

*Appendix 43:*

**NOTE: There is a second article in this file by Dany Ritut at xxxx**

**Double Standards As Bane of the Jos Crisis: A Response to Audu Zango By**

**Joseph Dangme Rinyom**

[riyom2004@yahoo.com](mailto:riyom2004@yahoo.com) **Gamji 112 May, 2004**

From the comfort of the branches, the bat plays its nature-eat, throw up and excrete from its mouth. This analogy, though inadequate in its moderation, summarizes the ranting of an ignoramus whose alias is Audu Zango. If there were a dozen of his type in Plateau state, no one needs to seek peace, for then it would be non-existent. His excruciating distortion of facts should not be allowed to go unchallenged lest those who do not know assume his statements to be true. The truth is that if he had only vented his frustration on his poor cyberspace victims without delving into the precinct of falsehood with the aim of maligning the indigenes of Plateau State, I, for one, could not have given him the benefit of a response. Alas, he took upon himself roles that were way over and above his understanding and intellect. It was a wise man that once observed, "there is nothing as terrible as ignorance in action". The vehemence and anger that Mallam Zango employed in scarifying all that he opposes in Plateau State identifies him as an ignoramus whose claim to "facts" are based on tertiary sources who themselves are devoid of any inkling of knowledge about the subject they claim to profess.

In the first place it is very wrong to say that the Muslim Jihadists did not attempt to bring the Plateau tribes under their ambits. They did try several times, but each time they failed. In fairness to them, they were tested warriors but could not reckon with the tough terrain, which defied their horses that served as their cannons. The geography of their victory attests to this. Nowhere on the Plateau does the Hausa/Fulani emirate exist on the highlands. The two emirates in Plateau State are the Kanam and Wase (on the Benue plains or what is referred to in Plateau state as "the lowlands"), the latter being the cradle of the present hostilities in southern senatorial district of the state. Yet, the Bogghom, and the Jukuns (and other tribes) that are indigenous to the Kanam and Wase emirates respectively were and are still far less in population compared to the Berom, Ngas, Mwaghavul, Tarok, and Ankwe tribes. How could the Jihadists have seen the relatively numerically weaker Bogghom as a threat and gone on a full-scale war to annex them and yet leave the major tribes untouched because they posed no threat to them? I suppose that the Tivs were no force to reckon with as well and that explains the reason why they were not Islamized. It is unfortunate how logic is locked out when ignorance has a full "in-house" day.

Secondly, the imposition of people from Bauchi as "rulers" over the Plateau tribes was a concession made to the Sultan of Sokoto

who found a ready ally in the colonialists that had faced more resistance at the hands of the smaller but stubborn Plateau tribes. In the same breath, it was a token of punishment for the uncooperative stance of these tribes that they were submitted, after their pacification by the colonial white man, to their old "enemies". It may interest you to know that the Bauchi emirate, the Sultan's crony, could not hide its pleasure at the chance to subdue the tribes that had defied its fantastic military. It was therefore a galore of cruelty that marked the "rulership" of the Hausa/Fulani in parts of Plateau where they were imposed on the local population. Even at that, they could not islamize them because the tribes were never under the control of the emirates, even though under their authority. It is this singular defiance of the local tribes that had made the Hausa/Fulani fiefdom swear an everlasting enmity against the Plateau tribes. It is unfortunate that wisdom is not commonplace. Only the wise know when to give up. For instance, can the Queen of England today lay claim to any portion of the caliphate's land simply because at a point in time she had dominion over it? By the same token, what is wrong in letting go what was *given* (not even taken or conquered by the Hausa/Fulani) to the Hausa/Fulani in Plateau State by the same colonial master who today is not recognized as sovereignty even in the caliphate that currently holds on, foolishly tenaciously, to those awarded territories? Where has commonsense fled off to that it cannot be recognized that what is good for the goose is also good for the gander? These claims and counter claims cannot change the truth neither can they rewrite history. It should, therefore, be accepted no matter how bitter it is that the Hausa/Fulani's traditional reign in northern Nigeria is gone forever.

