

Implications of Daba Politics on Democratic Process
in Kano State (1999-2015)

AbdulAziz Sani Zango PhD

Department of Political Science

Faculty of Social and Management Sciences

Bayero University Kano, Kano State, Nigeria

GSM No 08034226434 & 08091559650

Email abdulazizsanizango@gmail.com & aszango,pol@buk.edu.ng

Abstract

Daba Politics is the political pattern by use of political vanguards (Yan Banga) in order to give political support and protection to their party officials and their political aspirants especially during campaigns and other political process. It has become a common feature of party politics in Kano since 1950's during the First Republic through the second republic and in the fourth republic. However, the resurgence of daba politics in Kano state characterized by the deliberate use of violence and terror especially against political opponents and general electorates in the fourth republic has posed negative threats to the democratic process in the state, thereby infringing upon the political and constitutional rights of the legitimate voters and decent political aspirants in the state. This paper attempts an empirical explanation of the factors behind the persistence of daba politics and the ways by which it affects the democratic process in the state. A survey technique was adopted as methodology of the paper. The paper discovers that poverty and unemployment coupled with illiteracy are the major factors that directly influence daba politics in Kano. In essence these factors nurture, reinforce and sustain the persistence of the menace. The paper also discovers that under the current fourth republic politics in Kano state has been conceived by political thugs (Yan Daba) as an opportunity for material and financial gain, as well as means of establishing connection with people in high position like governors, local government chairmen, and commissioners, among others. Thus, daba politics has become independent profession of its own in Kano state, through which patron/client relationship is established between the politicians and Yan Daba, where the latter offer service in form of violence and the former purchase through exchange for material and financial resources. Thus, the paper advances the argument that the higher the financial expectation attached to the service of Yan Daba especially during election, the higher the level of political violence in the state. Hence, concludes that daba politics has posed a very serious negative threat to the entire democratic process in the state. Thus, the paper recommends that there should be a wider employment generation programme, through which Daba politics will be substituted with the decent jobs and employment. There should also be a law that will strictly ban thuggery and daba politics in Kano state. There should be provision for alternative security guards for political aspirants, through involvement of the private security company.

1- Introduction

Democracy is a system which offers a lot of opportunities for conflict resolution, resource allocation, and realization of human needs by vesting power of decision making over societal matters on the majority members in the state. Thus, it has become a value cherished and aspired for throughout the entire globe. It is also a strategy of government based upon the gamble that the potential for participation and responsiveness if offers could make possible a resolution of conflict resolution without violence. Because, where large scale violence or coercion does appear, democracy is fundamentally threatened (Powell, 1982:154). The inherent nature of democracy as a system is that of competition and contestation between various political forces in the state which more often resulted in intense rivalry and animosity. Therefore, the political atmosphere under any democratic dispensation bears the character of political competition, the difference lies in an attempt to accommodate and resolve contradiction. In Nigeria, the perception of the political class about democratic politics explains their behaviour during electoral competitions, which is characterized by do or die affair. Thus, democratic politics becomes warfare, where competition is reduced to a battle predicated on zero sum game, where winner wins all and loser losses all, and competitors are regarded as enemies to be eliminated at all cost (Marietu, 2009). This proves violence as a potential weapon in achieving designed political objectives.

In Nigeria, electoral process under democratic dispensation revolves around the use of violence as tool for bargaining among other important instruments in the political process. Hence, the Guardian Newspaper (cited in Adeniyi, 2003:352) describes politics in Nigeria to be a profitable business, the contest of which initiates acrimony and violence. The huge amount of wealth credited to Nigerian leaders in both local and foreign banks reveal the relationship, and why aspirants are desperate to win election. Little wonders then that aspirants use any method available to get elected. In all the conditions mentioned, contestants can coerce voters, blackmail the opponents, appeal to sentiments, bribe voters, and inflate figures. The primary target is political power. Hence, work for the defeat of opponents, so much such that if all other methods fail, resort to intimidation and violence. In achieving these aspirants employ the service of some less fortunate members of the society, refers to as political thugs “Yan daba” (Adeniyi, 2003:352). This explains the current trend in Nigerian democratic dispensation in which political office seekers utilize particularly uneducated and unemployed youths to unleash terror and create an atmosphere of violence which paved way for mass electoral rigging and malpractices, which in most cases characterized by new pattern of violence and bloodshed. These have posed a very serious threat to the entire democratic process.

is against this backdrop this paper raises the following questions: What are the causes of resurgence of daba politics under the current democratic dispensation (fourth republic) in Kano state? What are the effects of daba politics on the democratic process and people in the fourth republic in Kano state? In view of these questions, the paper examines the pattern of relationship between the democratic process and daba politics in Kano state, and investigates the force(s) that sustains and reinforces daba politics in Kano state, and finally its assesses the impact(s) of daba politics on democratic process and the people in Kano state. Survey method is adopted as a methodology of the paper through which data was generated through interview and focus group discussion with some selected thugs drawn from various parts of the state and some security personnel.

