

**SECURITY AND ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF ELECTION IN AN OPPOSITION SETTING IN NIGERIA, ANALYTICAL PERSPECTIVE ON RIVERS STATE.**

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**ABSTRACT**

The study examines the security and economic development in an opposition setting with focus on Rivers State. In this study, we used both quantitative and qualitative methods in generating data. The study consciously adopted the Marxian political economy theory as its framework of analysis. The adoption of this theory helps to reveal the political and economic interest of political gladiators in an opposition setting. The applied, investigative paradigm revealed comprehensively, that the use of federal might and resources by incumbent or national ruling party to out compete, victimize and above all, intimidate state governments on opposition political platform generate political tension, breed conflict and increases crisis of security. This is revealed when the opposition political party, not wanting to be out compete in the back push game use none state security agents (political thugs, cultists, and ex-convicts) to sustain their political and economic interests threatened by their political opponents. We find example in Bayelsa Governorship election ,Rivers State 2015 Governorship election, Edo and Kogi State Governorship elections. In this situation, the study further revealed that security problems are politicized in as both contending parties continue to accuse each other in the face of insecurity. It was also found out that Federal Government attention on development in state in opposition party is less. Beside, state government attention on development is distracted as every effort is gear towards protecting the opposition mandates. Lives are lost, and property worth Billion of Naira destroyed, investors are scare away and revenue to government lost as well. All these are attributed to weak election management in the country. Based on the findings the study suggests amongst others that political opposition should not be constructed around personal and individual interest if democracy is to be consolidated in the country. The opposition at the state level with but form national government should stop riding on the horse of federal powers to create unhealthy political atmosphere in the state . Democracy is about choice, rather than constantly engaging the incumbent government in power tussle, opposition should act as the voice of the voiceless, present policy that will make them viable alternative to the ruling government and in true sense of democratic system, work as critical partner in nation building.

**Keywords:** Political opposition, Security and Economic Development

## INTRODUCTION

March 28<sup>th</sup> through April 11<sup>th</sup> 2015 marked another shift in Nigeria's political history and process. On the different days of elections in 2015, eligible voters took to the polls to elect the next set of leaders into different political offices ranging from presidential to National Assembly, Governorship and then to state Assembly positions. The beauty of the elections conducted in 2015 was that, the opposition party for the first time emerged victorious against the usual displayed of incumbent power used of state resources to out compete the opposition. In the 2015 contest, the opposition- the All Progressive Congress (APC) and its flag bearer Retired General Muhammadu Buhari emerged as the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Before now, Buhari had attempted four times under various political platforms but could not make it. The opposition APC candidate won the election with 15, 424, 921 representing 54% of the total voters against the then ruling party, the Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) candidate President Goodluck Jonathan that had 12, 853,162 or 45% (DSM, Publication, 2015). In the National Assembly, the Opposition party, (APC) won the majority. The APC won about 225 seats over 125 seats of the former ruling party –PDP. In the senate, APC again won 60 seats against 49 seats of the PDP (Nigeria Tribune, 2015). The general elections of 2015 came to an end with governorship and state House of Assembly elections held in April, 28, 2015.

The governorship elections sprang of some surprises. While it was expected that voting would follow the same pattern witnessed in the presidential election, it was not so in some states where the ruling party won. For instance, the People Democratic Party (PDP), the ruling party won presidential elections in Edo, Nasarawa, Imo, plateau and Taraba states during the March 28 elections. Observers had expected that the ruling people's Democratic Party; PDP would repeat such victory in those states during the governorship elections. Surprisingly, however, the opposite was the case (Juliana, 2015). Following from the victory at the national level, the opposition party produced the president, majority seats in the National Assembly, and state governors), APC now emerges from the opposition status to form the national ruling party). This development made the People's Democratic Party to assumed an opposition party status at the national level. In the south – south geo political region, the People's Democratic Party (PDP) won both the governorship and House of Assembly elections in Rivers state, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa and Cross River states. Expectedly some aggrieved persons challenged the elections results declared by the INEC. Some of the results were cancelled while others upheld. These situations pave way for re-run elections in Rivers state several times. Observers attributed various intrigues that characterized Rivers' politics beyond 2015 as dangerous opposition setting. It is against this background that the study seeks to investigate security and economic implications of an opposition setting with focus on Rivers State.

