

THE PAIN OF INJUSTICE WITHIN THE NIGERIAN ARMY - BY GABRIEL JOSHUA OBONGHA

It is only in Nigeria that a gallant soldier is regarded a hero when he has fallen, but while he is still standing he is of less importance nor worthy of note

Dear Nigerians, permit me to write on the abnormalities that surrounds the Nigerian army with special regards to soldiers in the north east fighting the boko haram war. If you have a friend or a brother or perhaps your father in the military you would understand what am going to be writing in the following lines.

Since the emergence of this deadly group called the Boko haram in Nigeria, in 2009, Nigerians have lost families, friends, colleagues and relatives not to mention properties as a result of the menace they constantly pose to the society.

Our troops are being killed every day by these terrorists in the north east because of the military corruption and conspiracies by the high and mighty in supposed pretentious patriotism. It is sad to know that the federal government of Nigeria has turned a deaf ear to their plea. imagine a soldier in the battle ground without a helmet, no bullet proof jacket nor enough ammunition and the right weapons to contend against these terrorists and protect himself, how do you expect such a soldier to display expertise and not be overpowered?

As if these are not enough, survivors from deadly attacks by the terrorists are neglected to suffer Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) - a very severe mental health disorder triggered by terrifying events. With a very poor attention to their general well-being and mental health.

News have it that in November 2017, a soldier opened fire on a captain, killed him and then committed suicide.

In June 2018 an army captain on active duty deployment in the boko haram war committed suicide as he underwent psychiatric evaluation in borno state. Yet another disheartening situation ensued, in September 2018 Adegor Okpako a staff sergeant attached to 192 battalion in gwoza killed another sergeant injured four of his colleagues and killed himself.

Just this year (2020) more than Five hundred soldiers have been killed, with mention to the recent deadly Ambush attack in March where more than 300 soldiers were killed (eye witness report) The list of these depravities is endless with the incessant killings of civilians and detainment of Children and minors by the boko haram terrorists. Till the time of writing this article, the federal government has failed to bring back our girls. Snatched from us for so long a time.

To this effect the dumbest strategy deployed by the federal government in handling the insurgency is by initiating a safe corridor granting amnesty to "repentant" boko haram members and establish an agency to rehabilitate and reintegrate these inhumane insurgents back to the society, with no consideration to the greater harm they may pose being insiders. This is purely exceptionable, wicked, and unfair

And if that's the best strategy the federal government have got in seeing that sanity and balance is restored to the Nigerian army and the country in general, then we are headed for a grinding cycle of destruction and failure. This measure alone enervates our soldiers.

Come to think of it this way, what if the fight affects the high and mighty in the country? Would the federal government still maintain this nonchalant attitude? Certainly not. Imagine the president of the federation paid a visit to Mali to Resolve Conflicts while our women and children in the north are rendered widows with no hope for survival.

This having been outlined, what about the soldier's funding and allowance! What percentage of the national budget is allocated to them and really gets to them -welfare! They have families too, wives and children. Does the government ever consider these aspects? Indeed there was a country flowing with milk and honey, it's green and white glowed, but now she is scorned, it's green have collected dust and white has become brown.

The truth is we must all stand and speak out against this injustice and killings of innocent lives and destruction of properties. As crucial and necessary as prayer is, backed by faith without action it yields no results nor command the change we desire. We need to stand together and

Speak about these things and stand for our soldiers in the north east as daily they stand for us and defend the country risking their own lives.

There has to be a commensurate investment to national security the likes inputted against the fight of COVID-19 with all transparency that can cover the needs of our soldiers as regards war equipments and protectives, their welfare fare and funding, wellbeing and mental health--very vital. It is only through this strategy that balance and safety can be restored back to our nation and the integrity and might of our troops be uphold.

May God bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria

And...

May God strengthen our Armforces and keep them safe.

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