2.0- Conceptual Clarification

2.1- Democracy

Democracy is one of the ambiguous concepts in social sciences; this is due to its value-loaded orientation. In general sense, as Dahl (2000:3) observed democracy means “different things to different people at different times and places”, because, it has taken a number of forms, both in theory and practice.

In view of these differences, Schraeder and Hippler, (1995:50) argued that democracy represents a wide competition between organised groups striving for numerous opportunities for popular

participation in government through elections that are regularly and fairly contested. Hence, democracy is a politics which is concerned with institutions and processes of governance.

These institutions and procedures of governance tend to foster consensus whilst simultaneously promoting and sustaining respect for the ideology of democracy, (Onoja, 2008: 21). In contrast, Powell (1982) observed that democracy is a strategy of government based on the gamble that the potential for participation and responsiveness if offers will make possible a resolution of conflict without violence. In a similar vein, Abaje (as cited in Enemu and Anifowose, 1999: 193) argued that democracy exists where the principal leaders of a political system are selected by competitive elections in which the bulk of the population have the opportunity to participate.

According to Mabogunje and Obasanjo (cited in Onoja,2008) democracy is the philosophy of governance, which set a high premium on the basic freedom or fundamental human rights of citizen, the rule of law, the rights to property, the free flow of information and the right of choice between alternative political positions. This informs that democracy as a system of governance allows for popular participation and the respect for popular demands and interests in contesting as well as in running the political system. In essence, it is evident from the above explanation that democracy is a system of governance that represents in both forms the desires of the ruled (Parenti, 1983).

Essentially, most of the contemporary discourses on democracy have been focused on liberal form of democracy, which is a form of representative democracy in which the ability of the elected representatives to exercise decision-making power is subject to the rule of law, and usually moderated by a constitution that emphasizes the protection of the rights and freedoms of individuals, and which places constraints on the leaders and on the extent to which the will of the majority can be exercised against the rights of minorities.

3.0- Theoretical Framework

This paper uses relative deprivation theory expounded in 1970 by Ted Robert Gurr. It is concerned with the question and conditions under which various forms of violence against political institutions, such as riots, conspiracies, revolutions, thuggery among others occur. It describes the rise of expectations and the consequential disappointment in a given society as a trigger for conflicts. The major assumption behind the theory of relative deprivations is that personal disappointment and angers in those individuals who feel their expectation has proven to be unsubstantial or unrealized can eventually lead to violent conflicts, and this is much more pronounced where there are group of unemployed youth who can be used readily by politicians to achieved their nefarious ends. This can especially be observed when the respective state suffers low social and economic development. In such states, people hope for employment, poverty reduction, better infrastructure, and higher incomes.

According to Gurr (1970: 13) relative deprivation is a perceived discrepancy between men's value expectations and their value capabilities. Value expectations are the goods and conditions of life to which people believe they are rightfully entitled. Value capabilities are the goods and conditions they think they are capable of attaining or maintaining, given the social means available to them. Hence, Gurr (1970: 13) explains which conditions favour violent conflicts after frustrations, by describing factors that amplify the intensity of deprivation that raise the probability of violent reactions at individual, and also other factors that influence the use of violence after collective frustrations. He identifies these mainly in the socio-psychological background of the respective individuals. Even though violence is negatively connotative in such situations, it is still seen as an effective way to achieve collective interests. The potential for violence strongly varies with the intensity and popularity of the perspectives for success that violence has. Basically, this factor deals with the utilitarian question if the use of violence will lead to a satisfying result for the deprived and if it can contribute to the fulfillment of their wishes and hopes. As noted before, both factors strongly correlate, because if someone has simple normative justifications for the use of violence, it is also possible that this mean is seen as an effective way to reach ends (Gurr: 156-160). Apart from the socio-psychological background of the people, also the social environment is an important factor. The use of violence becomes more probable, when the source for their deprivation is not clear to identify because of the complexity of political and economic contexts.