Rivers state is one of the 36 states of Nigeria with capital in Port Harcourt. It is bounded on the South by the Atlantic Ocean, to the North by Imo, Abia, Anambra states, to the East by Akwa – Ibom state and to the West, Bayelsa and Delta states. Rivers state is home to a variety of Ethnic groups including Abua, Andoni, Ekpeye, Engenni, Etche, Ikwerrie, Kalabari, Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni, Okirika and Ogoni. Rivers state, named after the many rivers that border its territory. The state was part of the Oil Rivers protectorate from 1885 to 1893, when it became part of the Niger Coast protectorate. In 1900 the region was merged with the chartered territories of the Royal Niger Company to form the colony of southern Nigeria. The state was created in 1967 with the split of the Eastern Region of Nigeria. Until 1996, the state made up of the area presently called Bayelsa state. The state is administratively divided into twenty-three local government Areas with comparatively large population. Rivers state is one of the largest economies areas in Nigeria. Apart from housing a

lot of crude oil and gas deposit, the state has two refineries, two major seaports, airport and various industries dotted across the state, particularly the state capital and Eleme local government area. As noted earlier, May 29, 2015 was a historic day for democracy in the Nigerian state. This day, witnessed a political transition like no other since the birth of the Nigeria in 1960 because it is the first time an opposition political party took over the reins of power from a ruling party in a democratic election. Again, it is the first time that Rivers state is having an executive governor on a political platform that does not control power at the centre. While many welcome the smooth transition from one party to another, the Rivers state experience appear to be more of a perils than smooth transition.

## **STATEMENT OF PROBLEM**

The genesis of the political problems in Rivers state could be traced to the faceoff between the then Governor Rotimi Amaechi and the national leadership of the PDP which resulted in the defection of Amaechi and his supporters to the then opposition party- the All Progressive Congress (APC), putting Rivers State in an opposition setting. With Amaechi defection to APC, the political atmosphere in Rivers State became charged as the political formula changed. This is because the political significance of Rivers state in the nation political equation cannot be overwhelmed. This was because, Rivers state is geo-strategic to National politics, its number one in the south – south geo-political zone, in terms of voting strength and of course, one of the leading states in terms of the number of registered voters. The struggle to hold grip over the state for respective party became certain. Thus, the faceoff between major political elites in the state generated a deep sense of anomies and desperation. The anxiety ridden pre-election and election period are two far from been over. As observed, the election has come and gone, but the better relationship between the two political parties are beyond political tactics. The implication that flows from the above is that Rivers state is at a crossroad in contemporary political affairs in Nigeria. The ability of the people to speak with one voice has been lost in a multi region structure country. Many writers or scholars had written several research works and articles on drivers of electoral violence within Rivers state especially the peculiar feature of 2015 election in the state. Findings from some of the researches illustrated the role of the INEC, the Police and Politicians in the electoral violence, Voters' apathy, electoral corruption that greeted the 2015 general election in the state and how they impeded peaceful conduct of election in the area. Yet, efforts of these scholars appeared to neglect Rivers state opposition status in the context of in security and its implication for economic development. It is therefore, this gap among others in the literature that this study is aimed at filling.

### **Research questions**

1. What causes security problems in an opposition setting?
2. What are the economic implications

### **Objectives of the Study**

- 1 To identify factors that cause security problem in an opposition setting.
- 2 To examines economics effect of security problem in an opposition setting.

## **Theoretical Framework**

The essence of theoretical framework is to explain in order to reach generalization, predict and control. Thus the study employed the Marxian political economy theory to explain the security and economic problems in political opposition setting.

The political economy theory expounded by Karl Marx is found in one of his classics, *A contribution to the critique of political economy in selected works* (1968). He re-examines the philosophy of right in relation to Hegelian societal view and concluded that economic interest defined the social, intellectual and political life process in general. Thus, he posited that it is not the consciousness of men that defined their being, rather, it is their social being that determined their consciousness (Samuel, 2014): By implication, power tussle between power gladiators in the society is determined by social reality and primacy of material condition. In this sense, the prevailing political crisis in an opposition setting, is thus shape less by genuine desires for development. It concealed that behind insecurity in an opposition setting lies their political and economic interest. Their personal economic interest tends to becloud the real issue (collective development of the society). Rather than focusing on development, insecurity has become the basis for political actors in separate camps to seek to expand their frontiers of accumulation to the detriment of the poor masses. The ideal of a direct link between security and economic development in an opposition setting found explanation in the use of violence for unconscionable criminal appropriation of the peoples commonwealth.

