

Vestiges of Military Rule in Democratic Governance in Nigeria

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The position argued for in this paper is that: the inability to manage Nigeria as a federation; challenges in the area of fiscal federalism, the culture of political apathy, the culture of lack of accountability, contempt for the rule of law, gross disregard for and abuse of fundamental human rights, intolerance for opposition and other vices that eventually undermined the capability of democratic institutions, after democratisation in Nigeria, are vestiges of military rule in Nigeria. When Nigeria returned to democracy in 1999, it was after many years of military rule. However, since the values that military governance stands for are different from those of democracy, there is the need to evaluate how many years under military despotism have rubbed off on the institutions of democracy as we have it in Nigeria today. It is pointed out in the paper that the military years that preceded the establishment of democracy in Nigeria promoted conditions, mentalities, and practices among Nigerians that are constituting hindrances to the optimal performance of democracy in the country. This happened because democracy met in place conditions that are incompatible with norms, values, purposes, and structures that are suitable for the sustenance of democratic culture such that the rule of law, consensus-building, tolerance, free and fair election, accountability, checks and balances and other values of democracy are struggling for survival. It was concluded that the right democratisation process for Nigeria should include developing a mentality in Nigerians that is conducive for democracy to thrive. This requires the cultivation of the values of democracy in the minds of Nigerians and disabusing their minds from the anomalies associated with military rule.

Introduction

Military rule and democratic governance are informed by diametrically opposed values. According to Claude Ake, “the military values discipline and hierarchy, democracy, freedom and equality; the military is oriented to law and order, democracy to diversity and contradiction and competition; the method of the military is violent aggression, that of democracy is persuasion, negotiation and consensus building” (Ake 1996:14). This being the case, a society in which military rule occurs for a lengthy duration of time cannot but experience some influence of the anomalies of military rule on democracy whenever it gets instituted. This is evident in Nigeria.

In this essay, there is a discussion of how military rule in Nigeria influenced democratic governance in Nigeria. Democratic governance's immediate past, we note, promoted conditions, mentalities, and practices among Nigerians that eventually became obstacles to democratic rule in the country. In other words, "the current democratic processes in Nigeria are bedevilled with the problems of military left over (such as the democratisation of the use of authoritarian values of intolerance, insensitivity as well as lack of genuine dialogue in our democratic space) in the management of our democratic structure and institutions by the current crop of politicians" (Abbas 2013:58). This is because democracy met in place conditions that are incompatible with norms, values, purposes, and structures that are suitable for nurturing and sustaining democracy. This happened because the military era conditioned the mentalities of political leaders and those being governed in such a way that the rule of law, consensus-building, tolerance, free and fair election, accountability, checks and balances and other values of democracy became radically affected. The democratic culture that should sustain democratic institutions has been replaced with a culture of militarism that sees violence, force, and repression as alternatives to dialogue and peaceful resolution of disputes.

Our conclusion is that the inability to manage Nigeria as a federation; challenges confronting fiscal federalism, the culture of political apathy, the culture of lack of accountability, contempt for the rule of law, gross disregard for and abuse of fundamental human rights, intolerance for opposition and other vices that eventually undermined the capability of democratic institutions, after democratisation in Nigeria, are vestiges of military rule that the country had for years before democratising. A call is consequently made for the need to entrench the culture of democracy which will eventually lead to the flushing out of the values that characterised the military days in Nigeria.

Military Incursion into Nigeria's Politics: A Few Comments

Barely six years into independence and democratic governance in Nigeria, the military ousted civilian rulers and took over the reins of leadership. Military rule in Nigeria spanned between January 16, 1966 to May 29, 1999, with civilian rule sandwiched in between from October 1, 1979 to December 31, 1983. The institutionalisation of democracy on May 29, 1999 came after years of bad governance, as the country faced a lot of challenges from the international front; witnessed so many socio-economic crises, breakdown of law and order, abuse of fundamental human rights, institutionalised corruption, among other vices, (Bello-Imam and Obadan 2004:1) due to many years under military rule.

Various reasons have been offered for *coup d'etat* against democratically elected regimes in Nigeria. The most popular of these is the one offered by "coup plotters" themselves, which relates to corruption and misgovernance by civilian governments. The claim is that civilian governments fail to live up to expectations in the areas of governance, promotion of people's welfare, nation-building and economic prosperity. To the military, the civil folks are a set of undisciplined, unruly, and unknowledgeable people in the management of the state; and this requires that they are schooled, disciplined and put straight by some force. The restoration of social order and good governance is therefore made the basis of military intervention in politics.

