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QUESTION;CONSTITUTION IS IMPORTANT FOR THE CONSOLIDATION OF DEMOCRACY.HOWEVER THE MAKING OF NIGERIAS CONSTITUTION HAVE BEEN UNDER TWO POLITICAL DISPENSATIONS THAT HAVE ANTI DEMOCRACY TENDENCIES AND THIS HAS BEEN GREAT IMPEDIMENT TO DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE IN NIGERIA. EXAMINE SOME OF THE LOOPHOLES IN NIGERIAS CONSTITUTIONS OVER THE YEARS THAT HAVE AFFECTED DEMOCRACY IN NIGERIA.

The 1999 constitution of the federal republic of Nigeria has been widely criticized as a document hurriedly put together by the military in preparation for hand over to the civilian government at the inception of the fourth republic. Several of Nigerians challenges are attributed to perceived imbalances and inadequacies of the constitution. Attempts to amend the constitution to really address the imbalances have proved abortive. The seventh assembly made some headway in the amendment but unfortunately it did not receive presidential assent before the expiration of the tenure of the last administration. The eighth assembly legislative agenda has pledged to deliver on much needed amendments in the shortest time possible.it has picked up from where the seventh assembly stopped, and continues work on amendments that have already received consensus, approved of both chambers, two-third support of state assemblies, and approval from public conducted with Nigerians the 55-man special Adhoc committee on the review of the constitution of the federal republic of Nigeria 1999 held a four-day retreat in Abeokuta. the central theme of the retreat was, the imperative of constitution Review/Amendment in Nation Building opening the retreat, the chairman of the special committee, Deputy speaker yussuff Sulaimon lasun, said the committee made effort to ensure that the amendment process was more flexisible and practicable .it segmented the fourth Alteration Bill(From the previous assembly)into 14bills,and also considering over 30bills referred to it by the current assembly the exhaustive amendment to the constitution by the seventh assembly cannot be ignored as it is on their framework that the eighth assembly is working to address some unsolved issues and secure the assent the assent of the president this time Lasun said the governor of ogun state, senator ibikunle amosun ,in his goodwill message to participants at the retreat, which included members to the state house of assembly, said efforts to amend the constitution had failed due to interplay of the entrenched interests ,mutual distrust among the federating units and lack of political will on the part of the concerned political actors. Some of the contentious issues, which the proposed review need to address, according to Amosun, include derivation formula, revenue allocation, fiscal federation, state creation ,resource control, local government creation by states, state police ,and the perceived long-standing marginalization of the ethnic minorities and few regions of the country. During the july 16th Nigerian senate’s debate on long-awaited amendments which were drawn up by the constitution review committee to reflect the needs of a changing Nigeria, now senator Ahmed Sani Yerima, who was the first governor to introduce sharia law into a Nigerian state, successfully blocked the removal of a constitutional clause that critics say allows the marriage of under-age girls possible under sharia law. The clause says that any married woman is recognized as being of age and thus able to give up their Nigerian citizenship senator Ahmed Sani Yerima, a controversial Muslim figure, was the most powerful defender of the clause critics argue that his victory leaves a loophole permitting under-age marriage in spite of Nigeria’s present policy that hold18 as the legal age. senator Yerima argued against the removal of the clause, insisting that, under Islamic tenets, a woman is of age once married, and to counter that order would be discriminatory and in violation of another sections of the constitution customary law including matrimonial causes relating thereto. The constitution says the national assembly shall legislate on marriage except those under Islamic rites, declared the former governor islam says once a woman is married, she is of age The senator’s procedure success has been attacked in part because in 2009 he himself married a 13- years-old Egypian girl in the Nigerian capital Abuja, as his 4th wife, causing widespread outrage(He had previously married another 13-years –old, and Divourced one wife before she was 18). However, even though Nigeria’s child right act of 2003 designates that a child is anyone below the age of 18 the court ruled that since he acted in accordance with sharia, the stipulations of article 61 limited the court authority to rule on the matter. after all history tells us that the prophet did marry a young girl as well. Some fear retaining the clause could allow underage girls the right to vote, and leave them vulnerable to manipulation or coercion in how they use it. human right activists representing Christians living in sharia states fear that if the constitution retains this loophole for recognition of underage marriage, Christian girls abducted for forced marriage will have less protection. confirming those fears, the Christian association of Nigeria(CAN)reports a recent rise in forced abduction of underage Christian girls who are being forcibly converted to islam. They have even been kept in the homes of emirs or radical religious leaders some of whom are linked to Boko haram. CAN secretary Daniel Babayi reports that’s it is currently working on five cases on behalf of kidnapped girl’s families, but when we report a case to the police, the officers respond that they cannot do anything. Sometimes we believe they are complicit. Abiola Afolabi –Akiode, coordinator of the gender and constitution reform network (GECORN), described the resolution as a serious setback, only for women, but also for all Nigerian. we ask, is the senate saying that a 13 –years-old girl has the mental capacity to renounce her citizenship? Thus, we argue that senator Ahmed Yerima basing his argument solely on child marriage is treacherous and a deliberate attempt to misrepresent the intension of the 1999 constitution, she said so this kind of law will just legalize the abuse of children in the country how the table now turned against the children of Nigeria is what we don’t understand.