



## President Muhammadu Buhari's Administration and the Change Mantra in Nigeria

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### Abstract

Nigeria, Africa's most populous country and its largest economy is credited with an abundance of natural and human resource endowments placing it potentially, among resource-rich nations and raising hopes of its development potentials. Contrary to this potentiality, the country remains underdeveloped with a large portion of the population living below all indices of human development. Democracy offers hope for pragmatic changes to leadership and government policies in society's quest for change and stability. It was on this basis that numerous disenchanted Nigerians embraced the prospect of 'change' put forward as campaign slogan by Muhammadu Buhari of the All Progressives Congress against the ruling Peoples' Democratic Party in the run-ups to the 2015 elections. Consequently, Mr. Buhari was sworn in as President on the back of his change mantra, on the 29<sup>th</sup> of May 2015 with his party remarkably defeating an incumbent president. The party was re-elected for another four years in 2019 arguably aided by factors of incumbency and some remnant of civil optimism. After the expiration of his eight year tenure, there are questions on the performance of the Buhari administration that need exploration, viz-a-viz performance to voters' expectations; the party's delivery relative to party manifesto; and public disposition to, and perception of standard of living under the administration. Eight years after this government, were they able to introduce the much needed change? How far did they go in fulfilling some of their laudable promises as contained in their manifesto? Did they live up to the expectations of the citizens? This paper seeks to answer these questions through evaluation of the major promises made to the citizens by the 'Change Mantra' government. The social contract theory was employed. The paper relies on secondary means of data collection and is analyzed using descriptive analysis and narrative report. The study concludes that the Government did not live up to the citizen's expectations and most of their promises were never accomplished. The study recommends that corrupt politicians should be jailed to serve as a deterrent to others. Our political culture should be changed; citizens should begin to demand for dividends of democracy from their elected representatives.

**Keywords:** Change mantra; democracy; election; performance; manifesto; political campaign.

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## Introduction

Nigeria's Fourth Republic was ushered in, on 29<sup>th</sup> May, 1999. This was amidst great anticipation and high hopes, that was occasioned by long military rule. Military rule in Nigeria was characterised by flagrant abuse of human rights, lack of rule of law, infrastructural decay and unemployment. With the advent of democracy again, the citizens were looking forward to better and efficient service delivery in the areas of education, health, provision of employment and social infrastructure. In 1999, three political parties were registered by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). They were the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), All Peoples Party (APP) and the Alliance for Democracy (AD). The PDP emerged as the dominant party winning all the Presidential elections conducted between 1999 – 2011. The party produced as Presidents, Mr. Olusegun Obasanjo 1999 – 2007, Mr. Umaru Yar' Adua 2007 – 2010 and Dr. Goodluck Jonathan 2010 – 2015. The party also dominated in all other electoral positions contested between 1999 – 2011. For instance, in 2003, the party won 223 seats out of 360 seats in the House of Representatives. In the Senate, out of 105 seats, the party won 76 seats. The party's dominance of the electoral space was partly due to its geographical spread. As at then, the PDP was the only party with a national outlook.

The PDP however lost its dominance of National Legislative Houses to All Progressive Congress (APC) in 2015. The party also lost the 2015 Presidential election to APC. And therefore by 2015, became an opposition party. The APC was formed in February 2013. It was formed through a coalition of three major opposition parties and other factions; the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP), Congress for Progressive Change (CPC), a faction of PDP, known as the New PDP and a faction of All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA). The 2015 election was unique in some ways, for the first time in the history of Nigeria; an incumbent President was defeated in an election. Also, for the first time in the history of the country, there was peaceful handover of power from one party to the other. The 2015 election was also noted to be the most expensive election ever conducted in Africa. The 2015 Presidential election was between former President Goodluck Jonathan, the main opposition Mr Muhammadu Buhari and other aspirants from minor parties. A number of reasons were adduced to have necessitated this unprecedented defeat of an incumbent President. The Jonathan government was



noted to be inept and corrupt. Between 2009 – 2014, Nigeria got about 72 trillion naira from sales of crude oil, making Jonathan government the richest, in the history of the country (Naira metrics, October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017). Indeed, Duru (2014) affirms that in Jonathan's five years in office, Nigeria's total crude oil sales totalled \$470 billion. While the governments of former Presidents Yar'Adua, Obasanjo, Abdusalami and Abacha combined made total sales of \$489 billion. The regime, however, engaged in profligacy and could not account for how the money was spent. Even the money that was left in the Excess Crude Oil Account (ECA) by former Presidents Obasanjo and Yar'Adua was also shared between the Federal and the State Governors, despite the advice from the then Minister of Finance, Mrs Ngozi Okonjo Iweala to savethe money.

