Kaduna State Sharia Crisis of 2000: The Lessons and Challenges after Sixteen Years

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Abstract:-   Both Christianity and Islam, by their tenets, are a means of fostering peace and harmony in intergroup relations. However, in Kaduna State, Nigeria, religion has become a subject of controversy between Christians and Muslims since the 1980s. The introduction of Islamic Sharia law in 2000 in Kaduna state against the secular state status and principle of the Nigerian Constitution sparked one of the most violent conflictsever witnessed in the state. The ethno-religious conflict has further complicated the worsening interplay between religion and ethnicity in the state. Where ethnicity is synonymous to religion. The fierce rivalry between Christians and Muslims in Kaduna state has added to the security challenges in Nigeria. The paper is both quantitative and qualitative methodology, and the discipline is of peace and conflict studies. The religious rivalry in the state has led the two major religious faiths (Islam and Christianity) to stoop so low to the level of demonising and blocking each other's prospects. The evidence presented in this paper is that Christians and Muslims share a common faith in God the creator but both parties are responsible for discrediting each other's faith in the eyes of the world at large hence, they have contributed to the scepticism of many people regarding the relevance and usefulness of religion in our society. The study recommended that: government should,among other suggestions,respect the secularity principle as provided in the 1999 Nigerian Constitution (as amended) and that stiff legal actions be taken against sponsors and perpetrators of religious conflicts.

Keywords: *Ethnic, Security, Secularity, violence, conflict, Sharia, demonising, rivalry*

I.   INTRODUCTION

In 2000, Kaduna State witnessed one of the worst religious conflicts in the history of the country occasioned by the introduction of sharia law by the state government. Although sharia is an age-long practice among the Muslim population in the state, what triggered the sharia conflicts of 2000 was the impression of the Christian citizens that the action will turn Kaduna State into a Muslim state. The introduction of sharia law in Kaduna State by the state government was against the backdrop of the heterogeneity and religious plurality of the state and a long history of ethno-religious conflicts in the state (Alao, 2016). *Sharia,* or *Al-Sharia* (otherwise translated as Islamic law), according to Abikan (2002), literally means the way to a watering place or path to be followed. In other words, it connotes a path or way that leads to the water of life. In practical terms, *Sharia* is the totality of Allah's Commandment stretching over the length and breadth of man's life, regulating his action in total obedience to and observance of the law as an integral part of a Muslim's belief. Sharia can also be described as a religious code for maintaining moral standard. In other words, it refers to both the Islamic system of law and the totality of the Islamic way of life (Yelwa& Adams, 2014). Sharia deals with many topics addressed by secular law, including crime, politics and economics as well as all aspects of Muslim life, including daily routines, familiar and religious obligations, and financial dealings. It is derived primarily from the Quran and the Sunna – the sayings, practices, and teachings of the Prophet Mohammed. (Maupin and Jefferson, 2011). The Sharia as a codified system of law for guiding the moral uprightness of Muslim faithful does not of itself precipitate conflict, but the interpretation and its practice or application has been the basis of conflicts between Muslims and non-Muslims. The fierce rivalry between Christianity and Islam has obliterated their historical connection through Abraham which both faith claim to be their spiritual progenitor. This is because the Sharia law is intended to be applicable to only Muslims. On paper, Christians and other non-Muslims are supposed to be exempted from the provisions of the law. In practice, however, this provision is not usually followed (Human Right Watch, 2003). Hence, Sharia becomes controversial under two broad perspectives: Firstly, when it is practiced within the context of a multi-religious setting, in which the Muslim faith is recognized as the most just among the many existing religions; Secondly, when practiced against the background of constitutional stipulations regarding the principles of secular state subscribed to by members of other faiths (or rather by their elites). These two considerations explain why and how any matter about introduction of the Sharia law within an otherwise multi-religiously segmented setting (be it at the national,

regional, state or local government level will have considerable destabilizing consequences.

According to Laitin (1982), the first controversy sparked by the Sharia question at the national level was during Nigeria's first post-military constitution making process between 1978 and 1979 (preparatory to the return of Nigeria to democratic rule in 1979). The debate was on whether the new constitution should recognize Islamic law at the federal or state levels through the creation of the federal Sharia courts.