The military believe that they have the duty to intervene whenever misgovernance and gross indiscipline is noticed because they see themselves as the “custodian of national independence” and as such a group that must act whenever some individuals threaten the wellbeing of the Nigerian state and its people as a result of the misuse of power. To them, their assigned role is to rise to the occasion whenever an act of insurrection is noticed against the state; and hence they perceive actions of corrupt political leaders as aggressions that threaten the state. A scholar who shares this view is Larry Diamond. In an attempt to explain what was responsible for the expulsion of the Second Republic of Shehu Shagari’s regime by the military, Diamond (1984:905) holds that, “what caused the coup was not the ambitions of soldiers but the decay of the country under four and a quarter years of civilian rule. This decay had three components: staggering corruption, crippling economic waste and mismanagement, and the vitiating of the electoral process through violence and fraud.”

The position that civilian misrule is responsible for military intervention has, however, been countered. Antagonists of this view reject the argument that coups are precipitated by civilian misrule. On the contrary, they hold that “what civilian misrule does is to provide an *alibi* for military coups. It does not cause coups. It is the military’s monopoly over the instruments of coercion that gives it advantage over other groups in overthrowing governments” (Agbese and Keil 1992:21). Ihovbere (1991:604) shares this view. He holds that the taking over of governance by the military has been possible because of the military’s “monopoly of the means of coercion and alleged ‘legal right’ to use the weapons under its control” (Ihovbere 1991:604). The strength of this counter-position is that it recognises that it is not only the military that is dissatisfied with misgovernance in Nigeria but that even though other groups are dissatisfied they often do not have the power to bring about the desired change. The military has the instruments of coercion, which energise them to rebel against government and, if successful, overthrow it.

One may add to this that the explanation that coup is precipitated by the corrupt nature of civilian rulers neglects the fact that the military themselves are not saints in the conduct of public affairs. Regarding the Buhari regime for instance, Patrick Utomi notes that “the similarity between the Buhari regime and the Shagari regime are close enough for some to describe it, perhaps unfairly, as the military wing of the National Party of Nigeria” (Utomi 1985:42). This position seems justified because the same explanation for ousting the civilian regimes is offered for unseating military dictators by subsequent coup plotters. This has been possible because “having seized power, as regime after regime has shown, the military becomes vulnerable to corruption, ethnic, religious, and regional sentiments, manipulation by politicians, inertia, waste, and divisions that lead to indiscipline and the erosion of credibility” (Ihovbere 1991:604).

One should take it, as Bamgboye (2014:2340) suggests that the claim that the corrupt ways of the civilian rulers precipitates *coup d'etat* is merely made by the military in order to legitimise their stay in power. Utomi (1985:41) is of the same view when he insists that the military’s claim of being corrective regimes aims at legitimating an “unelected regime in a country that is quite politically conscious....” With such claim, the people are made to believe that respite has arrived for the economic woes they faced during the ousted regime’s reign. Unfortunately, curbing poverty, insecurity, and corruption is not better under the military than it is under the civilians.

For instance, it is on record that “the rapid growing oil revenues that coincided with the reign of the military regimes were blatantly squandered and mismanaged than channelled towards the socio-economic development of the country” (Bamgboye 2014:2343). It is not just that the military squandered and mismanaged Nigeria’s resources. To be more specific, they used “the national resources and huge revenues obtained from the nation’s ‘rentier oil economy’” to further their personal economic interests” (George, Amugo and Cornelius 2012:47). Other than this, the image of the country suffered so much damage in the international arena in the areas of human rights abuse, so much that one of the priorities of President Olusegun Obasanjo led government in 1999 was that of improving the international perception of local politics in Nigeria.

Also, as Agbese (1990:309) points out, the adventure of the military into Nigeria's politics was counter-productive in that it had the consequence of undermining the development of the country, which it was intended to aid. According to him,

even though the crisis of underdevelopment provides the opportunity for military intervention in politics (and the subsequent militarisation of Nigeria), military intervention in politics does not resolve the Nigerian crisis. Instead, intervention tends to aggravate the crises by introducing additional contradictions to the already existing contradictions of a dependent, neocolonial society. As military intervention aggravates the crisis of underdevelopment, the possibility for further militarisation to deal both with the old crises and the new contradictions is created. The consequence of all these is that the Nigerian case demonstrates the vicious circle of the crisis of underdevelopment leading to militarisation, which in turn, aggravates the crisis and causes higher militarisation. The vicious circle results from the fact that military intervention carried out in order to solve the problems of underdevelopment, tends to aggravate the crisis of underdevelopment, which in turn, perpetuates military rule with its attendant militarisation of society.