Former President Goodluck Jonathan was however quick to justify spending the money. According to him, the ECA was depleted from over \$20 billion to \$2 billion, due to constant pressure from the State Governors. The State Governors, according to him, always put pressure on him to withdraw moneyfrom the ECA and use it to augment the federal allocation anytime the crude oil sales drop (Udo, 2016). Arguing in the same vein, Dr Ngozi Okonjo Iweala, the former Minister of Finance and CoordinatingMinister of the Economy, maintains that lack of the political will to save displayed by the former Governors affected Dr Goodluck Jonathan's government ability to save (Nwabufo, 2016)). In a rebuttal, the former Governor of Rivers State, Mr. Rotimi Amechi maintains that the Governors pressured Dr Jonathan to share the ECA because every time the Governors meet with the President, they noticed that theECA money was depleting and was being mismanaged. They had to urge him to share the money between the Federal Government and the State Governors (Ojoye, 2016). Dr Goodluck Jonathan's claim that he was pressured by the State Governors to share the ECA, is of course a lame excuse, coming from a President, can only depict the lacklustre way he handled issues during his regime. There were many accusations of how former President Jonathan withdrew money directly from the central bank without any other approval from anywhere and disbursed them into non - government accounts. Dr Iweala attests that she acceded to a request from Jonathan to release \$322 million of the funds recovered from the loot stashed away by the late dictator, Sani Abacha for arms procurement (Ojoye, 2016). Most of these funds were however received by senior members of PDP. There were allegations of scenarios where oil was lifted from the NNPC and



the proceeds were not remitted to the federation account. There was a case of a contentious contract that involved Jide Omokore, Kola Aluko and the former Minister of Petroleum Resources, Mrs Diezani Allison Madueke, where they lifted Nigeria's crude oil but refused to transfer the proceeds into the government account (Ugbede, 2018). In 2014, the price of oil dropped drastically and the country did not have savings to help ameliorate the after effect of reduction in revenue generated by the country. The federal allocation gotten by States from the Federal Government reduced drastically and this affected the States' ability to pay workers' salaries. As at May 2015, about 23 States were not able to pay their workers' salaries. Some States owed up to nine months salary. For instance, in Abia State, workers at the State Teaching Hospital were owed nine months salary and workers at the Hospital Management Board were owed eight months salary. Other workers owed include workers at the Universal Basic Education Board, six months, Abia State Polytechnic, five months (Lawal, 2015) etc. In Enugu, parastatals were owed twelve months salary. In Osun State, workers and pensioners were owed six months salary.

In Benue, workers were owed five months salary and in Oyo State their workers were owed three months salary. Ogun State owed pensioners 52 months arrears (Lawal, 2015). This was the pathetic situation that Nigerian workers found themselves in, before May 2015. Unemployment rate was also at an all-time high. Also, in spite of the huge budgetary allocation given to security, the insurgents became more audacious and advanced in their dealings with the citizens. Owen and Usman (2015) rightly observe that from 2012 to 2015, the Jonathan administration allocated \$6 billion dollars to security annually. About 279 students were kidnapped by the insurgents from a government secondary school in Chibok, Borno State in April 2014. The inability of the government to properly handle this case affected the integrity of the party. It is within this background, that the All Progressive Congress (APC) emerged. The APC party came with a promise of a change to the appalling situation of things. The citizens needed a radical change and they massively voted for the Presidential candidate of APC, Mr. Muhammadu Buhari. The APC was therefore voted on a 'change mantra'. The expectations of the people were very high as the 'Government of Change' was inaugurated on May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2015. At the expiration of this government, were they able to introduce the much needed change? How far did they go in



fulfilling some of their laudable promises as contained in their manifesto? Did they live up to the expectations of the citizens? This paper seeks to answer these questions through evaluation of the major promises made to the citizens by the ‘Change Mantra’ government. The paper utilized the secondary means of data collection. Data was analyzed using content analysis and narrative report

### **Theoretical Underpinning**

This study will explore Social Contract Theory. The best known proponents of this theory are Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and Jean – Jacques Rousseau. The theory posits that the State came into being as a result of an agreement between the ruler and the ruled which defines their duties and rights. Locke’s social contract argues that legitimate political authority was gotten from the consent of the people and could be taken back if the freedom of the individual was breached or promise of good governance is dashed. This theory attempts to define political authority on the grounds of individual self – interest and rational consent. It spells out the demands of governance and involves corresponding obligations and promises on the part of the ruler and the ruled. The most essential promise is that of obedience made by the citizens and the reciprocal promise of protection of citizens and good governance made by the ruler. The theory is an emotional bond, where government must fulfill both the material as well as the emotional needs of the people.

In a workable democracy, government statements and actions must have some degree of trust from the citizens as a necessary condition for an effective social contract (Gaskarth, 2017). Elections should give citizens the opportunity to periodically negotiate with electoral candidates and decide the candidate with the best manifesto and vote in, the person. In Nigeria, there is wide gap between what the candidates put down as what they want to do and what they do when they eventually win the election. The idea is that the power of government emanates from the agreement between the citizens and the rulers in which the rulers promise peace, security, provisions of infrastructures and order in return for obedience for the citizens. The rulers should be made to hold the social contract theory sacred and hallowed so as to gain the citizens trust and confidence.