1.2 Theoretical Framework: Theory of Religious Mobilization

Since the turn of the 21st century, religious symbols, organizations and leaders have increasingly played vital roles in the induction of masses into the political process. Under transitional societies where this practice is most prevalent, religion from the perspectives of two interest groups, namely, religious functionaries and religious community serve as means by which the masses become politicized, (Karaman, 2004). Religious mobilization takes place when a large number of individuals come to think of themselves as members of political collectivities, determined by religious identity. Individuals perceive their personal interests as significantly related to the welfare of their religious community presently in conflict with its opponents, (Smith, 1970:145). Karaman also observes that the drawing of people into active participation in the political process through religion takes place when the people become conscious of conflicts which are conceived as being relevant to their lives, (Karaman, 2004). In the above context, conflicts between religious communities have generally taken two forms; (i) the situation in which a religious community attempts to overthrow a foreign imperialist power of a different religion, and (ii) the conflict between two or more indigenous communities. Under both situations, in order to mobilize the masses, religious symbols are exclusively used to promote attitudes and movements of opposition to the rivals or enemies of the community, (Karaman, 2004).

Islam as one of the world popular religions today presents some of the largest reform movements such as the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood that uses Islam to wield so much religious and political influence not only in the country but the entire Arab world. (Munson, 2001). Islam as a political religion implies that, there is indispensability between Islam and politics. In other words, "Islam makes no differentiation between state and society, politics and religion" (Toprak,1984:250). .That Islam can be safely tagged an "organic religion" (Smith, 1970:250), underlies the fact that political and religious functions are almost fused in Islam because of "alleged unity of the divine and mundane realms" (Tibi,1983:4). Put differently, there is an integration of religion and politics in Islam, or in more precise terms, "there is an inherent link between Islam as a comprehensive scheme for ordering human life, and politics as an indispensable involvement to secure universal compliance with that scheme", (Enayat, 1982:1) cannot be over emphasised. It is against this background that, Islam in the Northern part of Nigeria is always a rallying point in the mobilization of its adherents in almost all aspects of life. It also explains why Sharia was used by the twelve states of the "Far North" to mobilize the Muslim population as from 1999. Of course, not all Hausa-speaking people were amenable to being mobilized for political purposes or using Islam as a tool, since there were a significant proportion of the Hausa-speaking Northern Nigerians who were converts to Christianity. No state in the north is this brought out more patently than Kaduna State. The factors that are complimentary to Islamic mobilization are broad-based, and have their expressions inethnicity, resource control and social factors. These factors by themselves constitute different forms of mobilization (Alao, 2016).

.1.3 The Reason for the unbridled interest on Kaduna City by both the Muslims and Christians

Kaduna State is strategically positioned with rich historical antecedents. It is the third largest state in the Nigerian Federation; with about 6million inhabitants (National Population Census, 2006). More than any other city in Northern Nigeria, Kaduna city occupied the most important political position in the region. As the colonial administrative capital of Northern Nigeria since 1940s, it attracted people all over Nigeria.

Again, Kaduna State in all its ramifications is a reflection of the bigger Nigerian State. In other words, Kaduna State takes the plural nature of the bigger Nigerian State that is responsible for her deepening ethno-religious contradictions. Like Nigeria, the heterogeneity and religious pluralism of Kaduna State accounts for constant feeling of distrust between the component units and the fear of one ethnic or religious group dominating the other (Alao, 2016). Another factor is the historical antecedent that officially favoured Islam above Christianity and thus creates the sharp divide between the two major religions in Nigeria. Probably because of the relative success of the Indirect Rule policy of the British colonial administration, Islam was preserved in the Muslim dominated Northern Nigeria, and used as the basis of political authority in local administration. By so doing Christian missionaries were kept from the North so as to preserve the assumed Islamic homogeneity of the region. For this same reason, the British also adopted the emirate system of political administration with its 'strong religious content'. The extension of the Zaria Emirate to Southern Zaria (Zaria Province or present day Southern Kaduna) under the colonial dispensation was borne out of administrative convenience. The area did not seem to be under the strong grip of the erstwhile Sokoto Caliphate. This can explain why the northward movement of the Christian missions from the south enabled the area to embrace

Christianity as against Islam.It has also been argued that the Southern Kaduna minority ethnic groups' initial acceptance of Christianity was a reaction to the marginalization and oppression they had suffered under Hausa Muslim rule (Mavalla, 2014). However, prior to the introduction of the British administration, the area (present Southern Kaduna) lacked "cohesive administrative units and in fact each village was often hostile towards its neighbour" (NAK, C7/1953). Hence, the Zaria Emirate was extended to the area in order to put it under a unified and centralized administration. Thus, politics and religion created two of the three major age-long problems for the area. First is sustained feeling of political marginalization by the people of Southern Kaduna against the Hausa/Fulani administrators. Second is the religious difference with them and the Hausa/Fulani. The third problem, discussed below is ethnic complexity. These three constitute the underlying problems between the predominantly Northern Hausa/Fulani Muslims and the dominant Southern Christians of other ethnic extractions in the state (Alao, 2016).