It is also instructive to note that the military upon a successive coup often appoint civilians, including high ranking officials of the aborted civilian regimes, into places of authority. As such civilian bourgeois continue to have access to, and exploit, the resources of the state. Two reasons may be adduced for this. The first is that such gestures often placate the elites in the Nigerian society, who are seen by the military head as being capable of rocking the boat. The second is that in actual fact there is an alliance between the ruling elites whether they be military men or civilians. In any case, one would think that the accusation that the civilians are corrupt will make an incoming military dictator exclude the civilians from positions of authority in the country. We may conclude that corruption and mismanagement of the economy are just additional reasons for overthrowing existing political order, there exist more fundamental ones relating to personal ambitions of coup plotters.

The explanation that Agbese gives for military intervention is, however, somehow different. According to him, military intervention into Nigeria’s politics should be situated within the structural crisis of the Nigerian political economy and can be traced to Nigeria’s dependent status in the global capitalist system. It is this dependent nature that creates enormous political and economic

crises and “these crises in turn create opportunities for the military to directly intervene in politics by overthrowing democratically-elected regimes” (Agbese 1990:293). However, although Agbese’s explanation for military rule seems different from that of those who opine that military intervention in governance can be traced to misrule on the part of civilians, yet underlying his explanation and that which suggests that corruption and misrule are responsible for coup is the realisation that certain chaotic conditions in Nigeria provide the excuse, explored by the military, for intervention.

However, there are attempts, in some quarters, to justify the intrusion of the military into politics on the ground that it helps speed up the pace of national development. In defence of this view, it is contended that the military are able to “use repression against the working class and other non-capitalist forces to speed up the process of development” (Agbese 1990:298). Lending strong support to this view, Sadet Deger and Ron P. Smith argue that:

the coercive power provided by a strong military may enable the state to increase the rate of exploitation of available resources. Surplus labour may be mobilised, raw material production developed in the face of opposition, agrarian surplus transferred to industry, consumption restricted, industrial disputes suppressed, and the rate of work increased. Without the organised force provided by the military, the state might not have the power to mobilise or exploit the potential resources to the same extent (Deger and Smith 1983, Cited in Agbese 1990:298).

However, the Nigerian experience defies this kind of explanation of Deger and Smith. This is because, judging from the history of military governance in Nigeria, it is obvious that there is no qualitative difference between the style of governance of the military and that of their civilian counterparts. While it may be true that military rulers tend to take decisions faster, yet, in the case of Nigeria, military rule was “plagued by factionalisation, corruption, waste, and the abuse of power” (Ihombere 1991:602) which, apart from hindering speed with which decisions are taken, have eventually undermined the outcomes of such advantage since those decisions have not catapulted Nigeria into the class of developed states. In the long run, the anomalies plaguing Nigeria continue, under the military, to devastate the country. Accordingly, Ihombere(1991 :602) notes that:

the prevailing conditions of illiteracy, waste, poverty, unemployment, inflation, disease, lack of [means to meet] basic human needs, exploitation, inequalities, and vulnerability to external pressures, which are in themselves precipitates of historically determined structural deformities in the system, continue to breed the forms of uncertainty and instability that have become part of the political equation in contemporary Nigeria.

In fact, because there is no adequate form of control during military rule, military rulers tend to do only that which benefits them rather than pursuing development of the people and polity. In the final analysis, in the case of Nigeria, the incursion of the military into governance led to the

breakdown of law and order, degeneration of social infrastructure, economic stagnancy and hardship, civil unrest, widespread corruption, and deterioration of public morality. Summing up the devastating effect that military rule had on the country, Abraham Adesanya avers that:

The pursuit of their self-perpetuation schemes led to the total bastardisation of the political system. They banned credible and tested politicians, sponsored and encouraged their business partners to enter the political arena, promoted the use of money in politics, created and dissolved political parties at will and generally turned politics into a huge circus show of absurdities. Economically, the military brought Nigeria to its knees. They completely destroyed the economy. Corruption reached unprecedented levels. Every major national institution was destroyed and ruined, including the military, (their immediate constituency) the police, the judiciary, educational sector, the civil service etc. That was the military legacy. And all Nigerians irrespective of their ethnic and religious backgrounds suffered (Adesanya 2002).

