40 Mortal Sins & Human Rights Atrocities Of Buratai’s Era As Nigerian Army Chief

Onitsha, Eastern Nigeria
Wednesday, 27th Jan 2021

The Int’l Society for Civil Liberties & Rule of Law is half happy and half sad over the removal of Nigeria’s longest serving Service Chiefs since May 1999. We are half happy because of their sack or (self removal?) after over four years of sustained advocacy campaigns, featuring Intersociety as a lead-campaigner. It is reminded that Lt Gen Tukur Yusuf Buratai reached his retirement in Jan 2016 when he clocked 35 years in military service, but instead of quitting the stage, he conspired with other Service Chiefs and “the Presidency” to smuggle “Section 11.09” into the “Harmonized Terms and Conditions of Service for Officers of the Nigerian Armed Forces (2017) Revised”, otherwise called “H-TACOS (2017)”. The smuggled ‘Section 11.09’ provides as follows: “the forgoing notwithstanding, the President, C-in-C reserves the prerogative to extend the tenure of a Chief of Defense Staff/ Service Chief irrespective of his age or length of service”. The ‘H-TACOS” is a non legislative instrument arranged whimsically and capriciously by ‘the C-in-C and his Service Chiefs’ and was last reviewed outside public inputs in 2017 after that of 2012.

Saddened By The Appointment Of New Army Chief Who Massacred 216 Igbos

On the other hand, we are sad because the newly appointed Army Chief, Major Gen Ibrahim Attahiru, appears to have been chosen on the basis of ‘ethno-religious sentiments’, rather than competence, unimpeachable track records and ability in modern military soldiering and technology. Apart from being the same Army officer removed from the theatre of Boko Haram counterinsurgency operations for seeming crass incompetence in 2017, he was also the same officer that ignited and supervised the systematic and ceaseless massacre of defenseless Igbo citizens when he held sway between 2015 and 2016 as the General Officer Commanding the 82 Division of the Nigerian Army in Enugu.

The hateful and unlawful killings, supervised by the new Army Chief, Major Gen Ibrahim Attahiru had included: six (6) deaths in the 30th of August 2015 protests at Awka and Onitsha, twenty-five (25) deaths in the 2nd and 17th December 2015 protest and jubilation killings at Onitsha Niger Bridgehead and environs, fifteen (15) deaths in the 18th and 29th January 2016 killings in Aba, thirty (30) deaths in the 9th February 2016 massacre at Aba National High School, one hundred and ten (110) deaths in the 29th and 30th May 2016 Biafra Heroes Day massacre at Nkpor, Ogidi and Onitsha and thirty (30) deaths in the Asaba spill over massacre of 30th May 2016; totalling 216 deaths.

Defining Direct & Vicarious Criminal Responsibilities

By direct criminal responsibility/crime perpetrators, they are perpetrators or atrocity criminals that ordered, supervised and executed the massacre or killings outside the law; facilitated or attempted to facilitate the destruction of evidence-and colluded in protecting the command structure and rank and file culprits resulting in them not being fished out and brought to justice till date. By vicarious criminal liability or cr responsibility, it is defined as the responsibility of the superiors for the acts of their subordinates or, the responsibility of any third party that had the “right, ability or duty to control the activities of a violator, but failed or declined to do same.” It is also a liability assigned to an employer or other principal for his agent’s or employee’s acts, rightly or wrongly performed in the course of employment or other duty.

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- The Nigerian Army under Buratai as its Chief of Staff witnessed the highest level of bastardization, polarization and demoralization, particularly on ethno-religious grounds.
- The Nigerian Army under him was reduced to ‘jihadist and ethnic militias’, to the extent that its symbol was religiously inscribed and radicalized
- Secularity and plural soldiering were a history in the Nigerian Army under Buratai
- Desertions and sacks particularly on ethno-religious grounds characterized the Nigerian Army under Buratai
There were series of independent reports and accusations under Buratai on cases of ‘in-service’ enemy killings and conspiracies particularly perpetrated on ethno-religious grounds.