Nevertheless, it should be granted that the Hausa/Fulani settlers in Plateau State qualify to be accorded citizenship status, which they have enjoyed for a long time now. Indigeneship in Plateau State is as applicable anywhere else in Nigeria and should be so recognized until other times and events dictate otherwise. No matter the generational genealogy of a Berom man in Kano, he can hardly claim citizenship talk more of indigeneship. The concept is similar but not the same in Plateau State. Here, there are a small number of people on the Plateau that are Muslims. Of course, they are indigenes in all ramifications of the word, even if by religion they are in the least of minorities. But this is not different from the indigenes of Kano or Katsina, born Hausa/Fulani to the core that have since Christianized. Shamefully, many have had to relocate from their homes because of victimization. They have, severally, been attacked, denied scholarships, and employment simply because of their creed. No one hears about them and no one discusses them because they are Christians. The Plateau Muslims and Hausa/Fulani are treated with brotherly love. The latter, however, cannot and should not lay claim to indigeneship in Plateau State, especially in the context of present-day Nigeria. In Kanam and Wase where they (Hausa/Fulani) still lord it over the indigenous population and use that advantage to

claim indigeneship, they have for a long time been granted such status without any qualms. Their recent muscle- flexing in Plateau State, with the help of some conniving and irresponsible leadership in government and persons, has made the local people to take a second look at their renowned hospitality. Only a fool takes simplicity for a weakness.

Of course, it is unsurprising to hear the uproar that greeted the regrettable incidence at Yelwa where for a time the Muslim population thought they were sacred, untouchable and invincible and proceeded from such self-assigned false claims to perpetrate one of the most heinous acts in the annals of religious crises in Nigeria. It was never contemplated, even in the most stretched imagination, that a day should come to pass when people would slaughter others, who have sought refuge in a place of worship, in cold blood. It happened in Yelwa where people (?) who, undoubtedly are inferior to drunken savage pagans and who make claim to a religion that supposedly preaches peace, slaughtered Christians, including women and their children, in a Church. That singular act of bestiality, celebrated by many Muslims in the north, deserved world condemnation. Amazingly, there was a deafening (conspiracy of) silence. Not a word was heard from the likes of Ahmed Datti and Ibrahim Gambari, the self-appointed voices of the Hausa/Fulani Muslims community in Plateau State who presently brand smoking guns aimed at the state. When they should have risen to the occasion in total condemnation of their kinsmen they looked the other way and only just found their voices after the expected reprisal attack that the government did little to circumvent. History repeats itself for those who refuse to accord it the deserved attention. Know it that the same episode had been played in the Wase crisis that, by the way, was the architect of the present problem. The unprovoked sacking of the Tarok from Wase, the wholesale murder of hundreds of people, the displacement of more than ten thousand persons, many who still (even as at now) reside in refugee camps in their homeland were considered as no issues for a general uproar. No security threat existed when an "unknown" minority tribe, such as the Tarok, was at the verge of (genocidal) extinction in Wase at the hands of a "known" majority, such as the Hausa/Fulani. It is unfortunate, this double standard.

It is the complete absence of sincerity and the penchant for rascal "heroism" of our leaders that have made the problem linger this long. At the onset of the well-articulated onslaught at the Tarok in Wase two years ago, it was demanded of the state government to investigate and prosecute those responsible for the dastard act immediately. Morally inexplicable but politically correct (it paid off), the government ignored the issue and did not make any meaningful efforts at ensuring that the Tarok refugees, who had sought abode in almost all primary schools in Langtang and still spilled over into makeshift tents, were rehabilitated or provided adequate relief or returned to their villages in Wase.. In such a scenario, justice was denied, but in its nature sought other

