

CREATION OF PAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA IN 1980 AND THE IMPLICATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS RE-ORGANISATIONS ON INTER-ETHNIC RELATIONS IN QUAAN-PAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

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Abstract

The creation of Pan Local Government Area in 1980 was one of the Local Administration re-organisation policies of post colonial Government. Its proscription in 1984 was a relief to the People of Namu and Dokan-Tofa who felt dominated and suppressed in the defunct Pan Local Government Area. The re-organisations that followed provided them an opportunity to request for local Government Areas of their choices. The requests assumed a dimension of inter ethnic conflict and created a diatribe that led to the various conflicts in Quaan-Pan Local Government Area. The paper examined the creation and proscription of Pan Local Government Area in 1980 and 1984 respectively, the various requests for separate Local Government Areas and analysed the paths and patterns the requests were made.

This is to expose why Dokan-Tofa joined Shendam Local Government Area in another re-organisation and Namu, in series of demands joined Kwande in requests for Quaan Local Government Area while the Kofyar/Pan group resisted the joined requests and this has pitched the people in re-organisations related conflicts that has been sustained. Oral and archival materials among other relevant sources form the basis of data in this research while historical analysis was employed for the discussion on the matter and to suggest ways by which self-determination and separation can be harmoniously achieved.

Keywords: Interaction, Suppression, Self-determination, Re-organisations, Conflict, Administration.

Introduction

Pan Local Government Area was created in 1980 by Solomon D. Lar, the then Governor of Plateau State in the second republic from 1980-1984. Its creation was apparently one of the continuation of the re-organisation policies of Local Government Areas administration including Chieftaincy Institutions that were carried out after Nigeria's independence by both the Civilian and Military regimes in Nigeria. Being carry-over policies of Local Government administration re-organisation from the colonial period, some of these re-organisations were carried out in consultation with the communities while others were mere government policies without community's participation. Some were carried out to the later while others were aborted half-way. For instance, the creation of Pan which started with consultation on the communities later ended as Government decision where name and Headquarters of the Local Government area was changed from the initial request of the communities without the participation of all the parties involved. In the same manner, the creation of Quaan-Pan in 1989 by Gen. Ibrahim Babangida was done without involvement of the communities just as the attempt to create Quaan

Local Government Area by Gen Sani Abacha in 1996 was aborted half-way.

This article attempts to look into the creation of Pan Local Government Area in 1980 and the subsequent re-organisations that followed after the proscription of Pan Local Government Area with a view to understanding where the lapses occurred which led to the disagreements that resulted to the crises of agitations for separation and resistance presented by the separatists requests and other conflicts of interests between the various communities in Quaan-Pan Local Government area. Although conflicts such as the deliberate expansion of farmlands by the Pan/kofyar into Goemai land of Namu, refusal to pay tributes and tax to the Goemai host community instead of paying same to their home villages of Bwall, Doemak, Kwa, Kwang, Kwalla and Doka from where the Kofiar/pan group came from, and the disrespect of Goemai Chiefs of Namu by the Kofyar/pan group constantly pitched the Goemai host and Kofyar/ Pan group into conflicts, the re-organisation of Shendam Local Government Area that subsequently led to the creation of Pan Local Government Area compounded the conflicts. When Pan Local Government Area was created, it consists of seven Districts which include Bwall, Doemak, Kwa, Kwalla, Kwang, Namu and Doka consisting of Dokan-Kasuwa and Dokan- Tofa as one District alternating the District Head between the two villages (Gazette No 4 1980, 1981).

Its proscription by the military junta of General Muhammadu Buhari in 1984 generated more conflicts arising from poor interaction leading to more agitations

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for self-determination especially from some communities particularly, Namu and Dokan-Tofa who were part of the defunct Pan Local Government Area who were not comfortable with the mal-administration of the Local Government Area. The proscription of Pan Local Government Area served as a relief to them. The re-organisation that followed thereafter during the regime of General Ibrahim Babangida exposed the conflicts of interaction and presented an opportunity for the Goemai of Namu and Dokan-Tofa who felt oppressed to agitate for their own Local Government Areas but the dominant Kofyar/Pan in the defunct Pan Local Government Area did not endorse and support such idea. They also refused to let them seek for their own Local Government which has been responsible for the numerous conflicts between the ethnic communities in Quaana-Pan Local Government Area that defy solution.

