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THE ROLE OF FAVOURITISM AND SYCOPHANCY IN INFRASTRUCTURE NAMING AND ITS CONSEQUENCES FOR GOVERNANCE IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Several infrastructures have been named after deserving Nigerians in recognition of their contributions towards national development. However, the justified purposes and honour behind naming of infrastructures and the presentation of awards are being grossly abused. In recent times, infrastructures and awards have been given to recipients with questionable characters - including the obviously corrupt. Most of such recipients receive the awards while they are in office. Sycophancy and the desire to curry favour, play major roles in the award of such undeserving honours. In some cases, the recipients lobby for the awards. When such sycophancy occurs, it makes it difficult to speak truth to power. It also promotes corruption while giving a negative colouration about the essence of quality, respectable and efficient leadership to younger generations. In so doing, it makes the fight against corruption an arduous task. On the other hand, it encourages public office holders to become more autocratic. Using secondary data, this paper examines the circumstances and recipients of some controversial awards in Nigeria. It concludes that development is impeded when some public office holders who looted the treasury receive unmerited awards and life pensions in the midst of high unemployment and poverty among the majority of the masses. It recommends that awards and the naming of infrastructures must not be given to public office holders while they are still in office. It further recommends that separate courts must be established to prosecute corruption cases while persons that have been indicted for corruption must not be rewarded in any form. It is expected that when these actions are taken, it will contribute towards curbing corruption in Nigeria.

KEYWORDS: Awards, Corruption, EFCC, Favouritism, Infrastructures, Nigeria, Public office holders, Sycophancy.

INTRODUCTION

Justice require that each person is given what they deserve from available resources. The imbalances that occur through favouritism and sycophancy, are antithetical to building egalitarian societies. Favouritism and sycophancy work together and mostly end up producing nepotism and corruption. Both of them give undue advantage to the sycophant and invests more authority and undue honour on the target - who is mostly a public office holder. The consequence of both factors is that the target surrounds him/herself with praise-singers who mostly lack the capacity to assist in developing governance. *To avoid coup and betrayals, rulers, especially those who are weak and vulnerable, sacrifice the competence of their agents, hiring mediocre but loyal subordinates* (Egorov & Sonin, 2011).

Favouritism and sycophancy are impediments to governance in Nigeria and they continue to manifest in various aspects of national discourse. If this is not checked, the anomaly will continue to promote corruption and encourage incompetent leaders to take undue advantage of

government and the people. Favouritism and sycophancy are deployed in various ways and periods - either separately or jointly. Favouritism could be used before or after somebody has resumed office - to aid some persons by giving them undue advantages. Sycophancy is mostly applied when the person is already in office. The goal of sycophancy is to curry favour from such an office holder, through praise singing. One way through which sycophancy extol those who do not merit certain honour and favour, is by naming infrastructures after them, while they are still in office. In other cases, some persons are voted into office, not because of their capacity to perform, but because their positions will favour the sycophants and praise singers who do everything to make sure that their candidate win. When such persons get into office, their ineptitude becomes glaring and it negatively affects the generality of the people and the development of the country.

Fairness is paramount in governance. Artistotle *was a proponent of the ethics of fairness and he once stated that thus, it is thought that justice is equality; and so it is, but not for all persons, only for those that are equal. Inequality also is thought to be just; and so it is, but not for all, only for the unequal* (Cuellar, 2021).

On the other hand, favouritism leads to a point where those in government appoint either family members or close associates into government without regard to due process or ethics. Favouritism in governance occur in various countries of the world. For example, in the United States of America, John F. Kennedy appointed his brother Robert as attorney general (Manchester, 2024). In Nigeria, within two years in office, the former supreme court justice, Justice Kayode Ariwoola, appointed his son as a judge of the Federal High Court; *his daughter-in-law as a judge of the High Court of the Federal Capital Territory, his brother as an auditor of the National Judicial Council (NJC), which he chaired, and another family member as a Justice of the Court of Appeal* (Sahara Reporters, 2024). Ivanka the daughter of Donald Trump served as adviser to the president while her husband, Jared Kushner, was assistant to the president and senior adviser (USA Today, 2020).

One way to check corruption, is to check favouritism and sycophancy in governance. It is the the awareness of the destructive nature of corruption that Nigeria tookvarious steps both in military and civilian administrations, to fight the menace. Such steps include the establishment of the *Public Officer Investigation of Asset Decree No. 5 of 1976; Forfeiture of Assets Decree No. 53 of 1999; the use of tribunal like the failed bank tribunal set up by Abacha military administration; the Code of Conduct Bureau and the Code of Conduct Tribunal in 1979; and the fifth schedule Part 1 of 1999 Nigerian constitution, Ethical revolution of 1979 to 1983, WAI (1983-1985), WAI-C (1993-1998), ICPC in 2000, and EFCC in 2003, among others* (Ijewereme, 2013; Ogundiya, 2009). The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has been the most formidable and sustainable among these.

