

WHO IS BENEFITING FROM BANDITRY?

Why is Nigeria with all its Generals, billions and security structures still powerless?

— By: Godson Akinsanya —

Nigerians are asking the right question at last: How can a nation with this many soldiers, this many security agencies, and this much intelligence... fail for over a decade to defeat bandits who ride motorcycles? The truth is harsh, but it must be said, insecurity has become an industry, a business, a goldmine and too many powerful people are cashing out. Banditry is not thriving because the government is weak, but because certain people inside and around the system are making money, gaining power, and protecting their interests. Let's break it down plainly.

1. Illegal Mining Kings, the Real Warlords

In Zamfara, Kaduna, Niger and other northern states, criminal mining networks use bandits to:

Clear communities Secure goldfields Control territory. They provide the guns. They provide the money. They provide protection. And every time the military tries to shut them down, powerful backers push back. This is not a secret, it's an open secret.

1. Kidnap Cartels, Negotiators and Middlemen

Kidnapping is now a MULTI-BILLION NAIRA business. From ransom collection to cattle rustling to "negotiators" who take percentages... A whole economy has been built on the suffering of Nigerians. Some middlemen have government links. Some officials look the other way. Some benefit MOST when peace fails.

2. Corrupt Officials Living Off 'Security Votes'

Let's be honest: Security votes are the easiest loophole for corruption in Nigeria, no audit, no receipts and no accountability. The more insecurity spreads, the more "security votes" increase. So ask yourself, who benefits when Nigeria remains unsafe? Certainly not the citizens.

3. Politicians Who Use Bandits as Political Tools. In some regions, bandits are used to:

Intimidate opponents Control voter turnout Punish rival communities Secure political bargains. Violence becomes a bargaining chip. Elections become battles for territory. Peace becomes a threat to their political agenda.

4. Arms Traffickers Feeding All Sides. Weapons do not fall from heaven. Someone is importing them. Someone is smuggling them. Someone is selling them. Some of those weapons come from state armories. Some from foreign traffickers. Some from insiders making a killing literally.

THE GREY AREA: Why People Think 'Government Is Sponsoring Bandits' Not because there is proof of an official government policy supporting banditry but because the failure to arrest the financiers, the refusal to expose collaborators, and the lack of political will make many Nigerians believe the system is compromised. When criminals thrive and nobody powerful is punished, people assume the powerful are involved and you blame them. This Is the Real Problem:

Banditry survives because it feeds: illegal mining bosses corrupt officials political godfathers arms dealers ransom networks. This is why soldiers die while estates rise. Why citizens flee while politicians parade wealth. Why communities burn while VIPs negotiate "peace deals."

NIGERIANS ARE NO LONGER BLIND

We now understand that insecurity in this country is not just violence, it is a market.

It is a business and too many people want that business to continue. Until Nigeria dismantles these interest groups, and their financiers exposed and jailed, until security votes are audited, Until illegal mining barons are arrested, banditry will not end no matter how many troops we deploy. The people are watching, the world is watching and history is watching. Those who profit from bloodshed will face public accountability, if not in courts, then in memory. If this message resonates with you, let it reach Government. Let it reach the media.

Let it reach those who still think Nigerians are not paying attention. This has got to stop, the culprits must be dealt with, and Nigeria has to be great again.

Below are excerpts from a report on Nigeria by a diplomatic mission;

"As the general elections draws nearer, there is a growing sense of apprehension in the country. Daily news of corruption in government circles while the populace groans under the weight of growing poverty is generating a slow anger and apathy in the country. If President Tinubu is aware of this, he has not shown any inclination to change things for the better. Gone are the much talked about palliatives as little as they are. Instead the President seems more interested in pressing ahead with his reelection campaign. The fractured opposition seems to be playing into the president's hand by their lack of unity despite all attempts to bring them together. The most challenging issue has to do with President Tinubu's seeming determination to accumulate power around himself to the exclusion of other relevant sections of this diverse country. If he presses on it might result in some frightful eruptions although the President feels confident that he will be able to rally his South West region robustly behind. In our meetings and engagement, we have tried to subtly indicate to government officials and to highly placed Nigerians that democracy must be upheld.

Per the election timetable the elections will take place in January next year. And we assume that tensions will rise high as the elections approaches in the coming. We recommend that the Nigeria Response Committee NIREC must be ready to crank up its engagements with the government, opposition and CSOs and highly placed Nigerians. The goal being to guide the country through free, fair elections and successful transitions. It must be impressed on President Tinubu that the responsibility is in him to bring this through and the world will be keenly watching him carry out this responsibility. We will of course make our usual pledges to assist as possible".