### **Buhari Administration and the APC Manifesto or Campaign Promises**

As earlier stated, the Buhari administration was inaugurated on 29<sup>th</sup> May, 2015. There was a great expectation from the citizens because of the appalling situation that was on ground. But surprisingly, it took this administration five months to inaugurate the cabinet members. This is to the bewilderment of the citizens, because they felt that the administration was too slow. This earned the President the name 'Baba go slow' (Odesola, 2019). He ran the government solely with senior civil servants for five months. This made the opposition party members to accuse him of being autocratic. The President however explained that the long wait before the announcement of the Ministers or his Cabinet members was necessary so that they can be properly vetted to avoid the appointment of corrupt officials. He finally inaugurated his cabinet members in November 2015, the citizens were however amazed that he merely assembled corrupt officials from PDP who defected to the APC. The masses noted that the new government was not truly a government of change (Odesola, 2019). A senior lecturer, at Lagos State University, Sylvester Odion Akhaine, rightly observes that the new cabinet was not a cabinet of change (DW, 11<sup>th</sup> November, 2015). According to Mudashir et al, (2020), The Buhari Administration main campaign promises include:

- Public declaration of assets and liabilities
- Fight against corruption
- Ban all government officials from embarking on medical tourism
- Formulation of empowerment scheme that will see to the employment of 740,000 graduates across the 36 States and Abuja
- Introduction of free daily school meals for all primary school children
- National security: Guarantee that no internal or external force will take over an inch of the Nigerian soil
- Expansion of Electricity: The APC government will vigorously seek the expansion of electricity generation and distribution of up to 40,000 megawatts in 4 to 8 years
- Work with the leadership of the National Assembly to reduce the cost of governance
- Resuscitation of the Ajaokuta Steel Company



The study will evaluate how far the administration has gone in achieving their main promises

### ❖ **Public Declaration of Assets and Liabilities**

President Buhari promised that he will publicly declare his assets and also encourage his political appointees to also declare their assets. After his inauguration, the Presidential spokesman, Garba Shehu released details of the Presidential assets but did not give the value of all his assets (BBC News, 4<sup>th</sup> September, 2015). He however affirmed that the President will release it to the public after the Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB) verification. The public waited for him to fulfil this promise but he never did. After his second term inauguration, the Socio – Economic Rights and Accountability (SERAP) urged the President and the Vice President, Yemi Osinbanjo, to declare their assets as promised. A Presidential Spokesman, Femi Adesina defended the President by saying that no law mandates him to do so unless he wants to do it voluntarily (Kabir, 2020).

Arguing further, he submits that the President has already declared his assets to the Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB), and that it is now in the discretion of the CCB whether to release the documents or not. The CCB, however maintain that they cannot release or declare someone's assets without the person's permission (Adebayo, 2020). Bishop Mathew Kukah, the renowned Bishop of Catholic Diocese of Sokoto represented by Reverend Father Patrick Alukumu, in a public lecture berated President Buhari for not publicly declaring his assets. In a rebuttal, Mr Femi Adesina, the Special Adviser to the President on Media and Publicity, challenged Bishop Kukah to produce the evidence that showed that the President made a promise to publicly declare his assets if it ever existed (Nwabughioqu and Eromosele 2020). He submits that he discussed with the President and the President avers that he did not promise that he will declare his assets. Only two of President Buhari's appointees declared their assets. They are; Dr Joe Abah, Director General of Bureau for Public Service Reforms, who was appointed by former President Jonathan. And Waziri Ado who was the Executive Secretary of the Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. Former President, late Mr Umaru Yar'Adua was the first and only Nigerian President to publicly declare his assets.



### ❖ The Fight against Corruption

After the assumption of office by the President, he sacked the Chairman of Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC), Mr Ibrahim Lamorde. He replaced him with an Acting Chairman of EFCC, Mr. Ibrahim Magu on November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015 (Ogala, 2015). Mr Ibrahim Magu faced challenges being confirmed as the substantive EFCC Chairman by the federal legislators. The President nevertheless kept him as the EFCC Acting Chairman. The EFCC under Magu secured convictions for former political appointees like former Governors, former Senators, former Ministers and even a former First Lady, Mrs Jonathan. The former National Publicity Secretary of PDP, Mr. Oliseh Metuh was convicted for laundering over 400 million naira. The National Security Adviser to former President Jonathan, Colonel Sambo Dasuki was also convicted for allegedly stealing \$2.1 billion (Ndujihe et al, 2016).

Under Magu, The EFCC also recovered some stolen funds from the former Nigerian First Lady, Dame Patience Jonathan. The funds include \$3.65m, \$4.7m, 1.81billion naira, 7.22m naira, 226.38m, 39.42m naira, 1.09billion naira, 7.22million naira, 174.17m naira, 858.93m naira, 1.90billion naira, \$429.39million (The Vanguard, July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019).Isuma (2020) notes that EFCC under Magu secured 103 convictions in 2015, 109 convictions in 2016, 189 convictions in 2017, 315 convictions in 2018, 218 convictions in 2019 and 243 convictions in 2020. The Whistle Blower Policy was introduced by this regime on 21<sup>st</sup> December, 2016. It is an anti – corruption policy that urges people to willingly divulge information about financial mismanagement, financial misconduct, fraud, bribery and corrupt practices. A whistle blower who divulges any information or tip that involves financial fraud is rewarded with 2.5 to 5% of the retrieved fund by the federal government. Within seven months of the introduction of this policy, the Ministry of Finance obtained 5,000 tips from the public. By October 2017, the Chairman of EFCC Ibrahim Magu notes that through the Whistle Blower Policy the government has recovered 527,643,500 naira, Great Britain Pound (GBP) 21,222,890, \$53,222.747, and 547,730 Euros from the public (Itode, 2019). The EFCC under President Buhari was however not without flaws, just like EFCC under his Predecessors, it was used to go after political opponents. Most of the people prosecuted since 2015 are members of the opposition party. The EFCC froze the Akwa Ibom State bank account. The Akwa Ibom State Governor belongs to PDP, an opposition