Was the creation of Pan Local Government Area meant to create conflicts between the people or accommodate their different interests? Was it created for people of the same ethnic background or include other ethnic groups? Was it an accepted and unanimous decision of the communities that constituted Pan Local Government Area or otherwise? If it was, why did Namu request for the immediate separation and creation of a Namu Local Government Area from Pan Local Government Area after its creation in 1980? (Sanda, 1976) Why did Doka-Tofa, in Doka District opt out of Pan Local Government Area and joined Shendam Local Government Area before the proscription of Pan Local Government Area in 1984 and the subsequent Creation of Quaana-Pan Local Government Area in 1989 (Memoranda, Demand for Jan (Namu) Chieftdom in Pan Local Government Area, submitted to the Plateau State Government by Namu Community, 1981) consisting of the remaining communities of the defunct Pan Local Government Area and Kwande District which was in Shendam Local Government Area. These and many other pertinent issues raised in this research are the reasons for agitations for self-determination by the Goemai groups in respect to request for separation for a different Local Government Area and resistance from Kofyar/Pan who advocated the maintenance of status quo of the defunct Pan Local Government Area. The questions asked are answered appropriately in the various sections of the work.

In evaluating the creation of Pan Local Government Area and analysing the conflicts that came with Local Government administration re-organisations starting from the aftermath of the proscription of Pan Local Government Area and the numerous conflicts it has fueled in Quaana-Pan Local Government Area, the paper

discusses first, the creation of Pan Local Government Area and then describes the historical background of Quaana-Pan Local Government Area and the sequence of Local Government Administration re-organisations in the area starting from the post colonial local administration re-organisations to date. This is followed by analysis of the groups' conflicts of supporting vis-a-vis opposing requests for Local Government administration re-organisations in the area. This takes us to re-evaluate the stages of policies in order to understand where the re-organisation policies impeded on the relationship of the people and has pitched them in different disputes such as ethnic conflicts that led to the major crises in Namu and its lingering consequences that is aggravating indigene/settler differences, elections and political disagreement among other conflicts that led to the numerous vices and responsible for the insecurity in Quaana-Pan Local Government Area.

Meanwhile, there are some researches that were conducted on the re-organisation policies of Local Government administration and conflicts in some communities of Nigeria which effects spread all over the country but did not properly cover the intrigues in the re-organisation policies of Quaana-Pan Local Government Area. Since the creation and proscription of Pan Local Government Area and the conflicts that accompanied it, there has little or no adequate research to address the issue. The paper in this case reviewed relevant literature that are concerned with this study such as the "The History, Ownership, Establishment of Jos and Misconception about the Recurrent Jos Conflict" (Mangwat, 2010), "Conflict and Peace Building in Plateau State, Nigeria" (Best, 2007), "Hill Farmers of Nigeria: Cultural Ecology of the Kofyar of Jos Plateau" (Netting, 1968), "Local Government Administration, the Nigeria Perspective" (Dapun, 2004), "Insecurity and Economy of Northern Nigeria in the 21st Century and Beyond; A Festschrift in Honour of Professor Ahmed Modibbo Mohammed" (Mayaki, 2021), "Clash of Identities, States, Societies and Ethno-Religious Conflicts in Northern Nigeria" (Abdu, 2010), "A New Geography of Nigeria" (Iloje, 2001) in addition to other Gazetteers, archival records, colonial reports, memoranda and oral interviews.

They discussed local administration re-organisations and conflicts between the various ethnic groups not only in Quaana-Pan Local Government Area but the whole of Plateau State and Nigeria and analysed interaction, suppression, oppression, self-determination and conflict among other social, political and economic problems of different ethnic groups in Quaana-Pan Local Government Area. While the explanation in some of the relevant

sources were skewed, biased, inaccurate, and unreliable, some provided relevant background information that are useful to this study and are clues to correcting misconceptions on the issues created by the re-organisations policies of local administration and its consequences on interaction in Quaana-Pan Local Government Area and is adopted in this work.