This theory has some weaknesses: for instance it composes of prepositions that are too general, hence difficult for application to specific problems. Even though, the research for causes of violent conflicts has shifted its focus to factor like identity (ethnicity or religion), economic marginalization or institutional repression, the notion of Gurr remains important. However, in erecting this theoretical structure, Gurr has paved the way for understanding of the most intractable problems in the urban scene. Therefore, going by the theoretical postulation above aggression among individual or group is not just undertaken as a natural reaction or rather instinct, but that it is the outcome of frustration, and that in a situation where the legitimate desire of an individual or group is denied either directly or by the indirect consequence of the way society is structured, the feeling of disappointment may lead such a person to express his anger through violence, which will be directed against those he holds responsible or people who are directly or indirectly related to them, and indeed the society at large.

In essence, this theory is relevant to this study because mostly Yan Daba are by-product of poverty resulting from poor family background and unemployment. They feel marginalized by the social system and of course by the political system, they feel they are deprived of their distinctive existence. The deprivation they seek to address through violence. Hence, they confront the society in search of their basic needs in violent manner, and in this process violence is unleashed on the society on both sides. Thus, they become potential weapon in the hand of politicians who perceive politics as do or die affair characterized by violence and bloodshed, in order to capture political power and position.

4.0- The Politics of Thuggery (Daba Politics) in Kano State

One of the major features of Nigerian politics is that all major political issues including these issues that are considered fundamental to the existence and legitimacy of the state such as control of the state power and resource allocation are pursued through exclusively winner takes all strategies. These have transformed the Nigerian politics into one involving mutual antagonism (Olarinmoye, 2007:21). This trend in particular depicts the Nigerian politics as politics of rivalry and antagonism, as well as the use of violence as a means of gaining advantage over political opponents.

The violence which characterizes the Nigerian politics may not be unconnected with the perception of the Nigerian political class, about the politics as demonstrated by their behaviour especially during elections and electoral competition. Thus, politics becomes warfare, where competition is reduced to zero sum game, and competitors are regarded as enemies to be eliminated by all means (Marietu, 2009). Similarly, the extensive rivalry and competition, as well as bitter struggle revolve around the belief that political offices in Nigeria serve as avenues for accumulating private wealth. Thus, elections are ferociously contested, rigged and manipulated by hook and crook, particularly by the incumbent administration (Joseph, 1987). No wonder, the former President Olusegun Obasanjo (2002:50-51) pointed out that in Nigerian politics we fight, and sometime shed blood to achieve and retain political power, because for us in Nigeria, the political kingdom has for too long been the gateway to the economic kingdom. In essence, the relationship between political power and offices, and that of material accumulation is obvious in Nigerian democratic politics. Thus, the power, position, money, influence and affluence vested in political leadership underscore why people extensively struggle for a political post by whatever means possible. Electoral process in Nigeria has been premised on the threat of the use of violence as an effective tool for political bargaining, in order to coerce, intimidate and deter opponents.

The primary target of the political class is power and they are desperate about it, and as such whenever legitimate method of its acquisition fails. Violence and intimidation are used as a last resort, by mobilizing the services of the political thugs (Yan daba) to unleash terror and the society is worse for it (The Guardian Newspaper, cited in Adeniyi, 2003:352).

According to Ojodu and Zorro (1998), it is the politics of do or die affair; of not accepting defeat, of winner wins all, and indeed hostile and violence that characterised the political process in Kano state that breeds thuggery (daba) (cited in Ya'u, 2000:186). Thuggery's philosophy of thug characterizes by the use of violence, intimidation and brutality in order to achieve a nefarious end. As an activity thuggery is connected with stealing, killing, kidnapping, rudeness, victimization, intimidation and harassment. This manner affects peace, harmony and mutual co-existence among groups in their respective communities

and by large developmental processes in general. If politics is criminalized through thuggery, right people who are the observers of good values tend to be scared and keep away from political processes. Through these nefarious activities thugs are used to create an atmosphere of fear and violence, intimidate, brutalize and harass voters and opponents in order to cause electoral malpractices and achieve a given political objectives.