These anomalies eventually led to the clamour for democracy with the belief that democracy will ensure that government will stop being self-serving and become an institution that benefits the people. However, although Nigeria has democratised since nearly two decades now, yet the development aspirations of Nigerians have not been met. Nigerians have so far been disappointed about the so-much talked about “dividends of democracy” they were promised during the military era, while they were being mobilised for the struggle to end military rule in the country. What obtains, instead, is that “Nigerians are still faced with the situations that characterised the military era: poverty, corruption, infrastructural decay, social menace, vast unemployment, and violation of basic human rights” (Igbagbon 2010). According to Godwin Sogolo, “extreme poverty and unfulfilled elementary needs, famines and widespread hunger, a high rate of death, preventable diseases, illiteracy, lack of access to portable water, poor sanitation, geopolitical fragmentation, corruption, violation of elementary political freedoms and basic liberties, bad governance and various forms of violent conflict” (Sogolo 2013:16) are indices of underdevelopment which characterise Nigeria’s democratic era. These indicators of underdevelopment are the reasons why Nigeria has been listed as one of the countries in which the majority of her citizens live below poverty line. It is listed by the World Bank as one of the five countries in which two-thirds of the world’s extreme poor are concentrated; others being India, China, Bangladesh and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

A critical evaluation of the democratic experience in Nigeria reveals that at the root of the crisis democracy faces in the country is the inability to address issues regarding the foundation of social order in the country, which has to do with engendering the right value system appropriate for a democratic system, after lengthy years of military rule. What is wrong is that the democratisation process in Nigeria prioritised the adoption of the institutions of democracy over the nurturing of vital social norms and moral values that are germane for democracy to survive and thrive. The immediate past of democracy in Nigeria suffuses the Nigerian society with certain anti-democratic norms, practices and mental orientations that requires democratic

government inheriting the state from the military to put in place measures that will eventually lead to the eradication of norms, practices, and mental orientation that are antithetical to the values and practices of democracy.

Some Effects of Military Rule in Nigeria's Democracy

A major effect that military intervention had on shortening the life of democracy in Nigeria's history is that it deprived the country from gamering essential lessons from its past mistakes and consequently regulating itself by developing self-regulating mechanisms. This further had the consequence of preventing "the stabilisation and institutionalisation of democratic culture" (Ikpe 2000:146). Eventually, all the anomalies that military rule aspired to correct were still intact, and in worse conditions, when it eventually gave way to democratic governance. As such the plagues of personal rule, absence of separation between the public and the private realms, patron-client administrative networks, veneration of the ruler, massive corruption, ethnic/sectional-based support, repression of opposition and violation of human rights (Ikpe 2000:146), which characterised military rule, continue to bedevil democracy.

Inevitably, military rule, after many years of dominating Nigeria's political landscape, affected the democracy that was instituted in 1999. A major channel of influence on Nigeria's nascent democracy is ex-military men who became politicians and thus continue to play active roles in shaping the nation's democracy. Out of four presidents that the regime has had, two have been former military rulers. Military men have been able to continue to dominate the political scene for a number of reasons.

The reasons for the ex-military officers' access to plum political offices and top corporate boardroom positions are not far-fetched. One, some retired senior military officers were in control of power and economy for a very long time, some of them had corruptly enriched themselves by stealing public funds. Two, these retired officers possessed huge wealth that they can use at every opportunity to pave their ways into top federal and state political offices such as members of the senate, national and state house of assemblies, chairmanship of political parties and local government. Three, some of them had acquired civil education by going to business or management schools and universities in Nigeria and overseas, therefore, they were able to combine brain power with financial power which they acquired while in charge of the management of the country's economy for over thirty years (George, Amugo and Cornelius 2012:51).

Frank and Ukpere (2012:289), in like manner, argue that the military "allocate economic advantages derived in Nigeria from contracts and allocation of oil blocks to themselves and colleagues. In and out of the military, this social group possesses enormous wealth from these sources to influence the course of politics in democratic dispensation." However, although these ex-military men donned civil garbs yet their military features betrayed their outward adornment. They still see themselves as the unquestionable supremoes that must have their ways without any obstacle. Pointers to this fact are: the use of force rather than dialogues in handling dissents, disobedience of court orders, closure of media houses, arrest of journalists, and high handedness

in handling the Niger Delta militancy (Frank and Ukpere 2012:285). There is also the arrest of judges during President Buhari's tenure.