## **Method of data analysis**

The study employed survey method and obtained relevant data through the administration of self- developed questionnaire. Materials were also obtained from the secondary source especially magazine and Nigeria News papers. The focus of this study was Rivers state. The demographic characteristic of the population of the study showed that 433 representing 54.1% were male and 367% or 45.9% were females. The subjects included in the study comprised mainly of politicians, civil servants, undergraduates and academia. The reason for the use of these subjects was based on the assumption that when compared to others, obviously, they were better place to understand the content of the questionnaires. The sample size for the study consisted of eight hundred respondents. The researchers distributed 40 questionnaires in each of the 23 Local Government Areas of the state. Local political leaders (ex councilors) used their discretion and distributed the questionnaires to those who they felt would understand the implication of the questions. The respondents were required to cycle "Yes" "No" and don't know". There were also open ended questions. A total of eight hundred relevant responses were retrieved for an overall responses rate of 71.43%. Equal questionnaires were sent to the 23 Local Government Areas of Rivers State using stratified random sampling. This approach was used based on their importance.

## Discussion of Findings

### Descriptive data on security and economic effects in opposition setting.

Item	Yes	%	No	%	Don't know	%
1	600	75%	150	18.75	50	6.25
2	368	46	336	42	96	12.
3	480	60	320	40	-	-
4	447	54.9	353	44.1	-	-
5	337	42.1	367	45.9	96	12.
6	385	48.1	320	40.0	95	11.9
7	538	66.0	272	34.	-	-
8	431	53.9	240	30	129	16.1
9	448	56	352	44	-	-
10	447	55.9	192	24	161	20.1
11	239	29.9	336	42.0	225	28.1
12	315	43.9	304	38.0	145	18.1

**Source:** Survey 2018

The data above depicts responses from respondents on security and Economic development in an opposition setting. It did appear from item 1 that relate to what political opposition is all about, and their duties in democratic governance, majority of respondents know what political opposition in democratic setting means. Above 75% answered perfectly well the meaning of political opposition. The 75% respondent's opinion also reflected their views on the duties and responsibility of an opposition political party. However, on item 2 Has Rivers State ever experience political opposition status in the political process in Nigeria; about 46% agreed that Rivers State is experiencing an opposition setting for the first time during the fourth republic. On item 4 that asked do you think threatening character of Federal Government partly causes insecurity in an opposition, 54.9% of the respondents believed that threaten character of the federal power in connivance with party members in an opposition induce insecurity. In addition, 48.1% of the respondents also believed that the loss of grip over conventional security solely control by the federal ruling party made state in opposition platform to put in place defense mechanism usually built around un conventional security apparatus. Again in item 6 on causes of political crisis in an opposition setting, 66% also traced the problem to face off between political gladiators. On item 7-12 that relate to cost of crisis in an opposition setting 53.9% of the respondents believed that the crisis between the ruling and opposition parties in the state in a setting cost lives. A whopping percentage of about 56% through their responses agree that the violence associated with opposition status created an atmosphere of fear, consequently, many investors, stopped investing on the basis of fear and insecurity. More than half the number also answered that poor management of elections contributed to used of illegitimate means of assessing power; while almost half the number responded that opposition setting affects security and economic development of the state. From the responses it is obvious that democratic peace is lacking. The idea of Immanuel Kant and other 18th-century Enlightenment thinkers appear unrealistic in opposition political setting. They maintained that it is the institutions of representative government, which hold elected officials and decision-makers accountable to a wide electorate, that make crisis a largely unattractive option for both the government and its citizens( Alban,2005). Because the costs and risks of political violence directly affect

