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The Deplorable conditions of Roads in Nigeria

Since 1960, Roads around the country have faced been in a sorry state due to negligence and lack of maintenance. This in turn is not helped by the ever changing administrations which neglet projects started by their predecessors to begin their own. Nigerians pay taxes which are meant to be set aside to improve their stardard of living through the building and maintening of infrastructures by the government.

Roads are the major ways of transportation in the country and it is appauling to see the standards put in place. Many administrations have come forth, promising to salvage our roads only to get voted into power. They spend millions of naira hiring contractors only for the funds to be embezzled stalling the project. Embezzling of funds have become the order of the day in Nigeria even after 60 years of independence, throughghost contractors, awarding of contracts or political associates just to defraud the citizens.

There are many cases where the negligence of roads have led to accidents that have led to destruction of property and the untimely death of individuals.Official statistics from the National Bureau of Statistics, the total number of deaths by road accidents at 14 per day. This is a large figure as Nigeria has one of the highest road fatalities in the world. The lagos-Badagry road is one in which despite the ongoing expansion of the raod, it remains a death trap accounting for reoccuring accidents daily.

Expressways are meant to connect different cities together while providing high speed traffic without diverging lanes or obstructions. The Abuja-kaduna expressway is a hot zone for armed robbery, cattle rustlers, kidnappers and so on. The large numbers of sabateurs on that roads therefore defeat the purpose for which it was created.

Furthermore, the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway which was constructed in 1972, has little to no maintenance work done on it. In 1999, The federal executive government voted for a huge sum of money for the construction and maintenance of the roads but the money now cannot be accounted for. This has been repeated many times over with new administrations with little to nothing to show for it. They often times chose to implement their own ideas over ongoing projects. Sagamu-Ore-Ijebu Ode-Benin Expressway is another example; with cases where commercial drivers and trailers having to swerve to avoid the large and numerous portholes present on that road.

One of the major causes on the part of the government is the lack of checks and balances. The absence of this is what allows corrupt officials to divert the funds for the project. It can be evident in the fact that before a project contract is awarded, the funds are made available. This should mean that there is no reason the construction to take years at the expense of the people only to be abandoned when a new administration is elected. This lack of accountability is what allows them to come up with different stories without figures or disappear without a trace.The solution to this is to have a separate commission set up to review the budget used for construction and to bring the corrupt ones to justice.

The quality of roads built is another major concern. If we look at developed countries, we don’t see such bad roads, neither do we see endless construction work to the detriment of the people. This is because they use high quality materials and construction is done to standard. It is not common to see a new road that was constructed, still viable a year later with little maintenance needed. The solution is for a law to be put in place to standardize road materials, dimensions and equipment used in construction.

Last but not least, the fact that there is little to no continuity between administrations. Projects embarked on by previous administrations are usually scrapped once a new one arrives. The peopledo not benefit from this bacause the are left with the haf baked work and a new one to worry about. This is the reason why so many constructions have been abandoned half way all over the country. The best way to go about it is for projects to be time bound in the essence that it.

It might be high time the government allows the private sector to come in and fill in for their shortcomings because it is a cause for immediate attention. Without a change in the long run, the nation’s development objectives may not be attainable as the country as a whole needs a working economy that includes roads to attract investors.

 In conclusion, the government should treated roads infrastructure as a priority to enhance the economy and secure lives and property.