During the military era, the office of the president became a powerful office. First, this is because the military head of state's power was not subjected to the control of the legislative arm for it was none existent. Although the judiciary did exist, the military ruler chose which ruling to obey. Second, many institutions of government were made to be directly responsible to the president. For instance, during the Babangida years, the president was "not only the Minister of Defense, but also chairman of the Police Service Commission, the National Council of States, the Armed Forces Consultative Assembly, and the Council of Ministers. In addition, the Central Bank, the State Security Service, the Budget Department, and the Directorate for Mass Mobilisation for Social and Economic Recovery were also brought under the Presidency" (Ihonvbere 1991:611). During this era, the military, State Security Service, and the police were used as tools of terror, and this trace has been seen in how civilian presidents use institutions of the state to pursue personal vendetta as seen, for instance, in the use of the Economic and Financial Crime Commission, the State Security Service and DSS to subject to ill-treatment perceived political opponents. This act of political intimidation, in itself can be traced to the fact that the office of the president is too powerful with overbearing influence on nearly every institution of the state, which is a trait the Nigerian state acquired from the military days.

Another major effect that military incursion has on Nigeria is the way the federal system is operated as a unitary system with so much power at the centre, the federal level. Major-General Johnson Aguiyi Ironsi promulgated the Unification Decree No. 34 of May 1966, and since then Nigeria's federal structure has never remained the same. One may contend that even without this decree, which attempts to make Nigeria a unitary system, Nigeria's federal structure would have been defective as a result of the mode of command which characterises the military. This is the reason that even despite the abrogation of the decree, Nigeria's federal system remains defective with the federal level playing a dominant role while the state and the local levels remain heavily dependent on the centre. However, the defect in the federal structure in the country has affected democracy for it has created the problem of each region trying to outdo the rest in controlling the centre with the hope of gaining access to, and using, the resources in the centre to benefit themselves. This could have been avoided if each state has considerable control of its affairs; and if they had been stronger in relation to a weaker central government.

One cannot overlook the effect that the military has on morality in the society. The military years were characterised by high levels of indiscipline, looting of public treasuries, assassination, disregard for the rule of law, social values and norms among others. The consequence of this is that eventually after democratisation politics in Nigeria was devoid of essential moral values and social norms. This is why political actors do not consider immoral and illegal means inappropriate in some situations. Military rule ignored due regard for moral rules and social norms. It considers as expedient means that ensure the survival of the military rulers. Military rule was, thus, instrumental in destroying the fabrics of the society through the promotion of gross disregard for moral values and social norms. In addition, it created a culture of violence that legitimises force and repression as instruments of governance. Military rule, by so doing, enthroned the principle

of “might is right” at the core of governance in Nigeria such that rulers could justify their actions only through force with little or no regard for the views of the people.

The formation of political parties has also suffered. One, since the formation of political parties happened under military rule, military rulers influenced the formation of political parties during transition to democracy. Under the regime of Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida (who ruled from 1985 to 1993), the approval of the two political parties- Social Democratic Party and National Republican Convention- was done after his refusal to approved six parties that had been freely formed to be the platform on which politicians could contest, after they were screened by the then National Electoral Commission. Likewise, General Sani Abacha, before dying suddenly, was the only adopted candidate of the five political parties formed under him. Second, most of the political parties that emerged under military rule did so with a main feature of lack of ideological leanings. As Jide Osuntokun points out, “one of the missing links in the Nigerian nascent democracy is the absence of well-organised political parties. This absence is not surprising because these so-called parties were quickly put together during the Abdul Salaami administration. All the parties lack ideological foci and they seem to be mere agglomeration of disparate groups put together for the purpose of capturing power, no more no less” (Osuntokun 2002:13). Their being put together hurriedly under military rule is partly responsible for why Nigeria’s party politics lacks concrete form and structure. It is responsible for why its content and character are ambiguous and its purpose and finality uncertain (Aina 2004:83). Little wonder that, “rather than being instruments of order, the parties have become cogs in the wheel of orderly governance and smooth legislation (Osuntokun 2002:13).”