large segments of the population, it is expected that the average voter will throw the incumbent leader/party out of office if they initiate a losing or unnecessary policy, thus, providing a clear *institutional* incentive for democratic leaders to anticipate such an electoral response before deciding to go for election in a peaceful manner. This view does not assume that all politicians and elected representatives are liberal-minded, but simply that democratic structures that give citizens leverage over government decisions will make it less likely that a democratic leader will be able to initiate conflict with another liberal democrat in a way that is going on in Rivers State. Thus, even with leader in place, institutions such as free speech, political pluralism, and competitive elections will make it difficult for these leaders to convince or persuade the public to fight themselves. (wapmur,2014) According to this view, democratic political culture encourages peaceful means of conflict resolution which are extended beyond the domestic political process to other democratic tenets, opposition party inclusive. This noble thought appears to be at variant with Rivers State experience in recent time as the study revealed. However, the problem lies in the misconception of what constitute legitimate role of opposition. According to the result, the opposition leaders for instance, in Rivers State never regard their party as an official opposition. They argued that APC as a ruling party has overwhelming constitutional power. This misconception observed by Faruk (2015) seems to be a common misconception in the so-called “developing world” that the behavior of opposition parties, as the name suggested, is limited to opposing everything or anything incumbent government proposes or suggest. But contrary to this, in emerging democracies around the world, the opposition increasingly plays the role of shaping incumbent policy agendas, conducting civil education, fighting corruption etc. However, the disposition of the opposition in Nigeria largely undermined and has remained unappreciated of these roles. Opposition continue to dig deep into the use of federal power to out compete the ruling party and government. Such actions manifested clearly in the various elections conducted in Rivers state .In 2015, with the defection of Rotimi Amaechi, a sitting governor then, APC formed the government in power at the state level and an opposition at the national level, while PDP took the status of an opposition at the state level, but, formed the government at the national level. Prior to the 2015 election, the PDP never consider the party as an opposition and constantly used federal resources to intimidate and victimized the government in power at the state level. State security were used to harassed, intimidate and arrest political leaders on the opposition platform. In one of the many occasions, Police were used to criminalized APC political gatherings. In fact the then Police Commissioner in the state Mr. Mbu Joseph was credited to have said I am a lion that tame the leopard tail, the leopard herein referred to then Governor Amaechi on opposition political platform. The change of government and party in the state in 2015 never stop the misconception of opposition political setting as the APC are currently replaying the macabre drama. Niyi(2017) made this more clearer when he rightly observed that in March 19, 2016, the APC leaders flooded the state with soldiers. Amaechi’s, statement that confirmed this fact, was made in one of the APC gatherings, where he told the party supporters, “that security forces have been compromised along party lines and therefore, soldiers would be deployed in the election because the state governor had bought the conscience of police, that , by constitutional provisions, are require to provide security during democratic elections. He reportedly said. The commissioner of police in Rivers state has failed so any where you see the military know that the police have failed” ( Amaechi, 2016) what followed were alleged massive clamp down on the opposition PDP at the national level, but form government in power at the state level. The massive deployment of coded soldiers with instruction to intimidate the PDP, prompted the state government and the PDP to petition international bodies and foreign governments on the threats to democracy in Nigeria urging them to urgently initiate and maintain diplomatic pressure on the federal government to allow a free fair and violence free election in Rivers state. Furthermore, most respondents opined that state government were forced to used

non state security agents(cult groups, bad boys, referred to as political thugs) because, federal government security officers were paid to do the bidding of their pay master.

Respondents also agreed that better rivalry among political leaders is a factor that increase violence in an opposition setting .This fact is obvious as more than any other state in the federation, the political intrigues that led to the unprecedented change of power in May 29, 2015, continues to take their toll on Rivers State. This is an obvious fact, as observed, months after elections, when other states in the country have moved on with the new realities, the political gladiators in Rivers state are still at each other's throat in the desperation to outwit one another, thereby unleashing a deadly cycle of violence in the state. It is interesting to note, that the Rivers political debacle has been revolving around individuals whose relationship to each other and the polity is cast in the mould of treachery and unbridled ambition border on selfish control of the common wealth .As posited in our theoretical framework, In Nigeria, the competition for material wealth has taken a central stage and the only means of achieving this goal is through politics. This is because all forms of capitalist operations revolve around politics. The politics of the ruling class has created ties of relationship at all levels of governance in the country. Consequently, the attitude of protecting this links had led to various forms of electoral crisis just to attain power to consolidate their selfish plans and intensions, including the projection of their patron's interest(Kia 2016). The quest for material benefits has led to hash competition in the nation's body polity.

