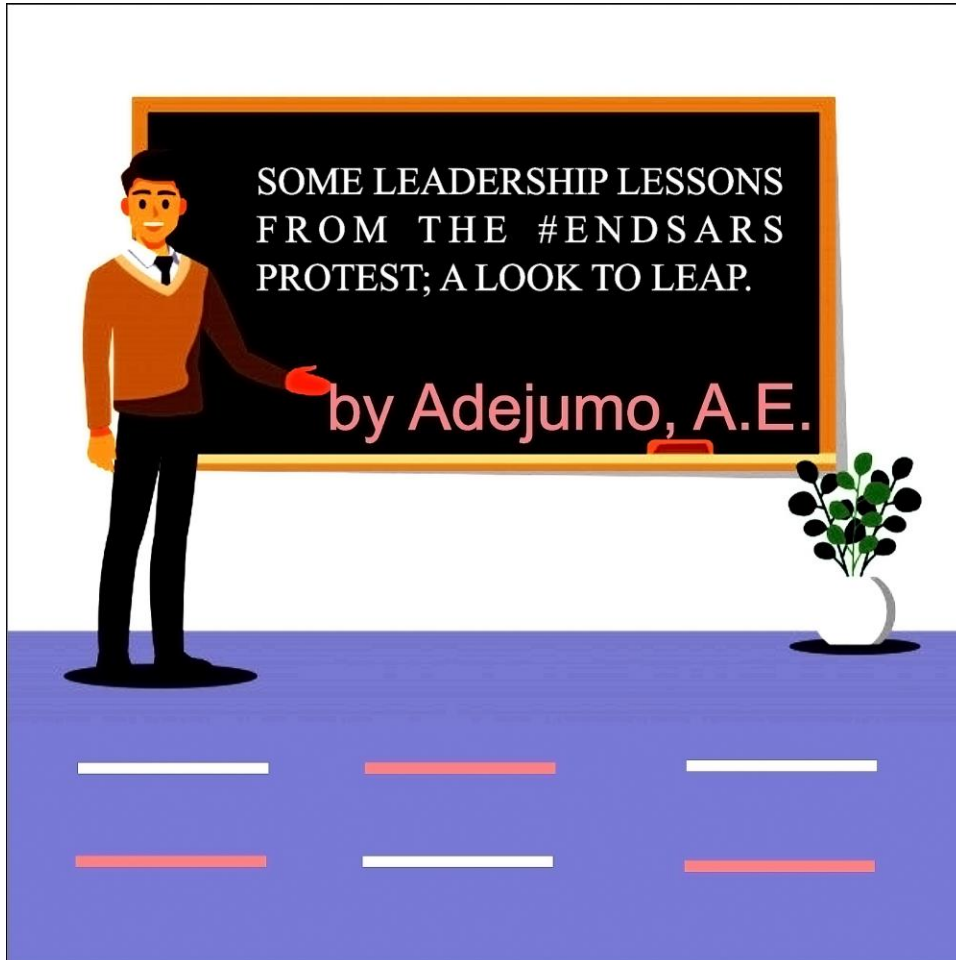


SOME LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM THE #ENDSARS PROTEST; A LOOK TO LEAP.



A leader is that person who leads or commands a group, organization, or country. Leaders are not found only in an organization, they are even in non-formal settings. Leaders are people charged with the responsibilities of making a decision. From a family setting to the society at large. Leaders take different names in different spheres of life. They can be commander, captain, controller, superior, superintendent, supervisor, overseer etc. We can then say that a leader is that individual that prompts and, propel others to follow a certain set of rules. So, they influence others within society.

Leadership is not restricted to the human race. Several other species of animals have shown leadership traits. These animals include the hyena's clans, chimpanzees' and monkeys' troop,

elephants' herd. Animals have displayed leadership skills in different areas. From movement, food acquisition, inter and intra-group conflict mediation, interaction and, or fight.

Sometimes, leaders are dominant figures in a group. They are the most prominent and most vocal. But in the real sense, some leaders are masked at the glance. They are masked from the front yet they give instructions and direct the followers. Thus, the very first in the row may not point to a leader. A leader can sometimes be at the back of the group, leading from the back.

In relation to the present happening in Nigeria. From the peaceful #ENDSARS protest to thugs and hoodlums attack on the protesters. I have learned some cogent leadership lessons. Several nuggets of wisdom have I pilled-up. Some of which I have penned down for your interest and the generations to come.

Lessons itemize for tomorrow's reference.

