the community, and make their streams/rivers unfit for drinking. Farmers would further argue that the herdsmen kill the community people because they scare the animals away from their farms and environments. Be that as may, herdsmen insurgency on the host communities/farmers has extensively led to high rate of unemployment, economic dwindling and drastic reduction in the national 'Gross Domestic Product' which is all about "the total value of all the goods and services produced by a country in one year".

Conclusion

Going back to agriculture is a viable way out to Nigeria's ugly economic situation. But very necessary, the issue of security of both farmers and their products must be prioritized. Because of insecurity, people cannot think of accessing their farms. Many farms have been occupied by terrorists and bandits and bloodthirsty herdsmen. The area Boko Haram occupies in the Northern Nigeria is enough to feed the whole country if cultivated. Security of farm products against natural disasters like flood, bush burning, etc. must not be overlooked as well. It is only when these are taken into consideration that people would be thinking of development from proceeds of agricultural productions and sales.

However, the whole exercise of economic diversification must start with the diversification of mind; that is, enlightening the mind to freely see reasons and how the diversification saga should be. Some Nigerians do not still see or know why there should be need for economic diversification especially making agriculture the central tool. Thus, the paper recommends that following the fact that Nigerians have resources like cocoa, coal, rice, groundnut, different species of legumes (*akidi*, sorghum, *azam/ozaki/ijiriji*, among other local highly nutritious products), Nigerians must keep depending on them as their food and agricultural products for exportation. Necessarily, "government should encourage farmers by providing subsidies and grants for them and the provision of storage facilities which prevent spoilage and wastage". Of course, building as many industries as possible in all the states of the country and rebuilding of dilapidated ones will help to make productivity easy, economy strong and will certainly help in developing those places where they are situated. But it must be recalled that without power supply, there would be no need of talking about economic diversification for productivity: preservation of agricultural products cannot function well without power. Financial sector should be looked into so that some unworthy banks would be stopped from operation. This will go a long way to curbing financial frauds as that will reflect in the financial status of the citizens. "Reduction of vegetation through over grazing climate change, deforestation and logging" and any other means and manner through which the environment is mismanaged should be curbed. In the discourse of agricultural plentifulness, the role of environment is never overemphasized hence good environmental management (avoiding flood-causing activities, unnecessary deforestation and bush-burning, oil spillage, air, water and land pollutions, over-grazing, erosion-causing activities etc.) should be of high necessity. Another problem is the one associated with youths, who in their inquisition for urban life and worst still doing nothing there, leave the rural areas and agriculture for women and children who are feeble to be as active as required in agricultural activities. This factor has perpetuated poor agricultural productivity. Agricultural practice and farm implements adopted by Nigerian farmers must be revisited and upgraded to global standard. "Majority of the system of agriculture practiced in Nigeria are still subsistent agriculture, using crude implements and land tenure system" instead of the "mechanized with improved agricultural inputs"—hence the need for improved agricultural practices and systems. Of course, the act making good policies must not be left out here. It helps the materialization of visions Nigerians have always had.

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