party. The EFCC also revealed on August 26<sup>th</sup> 2018, that they are investigating the Rivers State Governor, Mr Nyemsom Wike, a member of an opposition party. He was alleged to have withdrawn 117 billion naira in the last three years (Daniel and Yafugborhi 2018). The EFCC alleged that the withdrawals are contrary to the Money Laundering Prohibition Act. Also, immediately after the Governor of Benue State, Mr Samuel Ortom decamped from APC to PDP, the EFCC went after him and froze the State bank account for allegedly involving in diversion of security vote and other funds. Mr Samuel Ortom wondered why out of 36 Governors, he is the only Governor queried on how he spent his security vote (Owolabi, 2018). One wonders why he was not investigated until five days after he decamped from the ruling party. Since 2015, the EFCC did not investigate any State ruled by the ruling party.

Adeniran (2015) rightly observes that APC Governors that were accused of misappropriation of funds and corruption were not investigated by the EFCC. He mentioned Governor Fayemi of Ekiti State, former Governors of Rivers State and Lagos State, Mr Amechi and Mr Fashola respectively. Some PDP members have to decamp to APC to evade EFCC prosecution. The government also reinstated some officials who were sacked by the previous government for corrupt practices. For instance, Mr Abdulrasheed Maina, the Chairman of the Presidential Task Team on Pension Reforms (PTTPR), who was accused and sacked for stealing of billions of naira from the pension funds was said to be recalled and promoted to the position of Director in Charge of Human Resources in the Ministry of Interior (Abdulaziz and Busari 2017). The Executive Secretary of the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS), who was charged for not complying by the procurement law and other offences. The man was recalled even while the EFCC was still investigating his case (Ajibola, 2018). On 17<sup>th</sup> September 2015, President Buhari fully enforced the Treasury Single Account (TSA) which was conceived by former President Jonathan in 2012. Before then, government's accounts were scattered and some parastatals even had up to 45 different accounts. This encouraged corruption, as the government found it very difficult to monitor the many government accounts that existed then. TSA reportedly saves the government a whopping sum of N24 billion monthly since its implementation (Aderopo, 2019). On September 25<sup>th</sup> 2015, the President, however reneged on the promise of consolidating all inflows from all agencies of government into one single account by exempting the Nigerian



National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), The Nigerian Railway Corporation and other entities from depositing money in the TSA (Omo – Ikirodah, 2015). He justified his action by citing the fact that they are revenue generating organizations. The kind of corrupt practices that are still perpetrated by these organizations that were exempted are mindboggling. On 7th July 2020, Ibrahim Magu, the EFCC boss was suspended as EFCC Chairman. He was accused of mishandling of funds recovered by the EFCC and lack of clarity in the handling of the recovered funds. He was also accused of laundering money through cronies and amassment of illegal wealth (Sanni, 2020). Mr Ibrahim Magu was also accused of using his boys known as ‘Magu boys’ to garner bribe from people so that their cases with EFCC will be squashed. A recorded tape was reportedly played by a business man before a Justice Salami led panel that involved the ‘Magu boys’ where they demanded a 75million naira bribe from the businessman which was to be paid into various accounts (Akinola, 2020). Ibrahim Magu was however replaced as the EFCC Chairman by a Deputy Commissioner of Police, Mr Mohammed Umar.

#### ❖ **Ban on Government Officials from Embarking on Medical Tourism**

The Federal Government announced that it would no longer make funds available for any government officials to be treated abroad unless the medical condition cannot be treated in Nigeria. Shortly after the announcement, the President travelled to London for treatment of ear infection which can of course be treated in the country (Punch Editorial Board, 2019). He travelled many times to the UK to treat one ailment or the other. In 2017, he travelled for two weeks medical trip, he wrote to the parliaments requesting for extension of his medical leave by another two weeks. The Vice – President of the Commonwealth Medical Association, Dr Osahon Enabulele criticised the President’s visit to the United Kingdom to treat ear infection. He observes that there are many ear, nose and throat specialists in the country who could treat the President. Arguing further, he suggests that the President should lead by example by utilizing Nigerian doctors and facilities and make certain that Nigerians do not travel on superficial medical trips abroad (Kogbara, 2016). Between 2015 – 2018, it was reported by New York Times that the President had spent more than 170 days in London on official medical leave (Egbas, 2018). Nigerians spent an estimated \$2.5 billion which is about 1.25 trillion naira on foreign medical trips. The President reportedly spent £1,000 as the cost of parking his plane