This obviously implies act of thuggery in relations to the political process. Thus political thuggery can be defined as any act of intimidation, violence, hooliganism and brutality, whether leading to death or not, calculated to pose a threat or scale political opponent or perceived political opponents before, during or after elections and aimed at achieving an undue political result or advantage. Political thuggery, especially during elections may range from such acts as inciting or causing others to act in a disorderly manner, being in illegal possession of or usage of offensive weapon/s with the aim to scare or intimidate voters, snatching or destruction of election materials, acts resulting into undue influence as by compelling any person to vote or refrain from voting against his/her will, ballot stuffing etc. This illegal interference with the electoral process no doubt is electoral fraud, is criminal and has severe consequences on democratic stability in general and national security in particular. The politics of thuggery is the use of violence and terrorism perpetrated by political thugs to mobilize political support, to give personal protection and political patronage, to intimidate and threaten the political opponents, and also, to harass and coerce voters in ensuring the success of a particular political party or an aspirant. This has become the dominant feature of Kano politics since pre independence era.

Thugs “Yan daba” is a gang of unemployed youths who reject the poor conditions to which their background has relegated them, and by taking refuge in group criminal and violent activities. For most of the time they live in secluded places called “Daba,” spending much of their time in petty hunting and experimentations with different drugs, only interacting with wider society for their food and other requirements, often in a violent way (Ya'u, 2000:179).

Yan daba live in secluded places, market places, uncompleted buildings, around ponds, deserted areas around the city wall, and in the outskirts of town and bushy areas. They mainly come from poor parents as Dan Asabe's survey (cited in Ya'u, 2000:185) concludes that most of the Yan daba have a poor background and their parents are butchers, petty traders, donkey transporters, leather workers, firewood sellers etc. Similarly, Madaki (cited in Mohammed and Madaki, 2008:03) observed that daba is a deviant institution, like any other institution with subculture and proscriptive norms governing the behaviour of members. The group normally composed of male and female, young and adult. Ya'u (2000:183) rightly noted that sex barriers have been broken down allowing female to integrate into the gang, and also, the age bracket has expanded both ways including boys as age as eight years old and adults of thirty five years and above with families of their own.

He further noted that there are even instances of the son and father being both active at the time in the daba gang. Yan daba engage in petty hunting and also in theft and sometime armed robbery, as well as looting in addition to their ulterior motive of violence and blood thirsty, which is directed toward the society in general with no specific target, as whoever happens to be around the scenario of the violence can become a potential target; men /women, young/old, knowingly or unknowingly. In similar vein, Ya'u (2000:194) noted that the nature of violence perpetrated by Yan Daba has both material and utilitarian motives, and is characteristically apolitical. It can be bought by some people who can meet their basic needs, and directed selectively to a particular target.

5.0- The Origin of Daba Politics (The Politics of Thuggery)

The origin of daba politics in Kano state may not be unconnected with the formation of political parties prior to the Nigerian independence. This linked up with the transformation of the Yan Tauri and Yan Banga through their incorporation into the political terrain of Kano, in order to give protection to and defence (body guard) to political leaders of NEPU(Northern Elements Progressive Union), and since that time politicians invariably use them to achieve their political ambition (Mohammed and Madaki, 2008). Mallam Lawan Dambazau one of the NEPU's founding father noted that the phenomenon of daba politics can be traced to the transformation of the Yan Tauri and Yan Banga (militias) through their

incorporation into the political terrain of Kano city. This closely related to the dynamics of Kano politics right from the struggle for independence, when the ruling party Northern People Congress (NPC) launched a repressive campaign against NEPU using Native Authority (NA) Policemen and dogarai (Local Policemen). Consequently, NEPU leaders were routinely arrested, detained, imprisoned, tortured and subjected to other forms of harassment, all in an attempt to curb the influence of the organisation among the masses. However, that measure proved abortive because as more repressive the Native Authority had become, the more the influence and acceptability of NEPU spread among the masses, who saw in the party the promise of liberation from the exploitative and oppressive system of NPC and its Native Authority police.

When the Native Authority police failed to achieve the desired objective the NPC had to look elsewhere to extend its repressive machinery. It was in this context that it cultivated a core of political thugs to terrorize NEPU members and supporters. These political thugs were later to acquire the name of Yan Banga (a Hausa adoption of the English word 'Vanguard'). In this early period, Yan Banga were mainly recruited from Yan Tauri (people who specialize in using traditional medicine and charm to get immune from iron and metallic objects) (Ya'u, 2000:188).