The nature of political parties in Nigeria, heavily bearing the influence of the military, consequently poses some challenges to democratic governance in the country. First, as Temisan Ebijuwa rightly notes, there is the problem of the control of the political parties by wealthy politicians who finance and run the parties as their personal properties. These politicians dictate who takes what in the parties and expect victorious candidates to be subservient to their whims and caprices in planning and executing policies that affect the state (Ebijuwa 2007:183). Political parties have also played upon ethnic jealousies, such that they seek victory by discrediting other parties as being parties of the “other.” As such these parties rather than being instruments of integration have become instruments of division in the country. Moreover, political parties in Nigeria tend to see winning election as an end in itself rather than a means to the end of improving the lot of the populace. This is because access to state resources is the main aim and not rendering of services to the people.

The military era conditions the mentality of political leaders and those being governed in such a way that values of democracy became radically flawed. As a democracy that emerged out of the immediate past of military rule, military rule bequeathed to political leaders an orientation which Kolawole terms “democratic despotism.” This refers to the fact that Nigeria’s political leaders in its democracy have been unable to govern in line with democratic ethos. They have been unable to submit themselves to other institutions for regulating the excesses of political leaders in the country. They simply “do not understand the trends and essence of democracy.... Their orientation is towards legitimacy by compulsion” (Kolawole 2007:63). Frank and Ukpere

(2012:287-288) also hold that “the long years of military rule made the boundaries between the barracks and the civil society so permeable that the ethos of the military affected the entire society. The outcomes were that, at the entry of the civil government, politicians had adapted to the command system of the military.....” On the part of the followers, that past is responsible for ignorance about the nuances of democracy and as such responsible for “impatience with due process, calls for the intervention of the ‘presidency’ in matters that calls for negotiations or other legal or quasi-legal procedures” (Bello 2005:48) and resorting to self-help instead of allowing necessary institutions in a democracy to handle grievances.

One cannot overlook defective election as part of the parting gift that the military bequeathed to the Nigerian state. A free and fair election is an important precondition for democracy. Elections help confer legitimacy since the people, through elections, bestow the right to govern on political office holders. A legitimate government in turn receives the support of the people. This is so because people often give support to what they have willingly been instrumental in its creation as against what is forced on them. Election is devised to secure the consent of the led in deciding who the leader should be in dealing with issues that affect their lives. It is also important as an instrument of accountability and as an instrument of conferring legitimacy. As an instrument of accountability, Paul Collier explains that, “in a democracy, a government has no choice but to try to deliver what ordinary citizens want. If it is seen to perform sufficiently well, then it gets re-elected; if it is judged to be inferior to alternatives, then it loses. Either way, government strives to perform because it is accountable to voters” (Collier 2010:18). Since elected officers know that if they do not perform well they will not be re-elected and since they hope to get re-elected they often strive to carry out laudable developmental projects that will convince the people that they deserve another chance. Election therefore serves as a means of holding those in government accountable for their actions while in power. However, in Nigeria, election can still not be trusted as free and fair. The 1999, 2003, 2007 elections were massively rigged to favour candidates of godfathers and the presidency. This consequently led to prolonged legal battles. Sometimes by the time the court nullifies an election, the usurper has spent three and half years. The consequence is the development of political apathy on the part of the citizens, a situation which is unhealthy for democracy. Although subsequent elections seems to be fairer, after certain electoral reforms, yet, election in Nigeria are still marred with violence, stuffing and stealing of ballot boxes. And all these have radically affected the trust that citizens have in the political system.

The long period of military rule also led to the development of a culture of political apathy in Nigeria. The dictatorial style of governance of the military excluded the people from being the core of governance. They neither had the power to decide the what nor the how of governance. Unfortunately, the people long carried the spirit of political apathy, developed during the military era, into the democratic dispensation translating to low tum-outs during elections.

Conclusion

Being tagged a democracy is not enough and the democratisation in any polity should go beyond having in place institutions of democracy. Democracy, apart from having required

institutions, involves having a mentality that will help create the right kind of environment that will further strengthen democratic norms in a country. For Nigeria to truly become democratic and for its democracy to yield the rights dividends there is the need to do away with mentalities and ways of life, which were acquired during the military days and which are incompatible with the culture of democracy. There is the need to do away with disregard for the rule of law, authoritarianism, abuse of human rights and civil liberties, rigging of elections, apathy, corruption, and lack of transparency and accountability among other anomalies which characterised the military era. With the wildering away of these anomalies, the values of democracy should then be consciously cultivated through constant devotion to doing things right the democracy way. Thus, liberty, equality before the law, freedom of speech, assembly and worship, accountability, justice, separation of powers, respect for the rights of minorities, tolerance of faith, beliefs, and opposition should not only be paid lip service to; they will need to reflect in the conduct of activities relating to Nigeria's democracy.

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