Historical Background of Quaana-Pan Local Government Area

Quaana-Pan Local Government Area is one of the seventeen Local Government Areas of Plateau State which was created in 1989 by General Ibrahim Babangida during one of the post colonial Local Administration's re-organisations policies at that time (Tunde, 1992). The name Quaana-Pan derives from two distinct ethnic backgrounds. Quaana, refers to the Goemai ethnic group who traced their origin to Kwararafa and Jukun. They are established and are found in the settlements of Kwo or Moekwo (Kwande), Luu-kwo (Bakin-ciyawa), Turniyang, Nnagan (Kurgwi) and Japjan (Namu) (Longban, Musa, & Hassan, 2005). On the other hand, Pan is a group of ethnic neighbours including the Bwall, Doemak, Dokan Kasuwa also known as Jagat-noeng, Mernyang found in Kwa and Kwang Districts and Kwalla who according to Best, are referred to as "a Federation of ethnic groups speaking different dialects of the same broad language" and have traced their origin of migration to Pes in Pankshin and to Kofyar, an area founded by Dafyar their ancestor before spreading to establish their various present settlements (Best, 2007). However, some Kwalla groups are of the view that they are not Kofyar (Telyen, 2023) and their ethnic differences and independence is supported by the Report of Plateau Peace Conference of 2004 where they signed as representatives of their different District-based ethnic groups and not collectively as Pan (Paul, 2006).

The Local Government Area has a population of 290, 200 according to the projected population census figures to 2022 in a landmass that covers 2, 622 square kilometers. It is bounded in the North by Pankshin, East by Shendam Local Government Areas of Plateau State and Nasarawa State in the West and South (Iloeje, 2001). Quaana-Pan has three Chiefdoms which include Pan, Kwo and Namu Chiefdoms. While Pan Chiefdom was created in 1981 (Gazette, 1981) on second class status before being upgraded to first class status in 2002, Kwo Chiefdom was created on third class status in 1981, upgraded to first class status in 2002 but reverted to second class status in 2021 just as Namu was created Chiefdom on second class status in 2002. These chiefdoms presently have thirty-eight Districts and many

village areas under them. Administrative functions such as allocation of plots, farmland and maintaining law and order as well as dealing with migrants within the Chiefdoms are in the hands of the District and Village Heads.

Quaana-Pan Local Government Area is blessed with fertile soil, easy to cultivate and the soil supports dense vegetation and is suitable for the cultivation of yams, maize and guinea-corn. Rice, bananas and sugar-cane are also cultivated on the alluvial soil type found in some areas of Quaana-Pan. Clay soil is only important for pottery making while sandy soil has lost its organic material content and become lighter in colour and sandy in texture which makes it less important for use. Meanwhile, the climate of the area is characterised by rainy and dry seasons. The area in the rainy season experiences wet and dull weather and cloud cover as a result of high condensation leads to rainfall which is heavier in the month of June-August with an average temperature of about 27°C and 25°C (Iloeje, 2001).

On the other hand, the dry season also known as the winter begins from November - March. At this time, Quaana-Pan experiences cold weather with dust breeze blowing all over the area which is experienced mostly by December to the beginning of February. The temperature around this time is averagely between 25°C and 26°C and thereafter, the weather becomes hotter around March and April where the temperature rises to an average of between 30°C and 32°C (Iloeje, 2001). The vegetation and climate however is an attraction to migrants who joined their hosts in area and has raised the population of the area to meet up with one of the criteria for the demand of Local Government Administration hence the creation and re-organisations of Local Government Area Administrations in the post colonial and the conflicts of the re-organisations.

Local Government Area Re-organisations in Post Colonial Period

Post-colonial re-organisations of local administration in Nigeria started with the Local Government reforms of 1976 when 301 Local Government Areas were created across the country to serve populations ranging from 80,000 to 150,000. Shendam before 1976 was a Native Authority while Kofyar comprising of Doemak, Kwa, and Namu was a Federated Sub- Native Authority. By 1976, Shendam Native Authority became a Local Government Area and Kofyar Federated sub-Native Authority was merged with Shendam Local Government Area where Shendam Native Authority and Kofyar Federated sub-Native Authority were merged with Shendam Local Government Area. Although the Local

Government Areas in Nigeria were not so much different from those of the colonial administration, it was noted that they were re-organised in such a way that they were headed by a committee of chairmen and supervisory councilors who were responsible for policies, directives or orders on political matters instead of being headed by a District Officer as it was obtained in the colonial period (Hassan, 2013).