*The crisis in Rivers state has been reduced to a supremacy tussle between Amaechi and Wike and the duo heading rival groups, have so far been implacable. The lingering crisis between the two gladiators is more of personal pride rather that power tussle based on collective will of the people The state had persistently been considered as Rivers of blood( Tell, 2016).. During the various elections, there were numerous attacks resulting in fatalities, kidnappings, and death of many peoples including INEC staff, NYSC member and security offices. . Sources put the number of those killed in the recurrent mayhem (electoral violence) at over 500 since the crisis began while a thousand others sustained various degrees of injuries.*

While governor Chibuike Amaechi then alleged that over thirty members of his APC were gunned down in Rivers state in political related circumstances the PDP governor Barr Nyesom Wike on his part said over 45 PDP members have also been killed on account of their political affiliation. He said this when he addressed a team from the National Human Rights Commission, NHRC led by the Chairman, Prof Chidi Odinakalu in Port Harcourt. The two parties have continued to evidence some of their claims with names of alleged members killed. Amaechi at a press briefing, reeled out about eight names of members of his party he said were killed at different locations in the state recently, adding that about thirty members of his party had been arrested by the Police on what he termed frivolous reasons. The analysis aptly find support in the words

*As the power tussle continues, the creeks are turning red with the blood of scores of the victims including security operatives deployed to ensure peace, member of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) engaged to conduct the elections, officials of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and members of the opposition Camps. : The tension in Rivers state were caused by two major political parties, the All Progressive Congress, APC and the Peoples Democratic Party, PDP in their effort to grasp the state for their respective party..*

Another crisis induce factor in an opposition setting is weakness of electoral institutions including the security agencies. Again election had a lot of role to play. Unfortunately, the political parties and INEC are weak to the extent that electoral

materials especially result sheet are forged yet, no visible sign of prosecution. The majority of the respondents believed that this has tremendously impacted negatively on the security situation in an opposition setting with respect to Rivers state. This is evident in the compromising attitude of the security agents. The APC and the PDP lashed at the police for allegedly being biased. It was alleged that the APC maintain a killer squad in the police, code named C4I and with good romantic relationship with Abuja power, the PDP then, urged the Inspector General of Police to immediately disband the body. Today, former governor, and now a minister in the APC led national government is equally using the Abuja based power in threatening the PDP led state government in Rivers state.

## **IMPLICATIONS ON DEVELOPMENT**

### **1Security implications**

From the analysis it is obvious that the fear of threatening character of federal government against opposition party that form government at the state level increases security problem in the opposition state. This fact is well expressed in the statement made by Wike in the face of federal intimidation during election. He (Wike) said “Amaechi and APC brewed the crisis in Rivers State through their illegal use of federal might to cause acts of violence against the PDP. The Police, the state security service are instruments of federal intimidation. He further said that, “Unfortunately the use of federal power and resources has led to a great escalation of acts of killings, unlawful arrests and detention for frivolous and unsubstantiated reasons as well as constant and un-abating harassment using the very same federal security agencies meant to protect all sides ... we will defend ourselves if the use of federal resources against the collective will of Rivers people continue This goes to show how the use of federal power account for insecurity in an opposition setting. The threatening character of the federal powers and the actual use of national resources to victimize state on opposition political party increase spate of insecurity, as the state on opposition platform, not wanted to be outdone in the game- of buck pushing resort to the use of unconventional and unconstitutional means for regime survival. Today, partly, to reduce the power of using federal might against perceived opponents made governors to request for the creation of state police.

*The poor relationship or rather the intimidating intrigues of the federal powers against opposition state explained the called for state police by state governors. Predictably, this out feat would counter- the overwhelming control and use of security agencies by the federal powers against state on opposition political platform on matters of conflicting interest.*

The study also revealed that security take dangerous dimension when leaders of two major political parties in an opposition setting pursuit self-serving interest rather than the collective interest and will of the people. Because of the desires for selfish control of the people’s common wealth, political gladiators on separate side of the coin; recruits thugs, cultists as well employed hate speech, to outdone one another. This created division and hatred between supporters of both camps. According to Sopriye(2016) it has been difficult to draw a line between cult and political killings in the state because leaders of the two major political parties in a move to win at all costs use both legitimate and illegal means to access power. According to him, most of the cult groups were recruited by the political class to prosecute their interest in elections. “So the killings you see are both political and cult- related.