Every leader must understand his followers. This is one of the pertinent lessons I have learned from the event of the past few days. Finding yourself in a place of leadership either by vote, or force is not important. It is much more important for every leader to understand his or her followers. Failure to identify the simplicity and complexity of your followers is doom. A typical Nigerian is different from a Ghanaian even though they are closer in location. The uniqueness of the follower should be a pointer in determining how a leader lead. This uniqueness shows the characters and flaws of the follower. It also determines their reaction to matters. So, knowing this will help in discharging and dispensing his/her role as a good leader.

Promptness in action. Without mincing words, time is a very good ally of every good leader. Each leader should understand what the scripture pens down in Ecclesiastes 3:1-8. A little delay, a sluggishness in actions, and inaction by any leader are very dangerous. A danger to his success as a leader. Each leader must know when to talk and be silent, when to stay in-door and when to be out and when to pull down and to build. These harmless acts are what great leaders used in winning their people's hearts.

Understanding the power in your words is worth leverage on. Keeping silent when words are useful can kill, deadlier like the venous of the serpent.

Choice of words. Except for the state of condescending, every good leader must be good at communicating his mind to his followers. Saying the right things is not negotiable if you desire to win the heart of your follower. Since, amidst the people are men more knowledgeable, resourceful, and powerful than you.

It will not augur well for you to under-report or over-report cases involving human death. Your information must be true without a trace of lies. Any trace of detection or lie might translate to a loss of public support.

You are as good as your adviser(s). Permit me to explain this using two Biblical characters in 2 Samuel 15. One that you are conversant with and another you might be hearing for the first time (lol). David having overtime enjoyed the power and the efficacy of Ahithophel's counsel. But when Ahithophel cross-carpeted to Absalom's side. David understood that the party which has him is likely to win the war to the throne. Little wonder why he prayed that God should turn *Ahithophel's counsel* into foolishness.

Bringing this home, so many of our leaders took some wrong moves on the #ENDSARS matter. Their advisers must have got I wrong somewhere. I am talking of the president; someone who has a pile-up of advisers on security, finance, health, etc. I can say that whosoever advising the leaders on some of its recent moves is not getting it right. From freezing accounts to arresting protesters because of their demand for good governance. This is why I say without apology that when your adviser gets it wrong in repeats, you may be on the path of failure. This is something you will treasure as you read through this piece. This should be your driving force in the choice of your adviser(s).

There are several generals without a troop. Dear reader, are you worried that you have leadership qualities but without a place to act? Continue to be yourself, strive to stay on top of your game. Then, you will get your chance.

As events unfold in this country, I see that the country is blessed with several intellectuals. Several born leaders are in this nation but without an opportunity to lead. How can call yourself a leader without a troop, you will be asking me? But, so far amidst the protesters are generals well-endowed with leadership skills. Skills to lead but without the right environment or opportunity to do so. I

discovered leaders especially leading different sectors during the protest. From health, logistics calling the shot, and I asked myself where were they all this while?

Leaders win with empathy. As a leader, stamping your authority is something of public admiration. Trying to win and pass a message to your follower that you are the one in charge is something many pursue. But if you will lead effectively, try as much as possible to do so with empathy. Failure to do so, you are painting yourself a dictator. I mean only a dictator does things without identifying with the thought and feeling of his or her follower.

How could you as a leader talk from your brain and not your heart? How could you pursue your purpose at the detriment of public support? How could you choose to win by losing the people's support when you can still win with empathy?

Bridge chain of communication. Soon, after the sad night of 20-10-2020, sympathizers filled the street, TV, and the internet. One major sympathizer was the Vice President of the country who at exactly 11:35 pm on October 21, 2020, tweeted 'My heart goes out to the victims of the Lekki shooting and also the policemen and all other men and women who lost their lives in the past few days in a different part of Lagos and other states'. From his words, he acknowledged there was shooting at Lekki on protesters. A tragedy he prayed never to see its repeat.

Relating to the words of the president, there was a disparity in this matter of interest. How do we marry what he said with the complete silence on Lekki shooting in the President's speech? Do we call it a costly oversight or cheap negligence?

Conclusion.

Events are unfolding in our dear eyes, they are being recorded but in permanent memories. In those where they will last and outlast the present generations. It will be a crime, a crime against the unborn if we fail to panned down what this period has taught us. We must thus not fail to learn from how the present leaders handled a lot of events during the #ENDSARS protest. Such costly failure can present a more severe case to handle in the future.

Permit me to tell you that I have not seen it all, and you may have a better idea of could narrate my experience in a better way. You could have even noticed some silent points in my writing.

Permit me to tell you that you shouldn't be silent about them too, pen them down. You will be thankful you did.