The traditional councils who were agents of the colonialists were re-organised and saddled with the responsibilities of advising the Chairman on variety of issues like the maintenance of law and order, assessing and collection of taxes and the customary functions involving their areas (Hassan, 2013). Under this reform, the Districts and their village areas created during the colonial period in present day Shendam, Quaan Pan, and Mikang Local Government Areas were the only recognised traditional and administrative institutions in the area. It was noted that their chiefs who were district heads were attending traditional council meeting with the Chairman at Shendam the Local Government Area headquarters and the Long Goemai maintained his status of being the Chairman of the traditional council as it was during the colonial period (Hassan, 2013).

The Local Government Areas in Nigeria were later recognised and entrenched in the constitution of 1979. The 1979 constitution in section 7 (i) provided for a democratically elected Local Government Councils which the Government of every state of the Federation shall ensure their composition, finances and functions. They were to also benefit from the Federation account as contained in section 149 of that constitution (Gazette, 1981).

These Local Government Areas created in 1976 and entrenched in the 1979 constitution were inherited by the Shagari civilian administration of the second republic that succeeded the Obasanjo's military regime. Since the 1979 constitution provided for their control by the state governments, most states of the federation created Local Government Areas during the civilian government between 1979 - 1984. This marked yet another re-organisation of local administration when Pan Local Government was created (Dapun, 2004).

Creation of Pan Local Government Area

The creation of Pan Local Government Area started when different communities west of Shendam sent in various memoranda requesting for creation of Local Government Areas in respect to their areas. Among those who requested for creation of Local Government were the Dorok Chiefdom, Kwo chiefdom and Namu District. Others were the requests for Kwalla, Doemak, Kwa,

Kwang and Doka comprising of Dokan-Kasuwa and Dokan-Tofa as one District" (Memoranda, 1981).

However, the committee on the creation of Local Government Areas at that time decided as a policy to recommend Shendam west with the Headquarters at Kurgwi (Memoranda, 1981). This decision by the committee generated a lot of controversies between Kwande and Dorok Chiefdoms on where the Headquarters of the recommended Shendam West was to be sited made both Kwande and Dorok Chiefdoms to opt-out of the recommended Shendam West Local Government. While Kwande Chiefdom wanted the headquarters to be sited in Kwande, Dorok people were in support of the headquarters being in Kurgwi. Dorok first opted-out to remain in Shendam Local Government Area due to the insistence of kwande retaining the Local Government Area's Headquarters and later Kwande failing to become the Local Government Headquarters followed Dorok back to Shendam. Since Kurgwi was a village area under Kwande, it had no option than to follow Kwande Chiefdom to Shendam Local Government Area.

However, Shendam West Local Government Area having failed to materialised as originally conceived requested and recommended by the committee and for the other remnant communities who also advocated for it like Namu, Doemak, Kwalla, Kwa, Bwall, Doka, and Kwang were later renamed Pan Local Government Area with headquarters to be sited between Kwalla and Doemak towns (Dapun, 2004). This change in the name of the Local Government Area and Headquarters from "the nodal town of Kurgwi" to between Kwalla and Doemak later, Baap and the inclusion of Namu in Pan Local Government was said to have been done without the knowledge and consent of the Namu people.

The Districts of Bwall, Doemak, Doka, Kwa, Kwang, Kwalla and Namu constituted the area that made up the new Pan Local Government Area (Dapun, 2004). Shortly after the commencement of activities by the newly created Pan Local Government Area, the people of Namu in that same 1980 petitioned the Plateau State Government demanding for a Namu Local Government Area out of the new Pan Local Government Area. The people stated as their reasons for the request for Namu Local Government Area out of Pan as dissatisfaction from the running of Pan Local Government Area by the Pan people at the expense of the Namu people and in particular differences in ethnic background, culture and tradition, land mass and population among other reasons (Memoranda, 1981). Employments were said to be lopsided and discriminatory against the Namu people.

