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**CORRUPTION IN NIGERIA**

Corruption is Nigeria’s biggest challenge. It’s clear to every citizen that the country has an extremely high level of corruption. Corruption is found in every sector of the society. Critical examination of both large and small sectors reveals corrupt practices at every level.

What is corruption? It is dishonest or fraudulent conduct by those in power, typically involving bribery. It is the illegitimate use of power to benefit a private interest. It involves the embezzlement of public funds for personal use, offering of bribe to officials or government to conceal truth and any act that is considered to be criminal in nature according to the law of a particular society. Nigeria, which is the most populous country in Africa, has consistently been ranked high in corruption by transparent bodies or organizations that monitor corrupt practices around the world. High corruption ranking affects almost all Nigerians who migrate to foreign countries, as foreigners have the perception that since Nigeria is corrupt, so too are its citizens.

Corruption is not peculiar to any country, continent or state; it is sure a global issue which is endemic to all government all over the world. However, corruption is prevalent in the Niger delta region of Nigeria. Public officers in oil producing states of Nigeria are corrupt. Consequently, it has defied the Niger delta from developing politically and economically which has left the state reputation in a mess. Radicalization of youths, abject poverty and political instability are the three leading effects of corruption in the country. Corruption which has led to abject poverty in the country has made living unbearable for a good number of citizens due to the embezzlement of public funds for self-interest by the government officials. The means of livelihood in the states has also been destroyed by corrupt oil companies and public officers. People in the state can no more farm and fish because their land and water has been polluted by the oil companies in the area and thus this leads to mass hunger in that region. Despite all these, the federal government sometimes do their very best to assist people under such circumstances by releasing funds to the local government to enable such citizens survive but the local government has refused to put such funds into good use because they are corrupt. They prefer to use the funds for their own benefits, buying houses overseas, expensive cars which worth hundreds of millions and having numerous foreign accounts.

Moving into the aspect of political instability, corruption has hindered the growth of the society. Where the government officials focus on self-growth instead of the growth of the nation. Funds which are being expected to develop or increase the number of social infrastructure are being redirected to be under their possession. More job opportunities are also not created. This has brought about the increase in the rate of unemployment whereby students who are done with the various stages of education, graduate from school and end up idle in their parents’ house. Some of them may be lucky to get a job after graduating from school, however, after working several hours, five consecutive days of the week, salaries are not being paid. Apart from all these, the country is financially indebted to other countries with the purpose for the debt relating to the growth of the society. Whereas, nothing is being transformed to be bigger or better and nothing new is also being created.

Radicalization of the youth which is as a result of little or no education of children, unemployment, lack of funds from their parents who have lost their jobs and have no jobs due to limited opportunity is another tragic aspect the country faces due to corruption. This has brought about the lack of contentment in the youth and has indulged in them the negative motivations on how they can get money quick. Some youths are now involved in taking drastic actions in order to put food on their table and have the mindset that there is nothing wrong in the activities they indulge in. They often use the term ‘’hustle” to cover up their negative drastic actions. Corruption has made some youths, literates and illiterates, in the country become militants and kidnappers which has led to the abduction of innocent citizens for ransom from relatives and if terms and conditions are not levelled up and adhered to, innocent ones are being murdered. It has also brought about the increase in internet fraudsters which are popularly known as the “yahoo boys”. it is so unfortunate to know that nowadays, not only the males are involved in internet fraud, the females are also involved. The youths are also involved in drug trafficking and also join cults, associating with ritual killings in order to make quick and easy money.

Moreover, the rate at which corruption increases daily in Nigeria is alarming. This has also tarnished the image of the country across its borders. Nigerians are now denied access into other countries because of our convicted youths and some unfortunate politicians who are being or were being apprehended in their city. International trade is also dying daily as foreigners do not want to trade with us for the fear of scam. It has also brought about the hindrance of the international relationship Nigeria has with some neighboring countries and foreign countries far away.

I, a citizens of the great country, NIGERIA, believes and waits patiently for a turnaround in the government to yield eligible and transparent leaders to help fight corruption in the country so as to regain what we have lost and gain what we have have not achieved. Nigeria would be great someday.