It is however noted that the peculiar security problem in Rivers state is due to the state capacity to deliver mega votes that would have a lot of influence on national direction; this is because the state is one of the tripods of the country’s regional voting strengths. The fact therefore, is that, the APC-PDP Macabre drama in the state endures; because of the

state is hotbed of national politics and a ganged to measure the country's political temperature. This is underscore by the two gladiator's show of national strength to win the votes of the state to their respective party, even as their foot soldiers are dying of hunger and curable diseases. Deliver, a political palace for ensuring your state vote massively in favour of one's political party is unconstitutional pre condition for getting what you need from the party in government. Thus the battle of supremacy between the duos could best be explained from this perspective. They all wanted to deliver the state to their party by all means, hence high level of crisis. The study noted that security in the state is compromised, and losses of lives are politicized. In opposition setting, state government attention is detracted, and thus lost focus on developmental policy as every effort put in place is geared towards protecting its mandate.

The study further revealed that Weak democratic institution and treachery attitude of politicians induce crisis in an opposition setting. In one of the Rivers state elections, INEC materials were forged, staff were found to have compromised. When the people lost confidence in the ability of the body to conduct credible and unbiased poll, the people resorted to means deemed fit by them, including extra judicial mechanism to secure their interest. In such a situation, peace and security is threatened. From the analysis, the study traced four major factors associated with high level of insecurity and poor economic development in an opposition setting especially Rivers state to include:

- (i) Fear of federal intimidation of political opposition state.
- (ii) Better rivalry among political leaders of two contending parties
- (iii) Weak democratic institution – the INEC, security agencies and civil society.
- (iv) Misconception of the role of political opposition

## **11 Economic implications**

Apart from the security, there are also enormous economic implications in an unhealthy opposition setting. In Rivers state, the focal point of the study, the people lost property worth billion of naira. More than any state of the federation, Rivers state elections were conducted several times due to what INEC called inconclusive Elections (INEC, 2015). The fact here is that, at every election period, people were restricted from going about their respective engagements. Apart from the monetary cost of conducting endless elections by the electoral body and other relevant institutions, including security agencies, running into billions of naira, the effect on the psyche of the average Rivers state indigenes, in terms of anxiety, trepidation and social disturbance cannot be quantified.

The situation also troubled government from focusing entirely on developmental projects. On the whole, the electorates are on the receiving end of the ugly and unhealthy opposition setting in Rivers state. The federal government gives little attention to infrastructural problems of the state. Today Rivers federal roads are in deplorable state. It is commonly believed that the unhealthy relationship between the state and the federal government is responsible for the neglect of federal responsibility in the state. This was the case when Jonathan and Amaechi was in power and now that Buhari and Wike control affairs of the Federal and State respectively. Thus, it is well acknowledged and established that poor government attention to the plight of people in state with government on opposition party is a big minus.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

No pure and serious democratic setting can perform optimally without the input of the opposition. It has long been acknowledged by democratic theories that the principle of legitimate political opposition is one of the most fundamental components of any liberal democracy. APC opposition at the state level and PDP opposition at the national level should not be constructed around personal and individual interest if democracy is to be consolidated in the country.

The opposition All Progressive Congress (APC) in Rivers state should stop riding on the horse of federal powers to create unhealthy atmosphere in the state. Democracy is about choice, rather than constantly engaging the incumbent government in power tussle, they should act as the voice of the voiceless, present policy that will make them viable alternative to the ruling government and in true sense of democratic system, work as critical partner in nation building. In this, the incumbent PDP led Government in the state should uphold the rule of law and protect human rights and freedom. On the other hand, the APC opposition is expected to make room, space or allowance for cooperation and consensus building by exercising circumspection in opposing the incumbent government. This is obvious, and particularly important to current circumstances of eminent threats to peace and security in the state.

In conclusion therefore, if democracy is to be preserved as a viable governance strategy, then the opposition party must not use the over bearing influence of federal powers to intimidate the ruling government at the state level. Such practice created crisis of security with attendance consequences. It takes different shades of opinion and ideologies to fashion a dynamic democracy, therefore, national ruling party should understand that opposition political grouping holds the potential of moving the country into a qualitatively higher development through constructive criticism, Opposition should have the capacity to promote responsible and reasoned debate, and not to embark on untiring and protracted wrestling for control of the people's resources.

On a general note, Politics in Nigeria should not be seen as a platform for sharing the national cake to the advantage of the winning party. As this injustice in the distribution of wealth of the nation engenders the do or die Political Syndrome characteristics of the contest in Rivers State. In other words, there should be a massive campaign against the materialistic tendency of Politicians as well as the unequal distribution of the material resources and power sharing formula which in essence contradict the basic tenet of democracy. Electoral reforms should immediately capture lapses observed in order to strengthen democracy in the country.

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