every 24 hours in a London hospital (Thabit, 2017). The President's political appointees are not left out in this medical jamboree. Many of them travelled abroad to seek medical attention. The President's family members are not left out too. For instance, on August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020, it was reported that Mrs Aisha Buhari, the President's wife travelled to Dubai during the lock down when there was ban on international flight. She was flown to Dubai to treat neck pain (Akinkuotu, 2020). Nigeria has many specialists that could handle her case and it was even at a time that the President banned international flight as a result of covid 19 menace. Yusuf Buhari, the son of the President was flown to Germany to seek for medical attention after his involvement in a power-bike accident. He reportedly spent two months in a German hospital (Shaban, 1<sup>st</sup> March 2018). This is contrary to the President's promise, to end corruption and waste through foreign medical trips.

### **Formulation of Empowerment Scheme that will see to the Employment of 740,000 Graduates across the 36 States**

N – Power Scheme was inaugurated by President Buhari on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2016 to help reduce the spate of unemployment among Nigerian youths. The scheme was established for youths between the ages of 18 – 35 whether graduate or non – graduate. The scheme has six sub – groups which are the N – Health, N- Teach, N – Build, N – Agro, N – Creative and N – Tech. The programmes expected duration is between six to twenty four months depending on the subgroup chosen by the beneficiary. Within the period of the Programme, the Federal Government pay 30,000 naira stipend to the beneficiary. The Federal Government announced that they have spent 279 billion naira between December 2016 to July 2019 to pay beneficiaries of N – Power Scheme. At the end of the programme, the beneficiaries are disengaged and encouraged to start their own businesses using the skill they acquired from the programme. The programme was designed so as to train the beneficiaries and link them up with the available spaces in the Government and private sectors. Some to entrepreneurship where government will support them (Npower Discussion Group 2020). Hajia Sadiya Umar Farouq, the Minister of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development is in charge of the programme. Despite the progress claimed to have been made by this programme, unemployment rate in Nigeria has increased. On June 20<sup>th</sup> and July 31<sup>st</sup> 2020, the Batch A and Batch B beneficiaries respectively



were disengaged, about 500,000 volunteers without any exit package or start - up capital to start their own businesses (Okah, 2020). This is contrary to what the Minister of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development told them. During her visit to the corporate headquarters of Media Trust Limited, publishers of Daily Trust in January 2020, she promised that the exiting beneficiaries of the N – Power programme will not be left to their fate but they would be given something that they can fall back on .The beneficiaries were released during the Covid 19 pandemic when people were losing their jobs.

At that time, neither the Government nor private sectors were employing people. Their disengagement indeed increased the number of unemployed youths in Nigeria. The beneficiaries had thought that at the end of the programme, they will either be employed or given start – up capital to start their own businesses. The N – Power beneficiaries pleaded with the government to give them start - up capital, if permanent work is no longer possible.The Minister ofHumanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development however reiterated the fact that government cannot afford to empower each of the beneficiaries with 600,000 naira as promised. The N – Power beneficiaries also took their protests to the National Assembly which did not yield any fruit. According to National Bureau of Statistics, unemployment rate increased from 18.8% in the third quarter of 2017 to 23.1% in the third quarter of 2018 (Olawoyin, 2018). The National Bureau of Statistics submits that in the 2020 second quarter reports that unemployment rate further increased from 23.1% in 2018 to 27.1% in 2020.

#### ❖ **Introduction of Free Daily School Meals For all Primary School Children**

The National Home Grown School Feeding Programme (NHGF) is a home grown programme created in 2016 by the Federal Government which seeks to make available one nutritious meal a day to pupils in primary 1 to 3 public primary schools in all the states (Agu, Ossai and Azuogu, 2023). The meal is put at 70 naira per plate. It is meant to be a joint programme of both the Federal and State Governments. The Federal Government was to feed pupils from primary 1 – 3 while the State Governments feed pupils from primary 4 – 6. In most States, the State Governments are not fulfilling their own part, only primary 1 – 3 pupils are fed by the Federal Government. About 24 states implemented the programme, they are Abia, Anambra, Enugu, Imo, Ebonyi, Osun, Ondo, Oyo, Ogun, Benue and Niger. Other States include Plateau, Kaduna,



Jigawa, Katsina, Kano, Zamfara, Bauchi, Gombe, Borno, `Akwa Ibom, Cross River and Delta State. The scheme reportedly fed about 8, 596, 340 schools in 24 states in Nigeria. Some of the advantages of the programme include; encouraging parents to send their wards to school. It also seeks to provide nutritional food to children thereby encouraging the proper development of their mental well - being. The programme also aims at creating jobs through employment of cooks and also to patronise farmers through buying farm produce directly from them. The scheme engaged 100,000 farmers to supply farm produce. About 90,670 cooks were employed through the scheme (Olowokere, 2018). Statistics released by the office of the Vice President reveal that the government expended 83 metric tons of fish, 6.8million eggs, 594 cattle and 138 chickens weekly in feeding students in public primary school (Akinwale, 2019).