The Nigerian Army under Buratai was reduced to ‘an Army for Fulani-Hausa Muslims alone’, with others as makeshift and teamakers. For instance, the Army under him witnessed a high level or maddening domination and control by Fulani-Hausa Muslim officers, to the extent that in its recent promotions and postings; out of 47 Major Generals, North took 32 including 27 Muslims and South took only 15 including only 3 for the Southeast; in the case of 163 Brig Generals posted, North took 110 including 84 Muslims and South took 53 including only 10 for the Southeast.

Accusations of ‘conflict profiteering’ rather than professional conflict management and counterinsurgency operations were rife under Buratai as Nigerian Army Chief.

Nigerian Army under Buratai was so hateful and partisan that it was culturally named by other Nigerians particularly non Muslims of Northern and Southern extractions as “Boko Haram” and “Fulani Herdsmen” Army

Nigerian Army under Buratai was reduced to “Fulani and Muslim citizens’ Mai-Guards”.

Apart from chronic citizens’ defense, protection and safety disproportionality between Muslims and Christians recorded under Buratai’s Nigerian Army, the Army was more interested in protecting Fulani Herdsmen and Northern Muslims across the country than extending same to all citizens especially those in danger irrespective of their ethnic and religious backgrounds. This is to the extent that wherever a Fulani Herdsmen settlement is sighted, there must be an Army or Military post.

Buratai as Nigerian Army Chief played a critical role in the violent settlement of local and ‘imported’ Fulani Herdsmen/Shuwa Arabs in the bushes, forests and farmlands located in the Southeast, Southwest, South-south, North-central and Christian parts of the Northwest and Northeast.

Nigerian Army under Buratai also provocatively crossed and exceeded its boundary of responsibilities or duties including incompetently taking over the functions of the Nigerian Police Force and abandonment of its core defense and territorial protection duties.

Nigerian Army under Buratai also arrogated to itself the duties of Police CID, prosecutors and trial courts or judges, to the extent it abducted defenseless citizens at will, tortured them at will, disappeared them at will, setenced them to death at will, executed them at will and made away with their corpses at will.

Nigerian Army under Buratai also had basket-loads of accusations of sexual molestations including rape and indecent assaults against young married and unmarried women, involving Christians and a mixture of Muslims and Christians in insurgency areas.

Owing to incompetence, crude and hate soldiering, demoralization and conspiracies, the Nigerian Army under Buratai had had multiple thousands of its personnel killed or disappeared at will including victims of ‘in-service enemy killings’.

The recruitment processes in the Nigerian Army under Buratai were brutally bastardized and polarized leading to influx of brigades of radicalized ethno-religious zealots dotted with its camouflages.

The role of the Nigerian Army under Buratai in the democratic process especially during electioneering was horrible and worst of the worst, to the extent it had become a major poll rigging and poll violence instigator and perpetrator.

Under Tukur Buratai as Nigerian Army Chief, the number of Islamic Jihadist groups increased from only three in June 2015 to 21 or more main and splinter groups as at Jan 26, 2021.

Nigerian Army under Buratai contributed hugely to the country’s border porosity by looking the other side or aiding the invasion of the country by unarmed illegal aliens who later became an army of voters in the North and the armed Islamic jihadists who masquerading as subregional ‘cattle herders’

Nigerian Army under Buratai was deeply involved in the formation of ‘the Association of the Defenders of Atrocity Crime Perpetrators’ or Army/Government sponsored mushroom ‘human rights’ organizations. Among them are ‘the undertakers’, rented protesters, hired columnists, malicious petitioners, and ‘Army Contractors Human Rights Organizations’, etc.