The uniqueness of Kaduna State is also anchored on its multi-ethnic and multi-religious composition and therefore vulnerability to sectarian conflicts especially if differences/cleavages resulting from this are not well managed. Apart from the Hausa-Fulani, there are five other major ethnic groups in the state with over 20 other ethnic minority groups each with its distinct language, arts and religion. For a state with such an ethnic complexity coupled with having the highest Christian population in the Muslim-dominated northern half of the region, makes its vulnerability to ethno-religious conflicts highest compared to any other state in the region (Alao, 2016).

Kaduna is a polarized state, where the two major religions, Christianity and Islam, have continued to claim the majority (another cause for strife). Apparently relying on 1963 Census, according to Angerbrandt (2011), there were 49.3% Muslims and 49.4% Christians. Although the 2006 census results did not include religion, the fact that the figures show a relatively equal rate of population growth in the two zones is an indication that there is no justification to the claim by the adherents of the two religions as being in the majority. Yet adherents of the two religions have continued to hold each other with contempt and suspicion. This religious rivalry has led the two religious faiths, Islam and Christianity, to stoop so low to the level of not just demonising each other but also blocking each other's prospects. Moucarry, a former Arab Muslim who converted to Christianity, argued that Christians and Muslims share a common faith in one God and both have shared the responsibility of discrediting each other's faith in the eyes of the world at large. The rivalry between these communities of faith has contributed to the scepticism of many people regarding the relevance and even the usefulness of religion in our society. Christianity and Islamic faiths should be in the forefront in peace initiatives in Nigeria, in particular, and the world at large, in general (Mavalla, 2014). Muslims and Christian should be the vanguards in mediation process (Mavalla, 2015, 2016).

Furthermore, there had also been long trade relations between the area that is now the Christian dominated southern Kaduna with the Christian dominated southern parts of Nigeria. Ethnic based upheavals started under the colonial indirect rule system, when people of Muslim Hausa-Fulani origin were appointed to rule over the other groups in the area through the so called Native Authority System. This has given an impetus to the sustained Hausa-Fulani domination over the minority groups in southern Kaduna State. This minority groups are seen as appendages of the Christian majority groups in southern Nigeria (Alao, 2016).

1.4 The Sharia Conflicts of 2000
In Kaduna State, Sharia was introduced by Governor Mohammed Ahmed Makarfi on February 3, 2000 against the background of so many peculiar antecedents. Unlike other states of the Northern part of Nigeria, Kaduna State is made up of predominantly Muslim community in the northern part of the state, while Christians dominate the south. Similarly, the northern part of the state is made of the Hausa/Fulani, a major ethnic group in Nigeria, as against the minority ethnic groups in the south. This sharp divide of the population of Kaduna State between Muslims and Christians has been the source of conflict between both sides before 2000. The mutual suspicion was further aggravated by the introduction of the Sharia that was expressed in the open confrontations between the two groups in February and May, 2000.

The Sharia violence in Kaduna State took place in two main phases, which Paden referred to as "Sharia 1" and "Sharia 2" (Okpanachi, 2010:12). The first phase took place in the Kaduna metropolis from February 21 to 25 of 2000. This was followed by another round of killings in the following month of March. The second phase was from May 22 to 23. On Wednesday, 23 March, 2000, the crisis spilled over to the surrounding Local Government Areas (LGAs), particularly Kachia and BirninGwari. In Kachia LGA, Muslims were attacked, their residential houses, shops, clinics, courts, filling stations and the markets were destroyed. This round of violent religious crisis later spread to neighbouring villages like Sakainu, Katul, Adadgai, Sowai, and Gumel (Okpanachi,2010).

