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Wednesday, 19 October 2011

THE Presidential Committee on Security Challenges in the North-East has further confirmed what has for long been common knowledge. In its final report submitted on Monday, September 26, 2011, the Committee indicted both the federal and state governments. It also apportioned blame to the security agencies over the unending violence in the region. The seven-man Committee, headed by Ambassador Usman Galtimari, was set up on August 2, 2011, as part of efforts to find a solution to the Boko Haram menace.

ACCORDING to the report, the violence in the North-East has been brought about largely by the failure of governance, inadequate security intelligence and the existence of private militias founded and funded by politicians and individuals. The Committee underscored unemployment as a major contributory factor and urged governments at all levels to initiate programmes to address the problem. On the part of security agencies, the Committee identified underfunding, inadequate equipment, lack of coordination and operational lapses as causes of failure to forestall the violence in the region. It drew attention to the question of illegal immigrants, called for an institutional arrangement for interreligious harmony and stressed the need for the expeditious trial of the killers of the sect’s leader, Mohammed Yusuf.

AS earlier stated, the panel has only reinforced what is already well known to the Nigerian public. Underlying all the other problems highlighted by the panel is the critical issue of failure of governance.  This is why unemployment has been pervasive and hunger has been igniting anger in so many places.

WHILE receiving the committee’s report, Vice-President Namadi Sambo said the huge amount of money earmarked for job creation in the current year’s budget was an indication of the government’s desire to tackle the problem of youth unemployment.  Nigerians are not unaware that year in year out the government has been making budgetary provisions for job creation. The irony is that the population of the unemployed has been growing in leaps and bounds. Only the government can tell what has been happening to the money. Our hope is that the government will see the conflagration in the North-East as a pointer to the danger which a massive pool of idle hands can constitute whenever and wherever there are individuals who will readily sponsor anarchy in pursuit of selfish interests.

JUST as the failure of government is glaring everywhere, the need for government attention is sorely  needed everywhere. Hunger caused by unemployment  is today a national phenomenon. It therefore calls for a national rather than a regional approach so as not to send a wrong signal to other parts of the country. Boko Haram is being given a wrong interpretation as a revolt by the hoi polloi. The Galtimari panel has established that it is an outgrowth of private militias established, funded, used and later dumped by desperate politicians and other individuals after being taught how to handle arms. The sect would not have grown to become the monster it is today if its backers had not been shielding its lawless members from deserved punishment.

THE Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Chief Anyim Pius Anyim, said while inaugurating the panel that it would serve to generate a pool of suggestions that would guide the government on the desirability or otherwise of negotiating with the sect. It is our hope that the Federal Government will not see the panel’s report as the long-awaited justification for entering into negotiation with a group it had described as faceless. It will be a grievous error to equate the Boko Haram extremists with the Niger Delta militants whose environment had suffered a serious degradation in the course of the exploitation of the oil that sustains the entire country. The struggle in the Niger Delta was a just and rational cause while the devastations by Boko Haram are a maniacal exercise in which law-enforcement agents and innocent people are being wantonly murdered.

AS we have repeatedly sought to know what does the government have to negotiate with Boko Haram? Is it Nigeria’s secularity or western education? What concession can the government grant to terrorists and mass murderers as negotiation entails give and take?

THE government has said that it knows the sponsors of Boko Haram. The Galtimari report has gone further to say that the sect is being backed by politicians and other individuals. The logical step for the government to take is to bring them to justice. That is the surest way to break the backbone of the notorious group. For as long as the backers are there, Boko Haram will remain a national menace and a source of international embarrassment.

Also according to mr femi falana who said in the punch newspaper on the 25th of may 2013 wiv the budget crisis still looming and the police highly under equipped for guerrilla warfare and counter terrorism I strongly insist that we implement the recommendation of ambassador usman galtimari committee on insurgency in the North east