In 2018, two years after the commencement of the programme, the Special Assistant to the President on National Social Investment Programme, Mrs Mariam Uwais notes that the programme had gulped 49 billion naira. A research was carried out by a popular newspaper, Premium Times, in three States, Enugu, Oyo and Niger representing the South East, South West and North Central. The Study revealed some of the challenges faced by the programme. None of the States were able to cover all the public primary schools in the State. That is, it is not in all primary schools in the State that NHGF is operative that are lucky to be enrolled as beneficiaries of the programme. The programme also suffers from late and irregular payment of their caterers and this affects their consistency in supplying food to pupils. Some pupils interviewed from some schools in the three States investigated maintain that, at times for 1 to 2 weeks, they will not be served food due to inability to pay their caterers on time by the government (Oluwole, 2018). The students also complained of the size of the meat and food given to them. According to them, the food given to them is too small and cannot sustain them. In Yola, pupils in Dubeli Primary School complained that they were fed for only 10 days in 2019 (Owolabi, 2019). Their teachers complained that students' enrolment that increased, decreased when they stopped feeding the pupils. The programme also suffers from poor supervision. Most of the schools complained that lack of proper supervision is affecting the programme. They submit that they are not carried along or intimated about how the programme works. When they do not see their caterers they don't know who to ask questions from, whether they should direct their questions to



the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) or to the Local Government Education Authority (LGEA). According to them, they also heard that the caterers supposed to bring fruits along with the food but they do not bring fruits to their schools and they don't know who to complain to, since nobody is monitoring the programme. The Finance Officer of the project in Adamawa State, Mr Usman Mohammed however opines that lack of vehicles to move around for supervision is their greatest challenge (Owolabi, 2019). Another problem suffered from the scheme is the politicisation of the programme. In Ondo State, for instance, the supply of food to public primary schools was given as contracts to political cronies or members of the ruling party. The contractors collected 38 million naira from the State Government as contract sum and disappeared with the money.

The Special Adviser to the Governor on Multi-Lateral and Inter Governmental Affairs, Mrs Bunmi Ademosu, opines that some contractors collected 150,000 naira from the government and paid 10,000 naira to caterers for the supply of food to schools. Some, according to her, will collect contract to supply food to a school that is very far from where they are residing and will not even bother to go to the school at all. The State Government berated the contractors and asked them to refund the money given to them (Johnson, 2019). In Ondo State, the programme also suffered from inconsistency, the APC Unity Forum avers that out of 13 weeks that make up a term, students were fed for only 3 weeks (Odeyemi, 2018). The programme was also alleged to have started three days before the visit of the Vice President, Prof. Yemi Osinbanjo and crashed after his visit to the State. The President claim that the programme was also aimed at providing employment by employing caterers, the caterers were however paid between eight to ten thousand naira monthly. The money they are paid is not a living wage and it is far below the national minimum wage which is thirty thousand naira. The programme also claimed to provide nutritious food to pupils. The food they provided was valued at 70 naira per plate, considering the amount of the food, there is no way it can be nutritious. By 2019, the programme was no longer operative in most States of the federation.



❖ **National Security: Guarantee that no internal or external force will take over an inch of the Nigerian soil**

During the inaugural speech of the President, he announced that the military command and control centre should be relocated from Abuja to Maiduguri until the insurgents are defeated (Nwabughio, 2015). Maiduguri is known to be the epicentre of insurgency in Nigeria and has witnessed several ruthless attacks from the insurgents. The relocation is occasioned by the need for the officers to be near the insurgents and eliminate red tapism and accelerate quick decision making. This administration was able to recover some territories that were seized and occupied by the insurgents. The military also captured the dreaded Sambisa forest which is Boko Haram's operational base. During this regime the Fulani herdsmen became dreaded, as they became terrors to citizens in other parts of the country. The clashes between Fulani herdsmen and farmers over land and water resources in other parts of the country became frequent.

In February 2016, 100,000 people were displaced across 17 Local Governments, out of 23 Local Government that make up Benue State (International Crisis Group, May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016). Many cases of kidnap in the country were also traced to them. The Fulani herdsmen were noted to have become even more deadly than the Boko Haram insurgents. They are noted to be liable for most terror related death in Nigeria since 2015. The 2019 Global Terrorism Index (GTI) rightly affirms that more Nigerians were killed from herders attack in 2018 than from deaths caused by the Boko Haram insurgents (Ukpong, 2019). The Federal Government introduced the Rural Grazing Area (RUGA) to help in solving the conflict between the Fulani herdsmen and the farmers. Under this scheme, the communities are to map out some lands which will be ceded to the herders. The herders will live there in and do every of their businesses without moving from one place to the other. This, was of course opposed by the Southerners and the policy was suspended by the President. Not much was done by this administration to reduce the spate of Fulani herders attack on the farm or their constant kidnap of the citizens.