The May "Sharia 2" violence occurred while the Judicial Commission of Inquiry set up to probe the February through March 2000 clashes, was yet to complete its work. The clash started at Narayi and Banarwa areas and later spread to other parts of Kaduna Metropolis. While the immediate cause of the crisis could not be

fully ascertained, police said that the clashes broke out after residents of a mainly Christian neighbourhood blamed Muslims for the killing of a man (Okpanachi, 2010). According to Okpanachi, others, saw it as the continuation of the Sharia-induced February violence. It took a combined team of fully armed soldiers and police officers to restore peace to the city.

In the face of this violence, the police was deployed in the first instance to quell the conflict. However, when it became obvious that the police could not contain the spate of killings and wanton destruction of properties, the "Operation Yaki" (a joint military taskforce of the police, army and air force personnel) was drafted to quell the conflict. Only then was the conflict brought under control. Operation Yaki has been patrolling the streets of the Kaduna metropolis ever since the crisis of 2000, so as to maintain law and order and to forestall any resurgence of similar violence (Okpanachi, 2010).

An unconfirmed death toll of 2,000 was speculated (Human Right Watch, 2003).But the Judicial Commission of Inquiry set up by the Kaduna state government reported that at least 1,295 people had been killed, while an unspecified additional number were buried unidentified,7 and others were declared missing as result of the February disturbance alone (Kaduna State Government White Paper, April 2001). In all, it is believed that the two Kaduna riots left at least 3,000 persons dead and led to the displacement of over 63,000 people within Kaduna and its surroundings (International Displacement Monitoring Centre, 2007, cited in Okpanachi, 2010, 13). These displaced persons sought refuge in the police and army barracks, considered to be the safest places in the heat of the conflicts.

The neutrality of the armed forces in quelling the Kaduna State Sharia conflicts of 2000 and 2001 was called to question. It was reported that security agencies deployed to contain the situation were openly biased in the suppression of the disturbance. Hamman (2011) attributes this bias attitude and the inability of security agents to contain national emergencies to cultural imbalance within the Armed Forces, paramilitary organizations and other security institutions in the country. Cultural imbalance, he pointed out, is prompted by the composition of the Nigerian Armed Forces and paramilitary organizations which seems to be increasingly becoming culturally monolithic in spite of the Federal Character principle. That cultural imbalance within the Armed Forces as a major factor that exacerbates security challenges in the country is corroborated by Mohammed (2011:2) who tagged the obvious religious bias that has pervaded the Armed Forces as "social virus".

The accusation of bias against the joint military operations by the warring parties during the crisis was that its members were targeted by the intervening soldiers because of their religion. (Hamman, 2011). This made the Joint Military Task Force, "Operation Yaki" set up after the sharia crisis of 2000 to forestall subsequent ethno-religious conflicts to be held in contempt. The implication of this is that, the various groups were neither ready to cooperate with the law enforcement agents, nor ready to divulge useful information to bring the perpetrators to book or forestall future occurrence.

1.5 Perspectives on Ethno-Religious Conflicts in Kaduna State since 2000

The tense situation that pervaded the state since 2000 has been such that the relationship between the Muslims and Christians on the one hand and the majority Hausa/Fulani and the minority ethnic groups was one of curious suspicion (Human Right Watch, 2003). That the precarious situation could trigger face-off at the slightest provocation was evident in sectarian and ethnic conflicts that took place after the Sharia crisis of 2000. In 2001, there was a face-off between Christians and Muslims in Kaduna North but it was quickly nipped in the bud by the security agents (Opkanachi, 2011).

In 2002, there was a clash between the Gwari and Kataf in BrininGwari, spreading to the southern part of the state (Human Right Watch, 2003). In the same 2002, there was another clash between Muslims and Christians in Federal College of Education, Zaria, over alleged attack on female students by Islamic fundamentalists.(Human Right Watch, 2003) Shortly after this face-off, there was yet another conflict in Kaduna North and South LGAs resulting from protest by Muslims over the hosting of Miss World Beauty Pageant in the state (Kaufman &Feldbaum, 2009).

In 2006, there was another clash between Christian and Muslim students in Tudun Wada and Zaria (Salawu, (2010). In 2010, there was an ethno-religious clash between the Fulani and indigenous people in Rahama in the Chawai Chiefdom (Olomojobi, 2013). Feelers are that the menace of the dreaded Islamic fundamentalist group, Boko Haram is but a continuation of the old Sharia question by a new name.