Meanwhile, Plateau State Government went ahead

to re-organise Chieftaincy institutions and created Pan Chiefdom in 1981 with the same districts of Pan Local Government Area constituting the chiefdom without resolving the complaint of the Namu people. The Namu people again wrote requesting for a 'Jan' chiefdom out of Pan chiefdom stating the same reasons of their differences in ethnic background, culture and tradition, suppression, oppression and that the Longjan of Namu who was the most senior District Head among the Districts of Pan Local Government Area was deliberately denied the position of Long Pan on account of his ethnic origin of being a Goemai man and not of Pan stock.

This explains the persistent and continuous quest for independence and esteem through the creation of Namu (Jan) chiefdom (Memoranda, Government views and decisions on the report of High Power Committee of Local Government reform in Plateau State, 1973). These requests for Namu Local Government and chiefdom out of Pan Local Government Area were not successful up to when Pan Local Government was proscribed by Major General Muhammadu Buhari's regime in 1984 leaving only Pan Chiefdom. To the Goemai of Namu the creation of Pan Local Government Area and Pan Chiefdom added to their dilemma in the hands of the Pan/Kofyar groups.

On the part of the Pan/Kofyar groups, they claimed that Kwande was not one of the Pan Districts and ethnic group. That was why it opted out of the creation of Pan Local Government Area. As for the change of name from Shendam West to Pan Local Government Area with the Headquarters at Baap, they said it was the collective decision of the Pan people across the Pan Districts including Namu to enhance the relationship of the people from the same ancestry, origin, culture, tradition and brotherhood which Namu out rightly denied and refused to accept (Memoranda, Government views and decisions on the report of High Power Committee of Local Government reform in Plateau State, 1973).

Military Re-Organisations of Local Government Area

Another re-organisation of the Local Administration occurred during the military regime of General Ibrahim Babangida in 1989 when Local Government Areas were again created in Nigeria. Quaana-Pan Local Government was created this time to include Kwande District which in 1980 refused to be part of the proposed Shendam West which was recommended because Kwande town was not made the Local Government Area headquarters. Even though Baap was maintained as the headquarters of the new Quaana-Pan Local Government Area, its creation to the Goemai people of Namu was a relief since the

Goemai people of Kwande who are their Kith and Kins were joined in the Local Government Area (Constitution, The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria with the Amendments, 1979). The creation however did not change the problems of domination, suppression, oppression and marginalisation that the Goemai of Namu were complaining of even when the Goemai of Kwande joined them in the newly created Quaana-Pan Local Government Area. They however endured and remained in the Local Government Area only hoping that there would be another local administrative re-organisation. Another opportunity came during General Sani Abacha's regime in 1994 where Kwo Chiefdom and Namu District joined and requested for Quaana Local Government Area.

The regime of General Sani Abacha decided to create additional Local Government Areas in Nigeria in 1996. Even though it was a military regime, it requested interested communities to submit memoranda for the creation of new Local Government Areas. Kwo Chiefdom (Kwande) and Namu District as at then, in a joint memorandum requested for the creation of Quaana Local Government Area out of Quaana-Pan Local Government Area in 1994.

This generated another kind of conflicts between the Quaana and the Pan people. The Pan/Kofyar groups resident in Namu, the diaspora and the ones at home in Pan Districts protested against this request and gave as their reason the excision of Namu, which they considered as part of Pan land. Eventually, Quaana Local Government Area was not created among the Local Government Areas that were created in 1996 by the regime of General Sani Abacha (Hassan, 2013) and the marginalisation of both the Goemai of Namu and kwo (Kwande) continued unabated to this day.

Complexities of Local Government Areas Re-organisations Since 1999

The Goemai people in Quaana-Pan Local Government Area did not relent in their agitation and requests for separation from the Pan group. The return to democracy in 1999 opened up yet another opportunity for the re-organisation of Local administration. This time, it was Plateau State Government which, like other states of the Federation advertised request for memoranda from interested communities for the creation of new Local Government Areas in late 2001.