❖ **Expansion of Electricity Generation: The APC Government shall vigorously seek the expansion of electricity generation and distribution of up to 40,000 mega watts in 4 to 8 years**

The Minister of Power, Works and Housing, Mr Babatunde Fashola, opines that within three years of President Buhari's Government that power generation increased by 100%. Arguing further, he stressed that power generation increased from 4,000 mw in 2015 to 8,000mw in 2018 (Nnodim, 2019). The Minister also avers during The Guardian Power Summit in Lagos that on September, 12<sup>th</sup> 2017 that production of power reached the peak at 7,001mw (Olawoyin, 2017). The Minister also while speaking with journalists in Lagos, maintains that indeed power generation, transmission and distribution in the country has generally improved. He maintains that between 2015 – 2018, power generation increased from 4000 megawatts(mw) to 7000mw, power transmission from 5000mw to 7000mw and power distribution rose from 2690mw to 5222mw (Ochayi, 2018). Mr. Fashola, at the Nigeria-South Africa Chamber of Commerce (NSACC) breakfast forum reiterated that President Buhari's Government has performed in three years more than what the opposition party (PDP) did in their sixteen years in Government.

According to him, he observes that there was incremental generation of 1000mw per year as against 250mw per year generated by PDP which amounted to 4000mw in sixteen years. Transmission capacity improvement by 666mw per year as against 312.5mw per year generated by PDP which amounted to 5000mw in 16 years. There was distribution capacity improvement by 740mw per year as against 187.5mw per year generated by PDP Government which amounted to 3000mw in 16 years (Erezi, 2018). The Minister of Information, Mr Lai Mohammed also states while speaking at a News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) Forum in Abuja that power generation was as at 2018 at 7000mw and that the Federal Government will generate additional 2000mw by the end of 2018 (Adebulu, 2018). These statistics are however in conflict with that of some stakeholders in the power sector. For instance, the Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN) notes that the peak power ever generated between May 29<sup>th</sup> 2015 - 2017 was 5,222mw and it was recorded on December 18<sup>th</sup> 2017. According to them also, the peak average energy transmitted in 2016 was on February 2<sup>nd</sup> 2016 and it stood at 4,557mwh/h (Nnodim, 2019). This is a sharp contrast to what the Minister wants the public to believe. The TCN also observes that power generation increased to 5,377mw on 1<sup>st</sup> August, 2020 after 18





months (Africa Energy Portal, 5<sup>th</sup> August, 2020). The International Centre For Investigative Reporting (ICIR) from their investigation observes that the average energy generated for the 13 months of PDP, for which data is available stood at 3,313mw. Under Buhari's administration the figure stood at 3,727mw which has a difference of 414mw. According to them also, the peak generation ever attained by Buhari's administration from 2015 to 2017 was 5,222mw up from 4,517mw that they met on ground (Adebajo, 2019). According to a telephone interview with the Cable by Joy Ogaji, the Executive Secretary of Association of Power Generating Companies (APGC), she maintains that as at November 6<sup>th</sup> 2018, power generation stood at 3,968mw and the week before it was 2,000mw and at some point it was below 2,000mw the same week. Mr Adesina, the President of Africa Development Bank (AFDB), submits in Sandton, South Africa, at the Africa Investment Forum, that notwithstanding the \$200m AFDB invested in boosting power generation and transmission in Nigeria, power generation is hanging around 4,500mw (Adebulu, 2018).

This also contradicts what the Minister informs the public. It was observed that in 2019, power generation plunged low at 3,587mw as against 3,775mw in 2018 (Energy Central News, 24<sup>th</sup> December 2019). From these assertions, it can be deduced that not much has changed concerning power generation, transmission and distribution. Buhari administration like the Government preceding it allocated huge amount of money to the power sector with not much to show for it. This is despite the fact that the power sector has already been privatised. Adebowale (2020) corroborates this stance; he opines that N1.7 trillion has been allocated to the power sector in the last five years as intervention fund by Buhari administration. Arguing further, he stressed that there is still no improvement in the power sector. The Government preceding this Government, Dr Jonathan's Government reportedly spent N1.183 trillion in the power sector in five years he was in office with not much to also show for it (Adanikin, 2019). After the President's re-election in 2019, probably because he realised that the power sector has not performed well, he removed the Ministry of Power from Mr Fashola and appointed Mr Sale Mohammed as the new Minister of Power. A Spokesman to the new Minister of Power, Mr. Aaron Artimas, slams Mr Fashola, the former Minister by observing that the power sector has not achieved much since the President was sworn in on May 29<sup>th</sup> 2015 despite the huge government



intervention(Omilana, 2020). Even after the appointment of the new Minister, there was still no improvement in the power sector.

#### ❖ **Work with the Leadership of the National Assembly to Reduce the Cost of Governance**

The President believed that reducing the huge salaries and allowances of the legislative members will help reduce the cost of governance. In 2018, President Buhari instructed the Revenue Mobilisation, Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC) to address the uproar over bogus pay received by members of the National Assembly. The Chairman of the Commission, Elias Mbam, opines that by the time they are through with their assignment, all legislative members will earn less than one million (Usman, 2018). The Chairman of the Commission reiterated that lack of financial autonomy and lack of the power of enforcement and sanction of recalcitrant Ministries, Departments and Agencies remain the greatest challenge of the commission. As at today, no progress was made to that effect. In 2014, the President as a Presidential aspirant promised to abolish the office of the First Lady if elected as the President of the Nigeria, since the office is not written in the constitution (Adamu, 2015). The wife of the President also promised to abide with whatever the constitution says concerning the office of the First Lady.