Olomojobi (2013) ZwahuBonnat, *Vanguard Newspaper*, June 24, 2012 gave a detail of some of the crisis they both considered as ethno-religious violent conflict in Kaduna state, 1980-2011. The record also indicates that, between 1980 and 1999, only seven cases of violence but from 2000-2011 there no less than twenty-three cases within a space of eleven years. This is indicative of the vulnerability of the state after the sharia conflict of 2000.

1.6 Lessons and Challenges of the Sharia Conflicts of 2000

The lessons and challenges that can be drawn from the Sharia conflicts of 2000 are based on a recent survey sample of 1,010 respondents from six Local Government Areas of the state, namely, Jema, Kaduna North, Kaduna South, SabonGari, ZangonKataf, and Zaria. The six local governments were selected not only for the strength of their ethnic and religious composition, but also as a result of the fact that they were among the areas where the Sharia crisis was most pronounced.

Firstly, the conflicts established that Kaduna State is a badly divided and multi-religiously composed state, implying that it is highly polarized along religious and ethnic divide, and that religion is often used as an effective tool to ventilate such differences. Furthermore, there is still an indifference by antecedents of Christian religion to the principle of secularity of the state (i.e. a kind of "live and let live" attitude), as against the position of supporters of Islam who believe in the inseparability of religion and state power (i.e. fusion of both). There is therefore a clear disparity in the concept of state to the generality of Christians in the state on the one hand and Muslims, especially of the Hausa/Fulani extraction, on the other. This explains why no less than seventeen violent ethno-religious conflicts had taken place in the state since 2000.

Secondly, the introduction of Sharia by the Kaduna State government in 2000 was prompted by the politics of the day aimed at projecting Islam above other religions; while at the same time confirming the manipulative uses to which a phenomenon such as religion is often put in the hands of elites either as an instrument for seeking favour or diverting attention from social problems, whether real or imaginary. The state government played to the gallery on the Sharia issue. The idea of popularizing Sharia law though not initiated by the State Government was aimed at getting Kaduna to join other "Sharia States" of the Northern part of Nigeria without considering the ethnic and religious peculiarities of Kaduna State and its configuration. The consequence of introducing Sharia law in the state was the violent conflict it provoked largely between the Christians and Muslims. Aside from religion, the character of the state is also a strong factor for conflict especially when it comes to politics of the Northern part of Nigeria. The strong feeling of political marginalization by the Christian minority ethnic groups of southern part of Kaduna State is predicated on the notion that the majority Muslim Hausa/Fulani political elites are using Islam to hold on to political power. The fluid nature of the interplay of ethnicity and religion has continued to have its, expression in the politics of the state since 2000.

Thirdly, the Sharia conflictshad further polarized Kaduna State along religious and ethnic lines. A large proportion of respondents comprising of both Muslims and Christians saw inter-group relations in Kaduna State to have deteriorated because of the introduction of Sharia law. The experience of the conflict had left behind suspicion and fear among the various ethnic groups on the one hand and between Christians and Muslims on the other hand. So intense was this suspicion and fear that, Christians and Muslims, just as the various ethnic groups, found it no longer safe to live with one another. This had led to the emergence of separate quarters for Christians and Muslims within Kaduna metropolis and other major towns in the state, thus creating new and greater security threat and challenge for ethnic integration.

Furthermore, the use of the military to quell ethno-religious conflicts triggered by the introduction of Sharia law elicited contradictory reactions from respondents interviewed, and understandably so, given the badly divided and multi-religiously composed society like Kaduna State. Whereas, majority of the senior security personnel interviewed were favourably disposed to the use of military force for quelling the conflicts, most of the civilian respondents were ambivalent, depending on their religious inclination. Even so, from the majority of the informed respondents, both civilian and military (including the retired generals interviewed), a commonly underlined point regarding the role of the security forces in dealing with violent sectarian conflicts emphasised that the armed forces are not being trained for such conflicts, but for conventional wars; and that using an otherwise multi-ethnically and/or religiously composed military organisation, such as that of Nigeria, for quelling prolonged internal conflicts of the ethnic and/or religious kind harbours the potential danger of ultimately fragmenting the force along similar lines. This again explains why the Joint Military Task Force, "Operation Yaki" set up by the state government was not able to forestall several other ethno-religious conflicts since 2000 (Alao, 2016).