avenues of expression. It should be known too that any call for justice must address the injustices of the past; else all shall be in vain. There is no moral right in prosecuting and persecuting anyone on this issue without recourse to unraveling the genesis of it. No half measures would suffice in this taproot problem. The crux of the problem must be sought and uprooted, and the calls for arms from any group or person should be regarded as a security breach that can only inflame an already overcharged situation. Leaders on all sides must be ready to apportion blames where they are due without resort to the usual, and now pervasive, sectionalism that has become the hallmark of leadership on all fronts. The animalistic behavior that often leads to wanton loss of lives and property in so-called retaliatory actions in unprovoked situations as is prevalent in places like Kano must also stop with immediate effect. A volatile action can only result into a volatile reaction, and a volatile reaction often finds response in an equally volatile "re-reaction"; a vicious cycle of death and destruction that only the likes of those presently invoking hail and brimstone on others can cherish. What a shame.

Joseph Dangme Rinyom  
Jenta Jos, Nigeria.

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**The Ethnic Cleansing by the Pagan Savages in Jos Plateau and the Illegal Gang in Government Must Be Stopped: A Rejoinder to Audu Zango**

**By**

**Dany Ritut**

[danritut@yahoo.com](mailto:danritut@yahoo.com) Gamji 113 May, 2004

Tried as hard as I could to not response to the ranting of Audu Zango, I couldn't help but to put this piece with the hope he will have a sober reflection (possibly after his dose of Kwaya) and apply a little bit of sense, decorum and respect before he starts pouring vituperation on any group of people.

It is sad, sad for the North with demented individuals like you Mr. Zango. This is exactly why efforts of groups like the Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF) to bring harmony to this region will not succeed because of the likes of you.

With so much ranting you gave in your piece, I will only extract a small portion of it to dwell with. Lets start with your name Zango, can you explain how you came about bearing the name of Campsite? I am not going to try to correct your twisting of historical facts but the problems that we are seeing today in the middle belt arose with the likes of you wanting to rewrite history by making ridiculous claims. It is a known fact in the middle belt that after settling in your campsites (Zango), the people in their typical generosity will go out of their way to try and make those

settlers comfortable by providing any favour including parting with their farmlands just to please their guests. Unfortunately in a country like Nigeria with migrants from Niger, Chad or where ever after settling down, you realize by playing the religious card, you are easily absorbed into a system with benefits and privileges that are rarely extended to others of different faiths who have lived in this environment before you. This in itself was and has not been a cause of friction in the North.<sup>1</sup>

The refrain you hear from a good number of Northerners these days is asking why the open hostilities now from a few years back when all the peoples were living in harmony with one another. The simple answer is that you and your likes have completely destroyed the trust and understanding that your forbear established with the original inhabitants as a result of your neofascist interpretation of the actual history from your Zango enclaves.

It is sad that so many lives are lost in this part of the country under the guise of religion. As is always harped, no religious faith preaches violence and one begins to wonder what faith are individuals who will pursue and massacred their victims in places of worship or an organised selective massacre as occurred in Yelwan. Bad as it might look, I do not believe that friends I grew up and play together, went to school together will one day pick up guns or swords going after each other simply because we are of different faiths; and this fact translate to the majority of peoples in the North. Unfortunately this silent majority do not talk when settlers like Mr. Zango are destroying everything the North has managed to build and sustained over the years. The hypocritical statements put out by some individuals and groups do not help the situation in either way with their selective and bias inferences.

I hope Audu Zango and people like him do realize that Christianity and Islam are but a fraction of the world faiths, an acknowledgement that instil respects for each other no matter their religious beliefs. History itself is replenish with examples where arrogant societies are brought down and in some cases completely erasing their privileges when they arrogate to themselves special status devoid of the rest. Like you rightly pointed out the Plateau is a cosmopolitan of various peoples but there has to be order and peace which you will not find if every group that settles there or any part of the middle belt for that matter starts contorting their own version of history of how others excepting you are campsite settlers.

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<sup>1</sup>NOTE FROM J. BOER: This process of Muslim infiltration is a classic model in Nigeria. See also volume 7, p. 105.