

Jihad In Northern Nigeria

Introduction

tell me more

The topic chosen for the purpose of research is the 'Jihad in Northern Nigeria'. Nigeria is a multi-cultural and a multi-religious country with more than 250 of the ethnic groups. The population of Nigeria is more than 150 million making it the most populous nation in Africa. Nigeria is the eighth most populous nation of the world. This research is on the rise of the activist in the northern areas of Jihad. There is a complete description of what actually happened and also the role played by the government in controlling this situation

what happened + why?

Rise of Fulani

The ethnic group of Fulani actually came from the Senegal and the areas of Gambia of the West Africans. They are considered to be pastoralists or the cattle rearers and they have eventually started to make a movement from Senegambia eastwards which is along the northern Sahel region of the West Africa. In this way they moved from the Senegal across the Mali, Niger and the northern parts of Nigeria. The majority of the people settled in an area which is now called the northern Nigeria. It has been observed that some of the Fulani are the Muslims and not all of them.

However in the early 19th century the people who settled in the northern Nigeria were the people who listened to the Islamic teachings of Shaihu Usman Fodio along with his brother and son Abdullah dan Fodio and Muhammad Bello respectively. These Islamic scholars were eventually settled in the areas which are now called as Sokoto which is actually the north-western area of Nigeria. In the year 1804 Usman dan Fodio was successful in carrying out the jihad against the rulers of the northern Hausa. It was analyzed that Islam had first arrived in the north-eastern part of Nigeria in the 10th or 11th century in Kanuri which was later on called to be the Kanem-Bornu

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Jihad In Northern Nigeria

Empire. This was the same area in which Boko haram was considered to be highly active. It can now be observed that in the current times there are vibrant and very active chances of the revivalism of the religion Islam.

In the 14th century Islam was introduced in the Northern Nigeria in the Hausa Land. At that time they actually over threw the rules of Hausa rule and they were successful in becoming the new ruler in the area. At this time Usman Fodio successfully moved into that area. The purpose of the movement was to purify the area and to bring the essence of Islam in a broader way. For this purpose he successfully managed to stage jihad. The major purpose was to replace the Hausa rule and then they became the new ruler in the Hausa land. Due to this purpose many of the historians call this as the Fulani overthrowing the rulers of Hausa. When they took over the whole northern region of the Hausa Land they imposed their rules and regulations on the occupied Hausa people.

Trading of Slaves

Fulani were successful in the establishment of their Sokoto Empire in the north- western parts of the northern Nigeria. When there was revival of Islam in the northern region the Africans still have their own ways and they were even practicing those practices. The traders of Hausa used to travel very long distances (the 'Fatake') in which they managed to move from Hausa land into the Middle Belt areas. This was the area in which many of the indigenous groups of the non-Muslims were living and they were settled also. Many of the Fulani joined them.

When Usman dan Fodio was successful in staging a jihad in the northern Nigeria, the Fulani and the Hausa traders who were successfully settled in the Middle Belt and the other parts of the region heard his call for Jihad they moved out of their houses and they left Sokoto to join him. On return these people were even having the flags which were having the themes of Jihad. In this

way there was the start of the Jihad among the ethnic groups which were neighboring the Middle Belt.

There was a change in the relationships. Earlier it was supposed to be a peaceful trading between the Fulani-Hausa Muslims and the indigenous non-Muslim people. After the whole scene Muslims started seeing the non-Muslim areas as the regions which were highly fertile and they even started doing slave trading. In this way it was supposed to become the central theme of the wars and the conflicts which was then continued afterwards. It was observed that the Muslims from the northern region of Nigeria moved down into the areas where the non-Muslims were living. They used to stage wars for them and there was a growing concept of the slave raiding and even their trading. This continued till the time of the arrival of the British colonial masters in the year 1900.