However, there is a lacuna as the 1999 constitution recognises only the Local Government Areas listed in it. By Implication, no power has the right to create any additional Local Government Area except the central government. The constitution maintained that: "Similar

to the 1979 constitution, the 1999 constitution in section 7(1) provided for the control of Local Government Areas by the state Governments and was entrenched in the fourth schedule of the 1999 constitution" (Constitution, The Constitution, Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999). It needed to be amended before the new Local Government Areas that were created would be accommodated in the constitution.

In order to avoid the repeat of conflict that ensued between the Goemai and Pan groups when Namu allied with Kwande to request for a Quaan Local Government Area, the Goemai people of Namu District requested for Namu Local Government Area of its own this time separate from Kwo Chiefdom (Kwande District). Namu Chiefdom cited population, landmass, financial viability, unique ethnic, culture and traditions among other criteria for qualification to be created as an independent Local Government Area (Memoranda, Demand for Jan (Namu) Chiefdom in Pan Local Government Area, submitted to the Plateau State Government by Namu Community, 1981).

This request was said to be widely supported by both the Goemai people of Namu at home and diaspora as well as the Pan/ Kofyar groups and other ethnic groups that are resident in the Namu Chiefdom. It was the first time in the history of Namu Chiefdom an alliance of force between the indigenous Goemai people and the Pan settlers and all the ethnic residents in Namu have been united in one purpose to demand for a Local Government Area. According to Haruna Maimako, a meeting was held in the palace of the Longjan of Namu where the request for the creation of Namu Local Government Area was discussed and it was a Pan man who suggested that the name of the proposed Local Government Area be called Namu with the headquarters in Namu Town and was supported by all those in attendance (Hassan, 2013).

While the process for the creation of new Local Government Areas was on-going by the Plateau State Government, constitutional hiccup cropped-up between the State and Federal Governments over the recognition of the new Local Government Areas created by some states in Nigeria. This pitched the State Governments against the Federal Government. This reason forced affected State Governments to revert to another form of Local administration where Plateau State Government reverted to the new Local Government Areas to Development Areas and Namu Local Government was reverted to Namu Development Area (Hassan, 2013).

The delay by State Government from 2005 gave to revert to a new form of local administration till 2005, the Pan/Kofyar group an opportunity to submit a new

memorandum requesting for Pan South Development Area covering the same geographical area as Namu Development Area with the headquarters at "Jepjan" thereby contradicting the Goemai people of Namu earlier request for Namu Development Area with headquarters at Namu. Government obliged the Goemai people of Namu with the creation of Namu Development Area which was a reversion from Local Government Area announced early in 2002 because of the constitutional obstacles to Local government creation at that time. In this case, the twenty-nine new Local Government Areas created by Plateau State Government in 2002 were reverted to Development Areas including Namu Development Area and the bill signed into law in November 2005 (Memorandum, 1994).

However, because of the first crisis over the creation of Namu Development Area, a committee was set by the Plateau State Government to look into complaints arising from the creation of Development Areas in Plateau State. This led to the creation of more Development Areas which raised the number of Development Areas to fifty-nine in Plateau State (Request for creation of Namu Chiefdom in Quaan-Pan Local Government Area of Plateau State, 1995).

Re-Organisations of Chieftaincy Institutions

The re-organisation of Local administrations was not only limited to Local Government and Development Areas alone. Chieftaincy institutions were also re-organised. Chiefdoms, Districts and Village Areas were also created. Those that were earlier created either in the colonial or post colonial periods were upgraded as appropriate. The processes of their re-organisations were also contributory factors to the conflict between the people of Quaan-Pan Local Government Area. Since the creation of Pan Chiefdoms in 1981, the Goemai people of Namu have consistently demanded for the creation of a Namu Chiefdom beginning from 1981 where memoranda were submitted in 1995 (Memorandum Submitted to Plateau State Government for request of the creation of Namu Chiefdom in Quaan Pan Local Government Area of Plateau State by Namu District Community, 1999), 1997 and 1999 (Memorandum Submitted to Plateau State Government for request of the creation of Namu Chiefdom in Quaan-Pan Local Government Area of Plateau State by Namu District Community, 1999) until it was created in 2002. However, following a suit instituted by some aggrieved parties on the creation of the Chiefdoms in Jos North, there was a court judgment that set aside the creation of these Chiefdoms in 2004. The Plateau State House of

Assembly re-enacted a law which enabled the Government to issue a gazette in 2006 to sustain the created Chiefdoms, Districts and Village Areas (Gazette No.22, Vol 11, 2005).

