

Address food inflation, naira depreciation and rising insecurity now

...Nigerian Governors task Tinubu

By Temitope Hassan



The 26 state governors under the aegis of Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF) have called on the Federal Government to address the food inflation, naira depreciation and rising insecurity in the country. The resolution was contained in a communique issued at the end of the forum's emergency virtual meeting chaired by NGF Chairman, Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq of Kwara State. The governors after receiving a briefing by National Security Adviser (NSA), Mallam Nuhu Ribadu and the representative of the Director General of the Department of State Service (DSS), deliberated on the security situation and food stability in the country. The governors hitherto pledged support towards improved enforcement efforts by reviewing the extant criminal justice laws in the states to ensure quick dispensation of justice on perpetrators of insecurity in the states; supporting the office of the NSA in the states to enhance the nature and quality of intelligence. At the end of the meeting, the governors unanimously underlined "the need to address the connection between food inflation, naira depreciation and rising insecurity across parts of the country from a systemic perspective and called for urgent discussions with and synergy amongst stakeholders in improving the situation in the shortest possible time." The governors during the meeting unanimously resolved to reduce foreign exchange demand by use of moral suasion to reduce dependence on foreign exchange, imported goods and services.

They also underscored the need to improve foreign exchange supply by easing commodity export requirements to encourage exportation and supply of foreign exchange; curbing illegal export of solid minerals, and increasing crude oil production to earn more foreign exchange. The governors further pledged support towards

improved enforcement efforts by reviewing the extant criminal justice laws in the states to ensure quick dispensation of justice on perpetrators of insecurity in the states; supporting the office of the NSA in the states to enhance the nature and quality of intelligence. The governors also expressed commitment to deploying emergency food interventions, including incentivising food production, release of food items from strategic food reserves and collaboration with food millers and commodity traders in their various states to boost food availability as an immediate short-term action.

Meanwhile, a former Governor of Jigawa State, Alhaji Sule Lamido, has tasked the administration of President Bola Tinubu and the All Progressives Congress (APC) not to allow the growing anger and discontent in the country to reach the point of violence. He asked the president to take preventive measures against the general discontent in the country arising from poverty, high cost of living and the insecurity currently bedeviling the nation to avert an impending disaster. Thousands of citizens in Minna, the Niger State capital, had taken to the streets in protest against what they described as severe hunger and escalating cost of living in the country. There were similar protests in Kano, Plateau, Ogun, Oyo, Kogi, and other states. Lamido who is also a former Minister of Foreign Affairs, on his verified Facebook wall, used two analogies by two famous persons to capture the near disaster waiting to happen if the Nigerian government does not take an immediate preemptive measure. "The first of the two famous people is Fidel Castro. He narrated a story of a rich man on a holiday in his luxurious yacht. While indulging in the upper deck of the yacht with all the comfort money can buy, his workers were groaning in the heat of the engine room. "The commotion coming from the engine room arising from the unbearable heat started shaking the yacht violently! It was a signal to the rich man and his friends on the upper deck to either respond to the commotion from the engine room or risk the yacht overturning. "The other famous man is our very own Bishop Kukah. During the era of our blessed PDP, there were cries of hardship arising from the increase of the pump price of fuel and the then serious insecurity from Boko Haram culminating in the abduction of Chibok girls in Yobe State.