The civilization of Islam

The colonel Frederick Lugard had run the Royal Niger Company for a period of four years. The company was established in the year 1896. The Colonel worked hard to establish the trading between the colonies which were along the River Niger. After seeing all this the British declared a protectorate on the northern region of Nigeria on the 1st of January 1900. Afterwards Lugard and his soldier's took around three years to take over the ethnic groups of the Muslims. This also included the Sokoto Caliphate and the Sultanate of Kanem- Bornu and then there was the establishment of the British Empire in this region.

When the Britishers arrived in the northern Nigeria the missionaries of the Christians from the Greta Britain and then followed the North America. It was advised by the Britishers that they should not enter the areas of the Muslims rather they should stay in the non-Muslims areas.

Jihad In Northern Nigeria

However the Muslims were having the Islamic civilization and they were also in a dire need of a proper and a stable civilization. Initially it was considered to be the policy of the colonial government in the two varying and vast ethnic groups. These groups were the Muslims and the non-Muslim people. Lord Lugard also promised at the beginning of his term being a Governor that he would not interfere with the religious aspects of the people. It was then made a part of his responsibilities that he would not interfere with the religious aspects which were framed at the time of the Britishers in the beginning.

Hostility

After the movement of Fulani to the Middle Belt in the form of a peaceful trader and then the jihadists were waging wars against the people. The Britishers came and they established Pax Britannica which is also referred as the 'British peace'. The Britishers also tried to put a stop to the Islamization and the slavery and the trading of the slavery. Afterwards the Britishers left Nigeria in the year 1960. The Muslim rulers of Fulani-Hausa still had this idea that Usman dan Fodio started conquering the areas of the non-Muslims in an attempt to Islamize them. It was observed that when the British put a top on the slavery and the other relevant things then this created a sense of hostility which eventually left in the later world. This hostility was created after taking the Hausa-Fulani rulers of the Muslims and they were placed over the indigenous non-Muslim population. There was also authorization for the collection of the heavy taxation which were imposed by the Britishers. They actually tried to remove all those ways through which the Britishers used to govern the whole of the protectorate.

In the today's world in Nigeria there is vibrant and an active sort of revivalism in the perspective of Islam. The militants of Islam are even willing to move into the areas where they have never been into. Until the British arrived and then impose the rule over the whole of the northern

Jihad In Northern Nigeria

Nigeria and facilitating the Muslims to even spread out by moving into the other parts of the country. Similarly with the movement out of the Britishers and the upheaval all across the world there has been a rise in the radical Islam in the regions of the Middle Eastern countries. However the revival of Islam against the west more specifically y with the Christianity and the mobilization of the western culture. There has been a motivation among the Muslims in the West Africa in which it is supposed that there has been a start to think and to revive Islam as its original and evident status.

After the Britishers leave the place these were the Muslims who continued to be a part of the rulers and then most of the northern Nigeria was then considered to be ruled by the Muslims over the indigenous people.

Sophisticated weapons

It can be deduced that the Fulani are the radicalized Muslims and they have been seen taking part in the riots of the world. It is no exaggeration that they are seeing what is actually happening in the rest of the world and the weapons which have been used by the other countries in their riots.

It can be opined that the weapons are now available in all the parts of the North Africa. The terrorists are seen to be active in the Northern Africa and in the Middle Eastern countries and they have now moved into the northern parts of Nigeria. In this way many groups of Nigeria have been radicalized.

Among these radicalized groups one of the group has been categorized as the 'revivalist Islamism' in the northern Nigeria is Boko Haram. This is the group which have been operating in the historical geographical area of what is now called as the Kanem-Bornu Empire and then it can be seen that there is a historical correlation between the two. Similarly there have been the

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- elections - corruption & economic

Jihad in Northern Nigeria

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Jihad In Northern Nigeria

existence of correlation between the herdsmen of Fulani and the Sokoto Empire. The Sokoto Empire was raiding the area of the Middle Belt where the Fulani herdsmen are doing exactly the same today. In this way if any of the person say that there is a fight between the Fulani herdsmen and the indigenous farmers' then this would not be correct. This all has been done in the context of the reviving of Islam and the rise of the militants of Islam across the worldwide.

conflict
is
complex

In the last six years there have seen a peace with the hosts and the indigenous groups and the Fulani have armed themselves with some of the latest and the sophisticated weapons. There have been a start in the invasion of the indigenous areas which are not belonging to them. In this way the attacking and the destroying of the villagers can be observed. Moreover there must be the settling of the killing, chasing the people and then settling themselves there. All these things are done with sheer impunity. The irony of the fact is that there is no government taking part in the arresting of the killers. Nor the government authorities have done any of the considerable steps in the stopping of this nuisance.