The Pan/Kofyar groups' position on the creation of Namu Chiefdom is not different from their position on the creation of Namu Local Government later reverted to Development Area. It is an established fact that Pan/Kofyar groups viewed the creation of Namu Chiefdom as slicing part of Pan land away from them. When Namu Chiefdom was purported to have been proscribed by the Jang administration, the Pan people jubilated. However, when Government came to realities on the matter, it later advertised for re-submission of memoranda from communities interested in the creation of Chiefdoms (Gazette No 4, Vol 11, 2006). The Goemai of Namu wrote requesting for the restoration of its Chiefdom but the Pan/Kofyar groups countered with a memorandum requesting for the upgrading of the Pan Districts to second class status including Namu District. This disagreement was a contributory factor that led to the consistent Namu crises that are being witnessed to contemporary period. We must go back historically to understand the root of the conflict between the Goemai and the Pan sub ethnic nationalities.

Goemai is understood to be an ethnic group who founded and established settlements in Shendam, Quaana-Pan Local Government Area of Plateau State and Awe Local Government Area of Nassarawa State. They speak the same language and have a common culture and tradition even though they belong to different clans and villages. Pan on the other hand according to Abubakar Zakari, a Bwall man, resident in Namu confidently concluded that "Pan" is not an ethnic group but an association of Kwalla, Doemak, Bwall, Mernyang and Jagat-noeng ethnic groups found in different villages of the same names such as Kwalla, Doemak, Bwall, Kwa, Kwang and Doka (Hassan, 2013). He further elaborated that Pan did not exist as an ethnic group before 1980 when it was created as Local Government Area by the Solomon D. Lar's administration. Accordingly, he concluded that before its creation, Pan was only known to be a cult of a section of the Doemak people. But it is now used to describe the neighbouring people from different ethnic groups of the six Pan Districts of Quaana-Pan Local Government Area speaking similar dialects (Personnel Communication, 2023).

In any case, a Pan man is first known as Kwalla, Doemak, Bwall or Mernyang before being identified as Pan. This is evident from "Plateau Resolve: A Report of the Plateau Peace Conference" and in the membership of Plateau Indigenous Development Network (PIDAN)

where they are identified as listed above with no "Pan" identified or represented. Pan is therefore a conglomeration of ethnic groups that have common interests seemingly to overwhelm the Goemai of Namu over land ownership (Mangvwat, 2010).

Conclusion

In this paper, we discussed the creation of Pan Local Government Area in 1980 and the post re-organisations conundrum it caused between the Goemai and Pan ethnic groups in Quaana-Pan Local Government Area, it summarised that even though the conflicts in its different dimensions has been reduced significantly, the issues and complications in the aftermath of Local Government Areas re-organisations is still lingering between the two communities of the area. The claim of ownership over Namu between the Goemai of Namu and Pan group in particular despite being resolved by a Judicial Commission of Inquiry set-up by the Plateau State Government and the judgment of the Federal Appeal Court in Josin favour of the Goemai, the Pan group does not accept the outcome and still nurses the feeling of ownership of the place. This is still lingering and has the potential to cause another conflagration if it is not properly handled or closely monitored.

The paper thus studied the historical background of the people of Quaana-Pan Local Government Area and explained how Quaana group came together with the Pan group despite the differences in ethnic background to form Quaana-Pan Local Government Area in a marriage of inconvenience after the proscription of the defunct Pan Local Government Area. In addition, the paper studied the overview of creations and re-organisations of Local Government Areas in Nigeria and understand they were Government policies that constantly re-organise, reform and transform Local Government Administration from the post colonial Divisional Native Authorities to Local Government Areas where 301 Local Governments were created and entrenched in the 1979 Constitution and replaced roles of Paramount Chiefs and their District Heads who were responsible for policies directives and orders during the Divisions and Native Authorities with Chairmen and Supervisory Councilors who were appointed as management officials to take over from them.