In addition, the Sharia conflicts of 2000 indicates that, a badly divided multi-ethnically and religiously composed society like Kaduna State cannot live in peace if one faith is imposed as hegemonic group of faith over others. The implication of this is that the violent crisis has had many adverse effects on most of the inhabitants of Kaduna State which ranged from personal, psychological, physical, economic and social. That since the introduction of Sharia, many Kaduna State residents have not felt safe in their neighbourhood than before showed that the introduction of Sharia in state had significantly raised concerns about insecurity of life and property.

Consequently, the huge socio-economic impact on the residents of Kaduna State has strained intergroup relations with attendant reduction in economic opportunities. Since 2000 many residents in Kaduna

State were living a perpetual life of fear, which by implication had led to adverse psychological, mental and social imbalances. This had further widened the division among the different ethnic groups on the one hand and adherents of the two most popular religions, Christianity and Islam, on the other hand. The survey findings also show that the absence of ethnic integration that this elicited was not good for the security of the state.

Moreover, by virtue of the new ethno-religious groupings consequent on the Sharia conflict there had been the emergence of new settlements like Gonin-gora and AngwarRomi quarters in Kaduna metropolis. The positive aspect of these new settlements is that, it has minimized the incidence of inter-ethnic conflicts in the state. It was also indicative that the need for peace among the various religious affiliations and ethnic groups was considered very paramount for peaceful co-existence. It was also clear that the solution for lasting peace was considered as not only the prerogative of government alone but the collective and concerted effort of all and sundry, beginning from the grassroots and community levels.

II. CONCLUSION

The study has discussed in detail Kaduna 2000 Sharia crisis and also the lessons and challenges after sixteen years of the crisis. The crisis has further divided the multi-religiously composed state, implying that it is highly polarized along religious and ethnic divide, where most of the state's local government are divided along ethnic and religious lines. The Sharia politics remained a breach on the secularity principle of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution (as amended) which provoked negative reactions from adherents of the two most popular religions. The use of force to quell ethno-religious conflicts under such situation has always been counterproductive.   The rivalry between the two most popular religions, Christianity and Islam, is always the major reason for conflict in Kaduna State.

In spite of both human and material loses, which are deeply regrettable, notwithstanding, the crises have led many people who could not own a shack in the times of peace to be house owners. This is true of the many new suburbs that sprang up in Kaduna city. For instance Gonin-gora, AnguwarRomi and many other new suburbs that sprang up as a result the violent conflict could be seen as some benefit that arose as the consequences of the crises. However, the negative effects far outweigh this little positive effect. The need for peaceful co-existence among the adherents of various religious affiliations should be the top priority of the government be it at the local, state or federal levels.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following measures are recommended toward ameliorating ethno-religious conflicts and achieving lasting peace in the state. *Power Sharing between the Majority and Minority Groups:* Power sharing between the majority and minority groups must be adopted as a way to stem the frequent ethno-religious conflicts in the state (Alao, 2016).   *Respect for "secularity principle of the state":*Kaduna state government must come to terms with the constitutional provision of the "secularity principle of the state" by staying clear off religious matters including pilgrimages.*Depoliticization of Sharia Practice:* Sharia practice should be restricted to Muslims in the state as it had been the practice before the return of Nigeria to democratic rule in1999.

Reintegration of Ethno-Religious Groups: The State housing scheme should be intentional in bringing Muslims andChristian as neighbours once more. The scheme should not be restricted to civil servants alone but include other residents in the state.*Education and Public Enlightenment:* There should be education and public enlightenment such that Muslims and Christians would know that they have brothers in each side of the divide.

The state should criminalize the use of derogatory terms such as "kafiri" (infidels) and so forth.

Inter-Religious Confidence-Building Measures: There is also the need for the institution of inter-religious peace committee for fostering religious tolerance between Christians and Muslims in Kaduna and other states in the northern part of the country. *Effective Implementation of Government Initiatives for Peace:* In order to stem the frequent reoccurrence of ethno-religious conflicts in the state, the government at all levels has been advised through the recommendations of the various Judicial Commissions of Inquiry not to politicize initiatives for lasting peace and harmonious inter-group relations.

Legal Actions against Sponsors and Perpetrators of Religious Conflicts: the perpetrators of ethno-religious violence must be brought to book especially if they are at the corridor of power or influential members of the society.

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