For the first time in recent decades, Nigerian Army under Buratai had become engrossed in open corruption and other corrupt practices particularly the demand, collection and acceptance of bribes at roadblocks. In our studies of 2010 to 2014, nowhere was the Nigerian Army mentioned as partakers or perpetrators.
The combination of crass incompetence, hate and crude soldiering by the Nigerian Army under Buratai had led to over 30,000 territorial defense and civilian safety deaths since June 2015; involving not less than 9000 victims of Jihadist Herdsmen violence (all Christians), 9000 victims of Boko Haram/ISWAP insurgency (approximately 5,000 Christian and 4000 Muslim deaths), estimated 4000 victims of Zamfara/Northern banditry in Muslim dominated States of Zamfara, Katsina, Sokoto and Northern Kaduna (about 80% Muslims), majorly targeted at indigenous Hausa Muslims; multiple hundreds killed by Ansaru Jihadists (majorly Christians and foreigners), not less than 2,500 citizens killed by the Army and Air Force including not less than 1300 defenseless Shiite Muslims and 650 Eastern Nigerian Judeo-Christian citizens (crimes against humanity), 300 rural Northern Christians (air bombing), starving to death of 240 detainees at Borno’s Giwa Barracks (AI Report 2016) and multiple thousands of other civilian deaths arising from the Nigerian Army/Military’s unprofessional and crude handling of “counterinsurgency operations” in the Northeast (war crimes). The number of defenseless civilians shot and maimed by Buratais Nigerian Army during the killings was not less than 2,300.

There are also at least eighteen 'Buratai’s era Army butcheries in Nigeria since August 2015; involving: (1) the 30th August 2015 massacre of 40 defenseless citizens of Judeo-Christian faith during peaceful protests in Onitsha, Enugu, Yenagoa, Uyo, Port Harcourt and Asaba; (2) 2nd and 17th Dec 2015 massacre of 30 defenseless citizens of same faith in Onitsha; (3) 14th-15th Dec 2015 massacre of no fewer than 1000 unarmed Shiite Muslims during their religious processions in Zaria (Government later admitted massacring 348); (4) 18th and 29th Jan 2016 massacre of 20 defenseless citizens of Judeo-Christian faith during peaceful protests in Aka; (5) 9th Feb 2016 massacre of 30 unarmed protesters in Aba; and (6) 29th and 30th May 2016 massacre of 140 defenseless citizens of Judeo-Christian faith during global Igbo Heroes Day in Onitsha and Nkpor (110 deaths) and Asaba (30 deaths).

Others are (7) the 2016 starvation to death of 240 civilian detainees including 29 children with ages between newborn and five years at Giwa Army Barracks in Maiduguri, Borno State (AI Report: 2016); (8) 7th Jan 2017 military massacre (air bombing) of 236 internally displaced persons (IDPs) at Christian IDP camp in Kala-Balge, Borno State; (9) 20th Jan 2017 massacre of 20 unarmed protesters (pro-Trump rally) in Port Harcourt; (10) 4th Dec 2017 massacre (air bombing) of 50 rural Christians in Numun, Adamawa State; (11) 11th to 14th Sept 2017 massacre of over 180 unarmed and defenseless citizens of Judeo-Christians faith in Ogwe, Aba, Isiala-Ngwa and Umuahia, all in Abia State; and (12) 29th and 30th Oct 2018 massacre of 47 Shiite Muslims in Abuja.

The rest are: (13) 29th/30th June 2020 Army massacre of 30 unarmed Tiv Christians in Taraba State; (14) 23rd August 2020 Army massacre of over 30 Judeo-Christian worshippers and sports activists in Emene, Enugu State; (15) 20th night of Oct 2020 massacre of over 20 defenseless protesters in Lekki, Lagos State; (16) Oct 2020 massacre by Army/Police of over 300 unarmed citizens across Nigeria during the EndSARS protests including over 70 killed in Lagos and 50 killed in the Southeast, (17) Oct/Nov 2020 massacre by Army of not less than 102 defenseless Igbo citizens in Obigbo, Rivers State and (18) ongoing killings by Army in Orlu, Imo State where at least ten defenseless civilians have so far been reported killed. The Orlu Army killings is led by a hateful Muslim Army commander, named ‘Brig Gen Ibrahim Tukura’, Commandant, 34 Brigade, Oginze, near Owerri, Imo State.

These, therefore, bring the number of mortal sins (see Wikipedia) and human rights atrocities under Buratai as Nigerian Army Chief of Staff to 40.

Signed
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