No Protection

defends who?
what?
what?

In the whole context it has been observed that there is no protection available for the Nigerians. The citizens of Nigeria who are the law abiding citizens are still looking up to the government so that they can find peace and justice in their area. It seems that the departments dealing with the protection and the justice has actually surrendered in front of the killers. This can be evident in the failures of the government. Due to this cruelty that Nigerians has created their own narratives. These narratives actually define that the Fulani herdsmen are really well connected with the government and that is why they are free to do whatever they want without any of the restrictions.

7

Jihad In Northern Nigeria

If these indigenous people take the arms and started fighting for their own rights then they would be treated as the people who are taking law in their hands. They will be accused badly for what they will do with the help of the arms and weapons. This will eventually led to a situation in which the victims will become the sufferer. Moreover these Nigerians will be given tough punishments by the government. Yet these victims will not in any case be protected by the government from the attack of Fulani.

The history reveals that the Fulani were originally the settlers in Hausa land and when they could not enjoy some of the privileges then they took the path of making a jihad over the people. In the context of the Fulani jihad there have been many of the revolts that took place in the past in an attempt to gain the control over the Hausa land. Some of these revolts are known as the Mafara Revolt, Yusuf revolt, the Bukhari revolt etc. After the Fulani Jihad it was evaluated that no ethnic group in Africa has killed as many Africans as the Fulani of the northern region of Nigeria did. In the same context the Hutus of Rwanda was also a noticeable name who killed a lot of human beings in the year 1990 yet the Fulani still have the lead.

The Fulani herdsmen are being extremely worse. They have done each and everything which could create an intense trouble for the people of Nigeria. They catch the old men, young children, pregnant women. They slaughter the human beings just like the people slaughter the animals. Many of them would rip open the womb of the pregnant women and they would remove the fetuses and even being savage by chucking them on the ground. This is the extent of barbarism and cruelty the Nigerians are witnessing.

The Chief Obafemo Awolowo once said that Nigeria is not a nation but simply a geographical expression. Similarly due to the intense riots Sir Ahmadu Bello was very right when he described the fact that the amalgamation of the northern and the southern protectorates as one of the

greatest mistake. Furthermore the Awolowo made an assertion that there are simply no Nigerians in the way as there are English, Welsh or the French. This word is simply the distinctive appellation to differentiate with those who are living within the boundaries of Nigeria and the people who are not living there.

The first Prime Minister of Nigeria Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa made a reflection on the northern people that the southern people of Nigeria who are simply swapping into the region are really the intruders. He said that we do not want them and they are not even welcome in the North. He further opined his views that the British government is trying to make Nigeria one country but the people of both the lands are simply very different. These people are different in religion, customs, language and even in the aspirations. He further stated that it was simply the intention of the British to make this whole part a one nation yet it is not at all possible and this country was not meant to be made one.

On the other hand the government is continuously giving them the hopes that they are available to help them. The government officials and security would mobilize themselves just to show that they are protecting them. However the truth lies in the fact that the government has actually surrendered on what the Fulani people can do and what they are actually doing. This narrative of the government is becoming intense for the Nigerians as they are continuously being told that they are being protected.

It can be deduced that there is an intense level of cruelty and there is a high level of the lacking of the value of equality. The other aspect that is lacking is the justice to the victims. The people of Nigeria even do not have the human value of freedom and it is a basic human right to be at peace and to be granted the basic rights of living with freedom. It is a fact that humanity knows no one and no religion. Humanity is for the Muslims and for the non-Muslims as well. It is a fact

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