The work also discussed the creation of Pan Local Government Area in 1980 as setting the pace in ethnic division and conflict in Quaana-Pan Local Government area. The decision of Government to change the request for Shendam West Local Government Area to Pan was to the Goemai of Namu and Dokan-Tofa, a clear indication that Pan was not where they belonged. Viewing the

change as elite and politically motivated, they immediately requested for separation from Pan but the Government did not act on it. They were only relieved on the proscription of Pan Local Government Area in 1984 by the military regime of Maj. Gen. Muhammadu Buhari.

On the other hand, military creation of Local Government Areas by General Babangida in 1989 and 1991 and General Abacha in 1994, 1995 and 1996 explained the continuous re-organisation policies of Local Government Areas across Nigeria during one of which Quaana-Pan Local Government Area was created. Further requests for re-organisations to create more Local Government Areas where Quaana (consisting of the Goemai of Namu) and Kwande who jointly requested for Quaana Local Government Area out of Quaana-Pan Local Government Area was opposed. The Pan group opposed the request on the grounds that Namu was part of their land and could not be taken away from them. This marked the beginning of the Pan group ethnic claim on Namu that later exploded to the violent conflict in Namu.

The conflict of Local Government Areas creation and re-organisations assumed a gory dimension in Quaana-Pan during the creation and re-organisations of Local Government Areas in Plateau State after the return to Democracy in 1999 where the re-organisations went through different complexities. It explained the requests and creations of Namu and Kwande Local Government Areas out of Quaana-pan Local Government Area and the objection by the Pan group to the creation of Namu Local Government Area advancing as their reason that Namu was part of their land. Even when Namu Local Government Area was reverted to Namu Development Area because of the Constitutional obstacles between the State and Federal Government, the Pan group insisted on their ownership claim on Namu until the dispute generated into the violent crisis in Namu in 2005.

The dynamics of Local Government Areas creation and re-organisation also extended to the creation and re-organisation of chieftaincy institutions. This also generated re-organisational conflict between the Goemai and Pan in Quaana-Pan Local Government Area. As was the case with Local Government Area creation, the creation of Namu Chieftdom as a District on second class status was against the Pan groups' interest who wanted it reversed by Government. In fact having proceeded with the creation of Namu Local Government Area, it became the source of conflict between the Goemai of Namu and the Pan group. Subsequently, Government was pressured to elevate Pan and Kwo Chieftdoms from second class to first class and later reversed its decision in respect of Kwo

Chieftdom.

In summary, the paper suggests and recommends that further research on the background of the ethnic groups in Quaana-Pan Local Government Area should review the colonial documentation of their histories so that distortion in compilation will be properly addressed. This will do away with the contradictions that have been largely responsible for the counter claims of ownership of land by communities. This distortions and contradictions have been responsible for pitching the ethnic groups into crises of ownership claim of settlement among other conflicts which in most cases escalate to destruction of lives and properties.

Meanwhile, Government in particular should be wary of political elite lobby or threat that may deceived them into policy somersault and reversal which may lead them to wholesale proscribing decision already taken based on objective facts. Government should constitute committees to investigate thoroughly people's grievances with a view to reviewing genuine cases. Finally, the historical analysis of the complication on Local Government Areas creation and re-organisation has served as an introduction to the complex political conflicts that has fractured re-organisation of Local Government Areas in Nigeria.

In conclusion, creation and re-organisation of Local Government Areas is for development especially in the face of the growing population in Nigeria. This is to enable Government meet the administrative demand of rural villages that have developed to urban cities and have attracted political and economic attention to the areas. It strengthens self-determination of communities who want to meet the world standard of modern development. It should therefore be encouraged and more re-organisations be made to create more Local Government Areas in deserving communities in Nigeria to reflect the diversity of the people. It will go a long way in reducing crises in Quaana-Pan, Plateau State and Nigeria in general.

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