Later, in the politics of the second republic they acquired the name of 'Yan daba', and since that particular time they have become vital component of the political process in Kano state. Because, politicians use them for protection and also to harass and intimidate their opponents, the trend which has been a source of frequent violent and sometime bloody clashes between the supporters of one political aspirant and another, or one political party and another.

6.0- Yan Daba as Political Force in Kano Politics

Since pre-independence period particularly in the late 1950's Yan Daba have become political forces in Kano politics and political process. Certainly, they are political factor in the potential configuration in Kano politics. They are used by the political class toward achieving political plan (Dan Asabe cited in Mohammed and Madaki, 2008). The poor background and poverty resulting from unemployment which characterized the living condition of thugs dispels them to confront the society in search of means of sustenance. In the process violence is unleashed against the society. This is in particular make them into a force of manipulation by any person who can fulfil and meet their material and basic needs. This in particular was the main reason which has brought Yan Daba into direct contact with the political class.

Ya'u (2000) rightly observed that the link between the political class and Yan Daba is perhaps obvious and operate at two levels: At one level Yan Daba gang provides a recruiting ground for political thugs, who have been accepted as part and parcel of the political party structure in Kano politics. And their general functions in this context are to harass and intimidate political opponents of their patrons, terrorize constituencies during elections; where their patrons have no support or acceptability in order to create confusion; and cause delay of or even stop elections, when their sponsor cannot win either cleanly or through rigging. At second level, Yan Daba provide an army of mobilizers for campaign and rallies. They also provide the retinue of paid voters on Election Day, a common phenomenon in a political situation in which lack of faith and confidence in the processes creates apathy among voters. The people are generally not keen on coming out to vote, leaving the politicians to look for hired voters.

7.0- Yan Daba in the Current Democratic Dispensation 1999-2015

The transition to democratic rule on 29th May, 1999 has become an important milestone in understanding the contemporary trend of politics of thuggery in Kano politics. This is because; the trend has currently assumed new pattern and dimension as thuggery has now become a profession of its own. Yan Daba have now enjoyed financial privileges as employees with clear allowances and other material benefits attached from some politicians in the state. Additionally, Yan Daba believe that they are an integral component of the politics, hence, very vital to the sustenance of the political system. As the political system in the generally lacks provision for security and safety of the political office seekers and aspirants, they resort to the use of Yan Daba as the only alternative source of protection especially during the campaign and rally. Thus, Yan Daba believe that the politician cannot do without them. Beside, in

the current democratic dispensation Yan Daba are secure from the wrath of the law, this is why they perpetrate and commit all sort of violent atrocities against their fellow thug, ordinary citizens, and of course opponents with impunity, because their political masters always guarantee them backing and protection against security agencies. In line with this negative development Mohammed and Madaki (2008) observed that the politicians give them (Yan Daba) all necessary support and encouragement to minimize case of arrest and apprehension by the law enforcement agents. Hence, they further argued that political activities influence and facilitate daba activities in Kano, and this is even why the deviant attitude tends to be higher during party politics than any other time.

8.0- Implications of Daba Politics on Democratic Process in Kano State

This segment is presented according to the questions asked during the survey study and the hypothesis generated in the study.

Occupational status of the sampled respondents. Sixty seven point fifty percent (61.50%) indicated that they are outrightly jobless with nothing to do to sustain them, while thirty two point five percent (32.50%) indicated that they engage in petty occupation which cannot cater for their basic and material needs, they are mainly blacksmithers, butchers, labourers, fuel hawkers, substance and drug sellers, okada riders, and those who sold second hand goods or damaged goods thrown away at refuse disposal places and garbage (Survey, January, 2015).

The perception of Yan Daba on politics, eighty five percent (85%) of the respondents opined that they perceived politics as an opportunity for employment and material benefits, while, fifteen percent (15%) consider politics to be a civic duty (Survey, January, 2015). This in essence represents the fact that opportunities exist in Kano politics for Yan Daba, in terms of employment and source of earning means of livelihood.

Whether Nigerian politics is a dirty game, ninety percent (90%) of the sampled respondents agreed that Yes Nigerian politics is indeed characterized by violence. This was also agreed by majority of the interviewees (Interview, 7th February, 2015). Hence, as perpetrators of violence and other criminal activities politicians found them relevant in using them to achieve their nefarious political motives.