The office of the First Lady is one way tax payers money are wasted. Government waste so much money in appointing several aides and assistants to these First Ladies. Their activities are also noted to be flamboyant and profligate. After the emergence of Mr Buhari as the President, his wife took the title of the Wife of the President. The difference between the Office of the First Lady and the Office of the Wife of the President is just the nomenclature. The wife of the President is using the First Ladies office with all the paraphernalia that goes with the office. The President appointed 10 aides to the office of the wives of the President and the Vice – President (Adebajo, 2018). In 2017, the President appointed two additional aides to the office of the First Lady. The President spends huge money to sustain these offices that are not provided for in the constitution. After President Buhari's first term, his wife announced that she wants to be addressed as the First Lady of Nigeria and no longer Wife of the President (Agbakwuru, 2019). She announced this at the Banquet Hall of the Presidential Villa, during the conferral of awards to the current and past Governors' wives. In 2016, President Buhari banned government officials



from flying first class (Taiwo, 2016). Government also restricted the frequency of travelling by government officials by assuring that meetings and conferences are conducted where participants reside. This, he believes will ensure that government travel expenses drop by 20%. However, some senior government officials still engage in wasteful travel expenses. For instance, the Comptroller General of Customs, Hamid Ali, a good friend of the President was seen on British Airways flight returning from London to Abuja, flying first class (Ukpong, 2016). The Customs spokesman, Wale Adeniyi when contacted denied that the Customs Boss travelled First Class, he maintained that his boss travelled with Business class. Premium Times interviewed passengers on the flight and they affirmed to have seen the Custom boss seated in the first class cabinet of the aircraft during the flight. In 2016, the President's 16 years daughter, Hanan, who is in secondary school reportedly travelled to London on first class vide British Airways flight 083 from Abuja amid the hardship in the country (Ogbeche,2016). This was condemned by the public as they perceived it as a way of wasting Governments money. One wonders why the President told senior government officials to desist from travelling with first class while his children are flying first class as it depicts him as being a two faced or double standard man.

#### ❖ **The Resuscitation of AjaokutaSteel**

The Ajaokuta steel was inaugurated on 18<sup>th</sup> September, 1979 by the Shehu Shagari administration. It was built by a Russian firm known as TyazhPromExport (TPE). The steel company was operational till 1994 when they stopped production of steel ( Oluyole, 2017). The company was mismanaged and has not been able to live up to expectation. Three quarters of the complex have been deserted and they undertake only production of light mill on a small scale. There have been attempts by previous governments to resuscitate the company which have failed. In 2002, there was collaboration between a Japanese firm, Kobe Steel Limited, and the Federal Government. After six months, the Federal Government reached a financing agreement with a company in USA known as Solgas. According to the agreement, they are to finance the agreement the Federal Government had with the Japanese firm. There was also an attempt to collaborate with an Indian company known as Global Infrastructure Nigeria Limited (GINL) and the Federal Government also tried quasi – privatisation. These plans however all failed and did not achieve the desired result. At the inception of Buhari's government, he settled all the legal



battles between the Federal Government and an Indian Company, Global Infrastructure Nigeria Limited (GINL) out of court. With this the government was set to reconcession the company again. This administration entered into a new agreement with the Russian Government who will nominate a Russian contractor that will build and help reposition the company. The Minister of Mines and Steel Development, Mr Olamilekan Adegbite, maintains that the President reiterated that Nigeria has wasted enough money on Ajaokuta Steel Company and will therefore solicit for external funding of the project (Uzoho, 2020). The Government has however obtained funding from the Russian Export Centre. Since then, not much has been done concerning the resuscitation of Ajaokuta Steel company apart from rhetorics.

## **Conclusion**

The APC ascribed PDP's failure in governance to lack of manifesto to guide and direct their government. They reiterated the fact that, with a well - articulated manifesto, their party is set to make a difference. From the foregoing, it is clear that the APC and Buhari's administration has performed poorly and have not lived up to expectations. Despite the fact that they have a manifesto, they have not shown themselves to be different from the former ruling party. The change they promised has turned to 'scam'. The President had on some occasions argued that he was not even aware of some of the promises written in their manifesto. The ones he is aware of, he didn't even deliver on them. The Nigerian State is blessed with abundant human and material resources but getting the right leadership has been a bane to their quest for development. The political culture of the Nigerian state has also been an impediment to their development. When people are appointed to serve in any capacity, they see it as an opportunity for them to enrich themselves and cut from the national cake. This has culminated to the emergence of leaders that are selfish, self - serving and do not have the interest of the country at heart.



## Recommendations

- Corrupt leaders should be prosecuted and jailed if found guilty, as this will serve as a deterrent to others
  - Our political culture must change; the masses should begin to demand for the dividends of democracy.
  - Our civil societies must have to be virile, and demand for accountability of funds from leaders. They must oppose laws that are for the benefits of the elites only
  - The cost of governance should be reduced. Politicians should be made to collect stipends as salaries. This will encourage only people who wants to serve to occupy political positions

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