Thenature of their political participation, majority of the respondents by eighty seven and a half percent (87.50%) opined that they participate in politics mainly as party members. This involves membership of the political party and participation in all party activities; campaign, rally, election and so on. This indicates the fact that majority of Yan daba actively participate in political process at different level: as card carrying members, voters, vanguard of the party in question and also as personal body guards to political aspirants. In addition, they are used for fermenting trouble against political opponents through financial inducement.

The relationship between political class and Yan Daba, ninety percent (90%) of the sampled respondent opined that there exist a very strong cordial relationship between the political class or politicians and Yan Daba. This is as the majority of the sampled respondent maintained that their role is child of necessity and hence an integral component of the politics in the state. They further maintained that "the politics cannot go without us; we contribute immensely, particularly during elections. The politicians depend on us to achieve their interests, and we are the only force available that guarantee them protection" (Survey, January, 2015). It was opined that the kind of relationship that exists between the politicians and Yan Daba is a sort of Master/servant relationship, in which politicians used thugs as his own gang to scare away opponents and rig elections (Interview, Monday 12th March, 2015). In contrast, it was opined that the kind of relationship that exist between politicians and Yan Daba is a patron/client relation, through which an alliance is entered in form of contract, where the service of Yan Daba in form of violence is offered for sale and purchased by the highest bidder politicians for his own personal gain and interests. In fact daba politics has become independent profession in Kano politics (Interview,7th February, 2015). This indicates a strong relationship between political thuggery and democratic processes and daba politics in Kano state.

The nature of service Yan Daba offer to the politicians, eighty two percent (82%) of the sampled respondents opined that the nature of the service they offer depends upon the condition or circumstances, or rather the political request surrounding the service. Thus, it can be positive or negative, or both (Survey January, 2015). Positively, Yan Daba partake in politicking especially membership of the party, campaign, rally, pasting posters of the party and its political candidates or aspirants, safeguarding electoral boxes against possible irregularities, etc. They also provide protection and security for political aspirants at their respective houses and during campaign and rally (Interview, 8th April, 2015).

Negatively, Yan Daba partake and involved in political and electoral violence in order to ensure the success of their party and political boss through: engaging in multiple registration and voting, stealing and breaking electoral boxes; where they lost confidence and hope of winning the election, supplying illegal voters, rigging. They also kill, wound, kidnap, injure, maim political opponents, and dealt with any obstacle by whatever means possible that stand the way of their master to winning. Additionally, they intimidate and posed a threat to legitimate voters by creating unfriendly atmosphere at polling station, they are also hired to disorganize and destabilize electoral process where they assured that their aspirant cannot win (Group Discussion, Wednesday 7th - 12th February, 2015).

The kind of benefits enjoyed by Yan Daba from the political politicians, seventy four percent (74%) of the sampled respondents noted that they benefit a lot from the politicians, especially when their boss succeeded in capturing political power and position. It includes the following:

a- Appointment into political post like sub-committees, as youth leader, special assistants, personal body guards to excellencies, employment as securities in public institutions; classroom teachers especially at local government level, and also as revenue collectors at motor parks and other places (Group Discussion, Wednesday 7th - 12th February, 2015).

b- Allocation of resources especially money whenever demanded, or when there is any case of emergency like execution of special assignments, and sometimes they enjoy payment of monthly allowances, medical bills especially when there is a case of accident during campaign or inter-thugs clashes (even though there is an incidence of betrayal and negligence sometime), payment of rent, dowry, invitation card during wedding ceremonies of particular thug, and in addition, given of money for prayer during condolence visitation to any of the thug that lost his parent or relative, issuing of plot of land, allocation of fertilizer, foodstuff, ram, clothes etc during Ramadan and Sallah festivities, award of minor contract and direct labour like painting, reconstruction of feeder roads, maintaining of drainage and cemeteries, and supply of goods and commodities, procurement of bicycles, motorcycles and car, allocation of seats for pilgrimage (Group Discussion, Wednesday 7th - 12th March, 2015).

c- Guaranteeing protection against security agencies through bailout and during arrest.

d- Construction of hamlet at the outskirts of town where they live daily and it serves as their headquarters or base.

e- The procurement of drugs and weapons during operations.

In essence, these material benefits attached to the politics of thuggery, and which enjoyed by Yan Daba is the factor which reinforces the trend and becomes brain behind the persistence of the menace. This has confirmed the first hypothesis which states that the higher the expectation for material gain in the political process, the higher the risk of political thuggery in Kano state of Nigeria.

The impact of the roles/benefits of politics of thuggery (Daba politics), sixty seven point fifty seven percent (67.50%) of the sampled respondents opined that even though these roles have negative consequences on the people and democratic experiment, yet, it engaged them with employment and offers them an opportunity to meet their financial and material needs, and also provide them with opportunity to have contact with people at high places, thus as they claimed Daba politics indeed pays them a lot (Survey, January, 2015).

Possibility of abandoning Daba politics should there be an alternative decent job or employment. Eighty seven and a half percent (87.50%) of the sampled respondents opined that certainly unemployment and

poverty are the major reason behind their involvement in Daba life and hence of Daba politics, and they have no alternative, even they dislike it. They maintained that should there be an alternative job there is no way they will be trooping to party and local government secretariats, branch offices, ministries, or moving across the houses of the politicians, because it involved a lot of humiliations and sometime even risk, (Survey, January, 2015). This is true from the nature of their means of livelihood, which involved joblessness and petty occupation. This is in line with what has been observed that poverty and illiteracy are the major factors behind Daba politics in Kano state, and as such once employment is generated, there is possibility to control the problem (Group Discussion Wednesday 7th - 12th March, 2015).

Obviously, the politics of thuggery (daba politics) has become a vital component of Kano politics as hardly any politician can survive the system of politics in the state without recruiting the thugs even for his own security and protection. Yet, it poses direct threats to the entire democratic process, and this has been manifested in various forms and patterns as follow:

It develops political apathy among legitimate electorates thereby denies them active participation in the political process, and in turn violates their constitutional rights.

It creates violent and unfriendly political atmosphere, characterized by a lot of uncertainties. This involves intimidation, harassment, threats, injuries, and bloodshed of the innocent citizens.

It leads to electoral malpractices, multi-votes, stealing of electoral boxes, and other irregularities.

It leads to political kidnapping and intimidating of political opponents, which renders the political seats hard to contest by decent and popular contestants.

It breeds corruption and mismanagement of public funds as huge amounts of resources meant for public expenditures are diverted for the services and expenses of the political thugs Yan daba, and this implies the collapse of the social services in the state.

9.0- Findings

This study comes up with the following findings:

The conception of politics in Kano state is that of do or die affair, in which majority of the political office seekers and holders primarily calculate the game of politics in terms of winner wins all and loser losses all.

Politics in Kano state has been conceived by political thugs (Yan Daba) as an opportunity for material and financial gain, as well as means of establishing connection with people in high position like governors, local government chairmen, commissioners, etc.

Political thuggery has become independent profession of its own in Kano state, through which patron/client relationship is established between the politicians and Yan Daba, where the latter offer service in form of violence and the former purchase through exchange for material and financial resources. Thus, the higher the financial expectation attached to the service of Yan Daba especially during election, the higher the level of political violence in the state.

Poverty and unemployment coupled with illiteracy or low level of education are forces that directly influence daba politics in Kano. This in essence nurtured, reinforced and sustained the persistence of the menace.

Political violence especially during election is directly associated with the daba politics breeds electoral malpractices in Kano, which in turn negatively affects the general democratic process in the state.

10.0 Conclusion

Daba politics has become part and parcel of political process in the Kano state for the past six decades, however the trends has in the contemporary dispensations assume new pattern and shape, as it graduated from the provision of security and protection in the late 1950's, to profession of violence in the current democratic dispensation, especially 1999 through to 2015 and this posed a very serious negative and direct threat to the entire democratic process in the state. Thus, it can be established that in as much as the true spirit of democracy is to be maintain and the problem of electoral violence be curbed in the state, a very decisive measures of action has to be taken by the government, community, parents and stakeholders in general, against daba politics.

11.0- Recommendations

There should be re-orientation and enlightenment campaign in order to enlighten the society about the dangers of Daba politics in the state.

There should also be mass campaign for the political office seekers/holders to disabuse their minds from their erroneous conception of politics as dirty and also refrain from using Yan Daba in the political process.

There should be a wider employment generation programme, through which Daba politics will be substituted with the decent jobs and employment. Because, the major perception of most of the thugs is that daba politics is legal profession and it pays.

There should be a law that will strictly ban thuggery and daba politics in Kano state. This should be enacted as the edict of the state.

A law should be introduced by the government and INEC in particular banning the use of Yan Daba in the political process. This law shall make provision for penalty against any convicted candidate by disqualification from the political contest.

• There should be provision for alternative security guards for political aspirants, through involvement of the private security company.

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