It was established was established by an Act of the National Assembly on 12th December, 2002 by the administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo. Thereafter, various amendments were done in Section 7(2) of the Establishment Act 2004 to operate the Money Laundering Act of 1995, the Money Laundering (Prohibition) act 2004, the Advance Fee Fraud and Other Fraud Related Offences Act 1995, the Failed Banks (Recovery of Debts) and Financial Malpractices in Banks Act 1994, the Banks and other Financial Institutions Act 1991, the miscellaneous Offences Act, 1985, the Criminal Code and the Penal Code Terrorism Act, 2011(EFCC. The establishment of this commission was intended to fight the hydra-headed problems of corruption which has deeply affected the economic fabrics of Nigeria. Sadly those in position of authority continue to bestow honours on individuals who have been involved in cases of corruption. May officials use their positions to promote corruption (Obuah, 2010a). By

honouring such persons when they are still in office, inadvertently gives them the toga of public masters instead of public servants. When awards are given to corrupt individuals, the growing population of youths copy from the anomalies. Now, we have many youths in Nigeria`s correctional centers as a result of fraud. Others have been used by the same political class as political thugs while others have been conscripted as terrorists who kidnap for ransoms. In all of these, some Nigerians try to measure with the luxurious life styles of corrupt public office holders. The irony is that the corrupt officials are seldom jailed. In many cases, they escape prosecution after plea bargains. The Kirikiri prison was established by the British in 1955 to cater for a capacity of 1,056 inmates (Jibrin, 2018). As of 2024, there are 2,017 incarcerated there (Punch, 2024)) due to congestion. In that number, public office holders are hardly detained as inmates. Meanwhile the agitations and frustration in the country, were mostly caused by them.

The sycophancy behind giving awards or naming infrastructures after serving public office holders, is driven by the desire to use them to achieve selfish purposes against the rule of law. Among others, the naming of some infrastructures after former President Buhari in Ogun, Plateau and Imo states, while he was still in office, are empirical evidences that have been elucidated in this paper. The governors of the mentioned states needed the endorsement of the president because they desired to get the primary tickets of their political party in order to return to office for second terms. It is significant to note that no infrastructure has been named after Buhari after he left office in May 2023. The aberrations of such sycophancies come with praise-singing and it challenges the the fight against corruption because people who are not qualified for certain positions and awards, become recipients. Instead of using the law to punish those involved in corruption, some of them have been given awards.

If sycophancy must be checked in Nigeria, a law could be introduced where awards and infrastructures should be named after public office holders only after they have left office. Their works at the end of their service should determine the justification for such honours. The anticipation of such awards and the possibility of naming infrastructures after them, could encourage them to work better while in office. An observation about some of the awardees need to be mentioned. Most political office holders who received awards while in office become silent on national issues when they leave office. In so doing, their patriotism, circumstances and justification of their awards become questionable. For example, several infrastructures were named after David Alechenu Bonaventure Mark when he occupied public offices such as military governor, minister, 20 years as senator (3 June 1999 – 9 June 2019) and 8 years as senate president. He also received various national and traditional awards including the Grand Commander of the Order of the Niger (GCON) Immediately he left office as senate president (2007–2015), he became very silent on national issues. However, there is no law which compels such persons to continue commenting on national issues. They have the right and choice to remain silent.

Favouritism and sycophancy embolden the public official to a point of patrimonialism and over-blown self worth. It is worsened when the official wields extensive constitutional rights in governance. In Nigeria, the president wield so much power especially the power to appoint persons into sensitive positions. For example, the president has the power to appoint the service chiefs, chairman of the economic and financial crimes commission, chairman of the independent national electoral commission, governor of the central bank, comptroller-general of immigration, comptroller-general of prisons, etc. It means that the president has power over the economy, security, migration, prison and elections which are the sensitive and critical areas of the governance of a country. In some cases, senior police officers and soldiers have been

ordered to retire because the president wish to elevate his favourite candidate to the position where, by hierarchy, ought to have been occupied by somebody else. When cronies and sycophants are appointed into such offices as a result of favouritism, effective and efficient governance may become difficult because government may be run like a closed circuit or a cult.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This paper is conceptualised and based on the theory of of patrimonialism as applied to political studies at the beginning of the 19th century by the Swiss legal scholar Karl Ludwig von Haller. He argued that the state can and should be viewed as the patrimonium (the patrimonial possession) of the ruler and that the prince is responsible only to God and the law of nature (Bakker, 2017). Patrimonialism believes in vesting authority primarily on the personal power exercised by a ruler, either directly or indirectly.

Such an ideology could be the product of favouritism and sycophancy. In the 20th century, the German sociologist Max Weber promoted this non-totalitarian theory by adopting the term *Patrimonialstaat* as a label for his ideal-type model of traditional authority (*Herrschaft*).

Patrimonialism shows how powers revolve around an individual. As a result of this, members of the society could exert pressure on a public office holder to act in ways that may transgress the rule of law. Within this pressure which could come from family, friends and others, the office holder is the `victim` who may end up being corrupt in order to satisfy public expectations.

In Nigeria, when an official enter into public office, it is expected that he must become rich. He is later surrounded by people and sycophants who expect him/her to meet their various needs such as personal health care, education for their children, jobs and other demands which borders on finances. In order to satisfy societal expectations, office holders indulge in the inflation of budgets, falsification of documents, receipts and the direct pilfering of public wealth. As the official satisfy the society, his/her trumpet is blown by sycophants while awards and infrastructures are named after them. The Nigerian experience shows that, as a way of implementing the corruption process, a new public office holder is taught by the sycophantic regular office workers, how to steal the available funds. In most cases, budgets are duplicated or written in a way that items which are not needed, are budgeted for. The annual budgets approved by the national assembly have become subjects of criticism in Nigeria over the years. This occurs because the presidency interferes with the leadership of the national assembly who end up paying allegiance to the president through the instrumentality of sycophancy and favouritism. When this happen, corruption is enthroned by way of cooperation between the two organs of government. For example, in 2018, the court ordered President Muhammadu Buhari to prosecute members of the national assembly who were indicted for padding the 2016 budget to the tune of N481 billion (Vanguard, 2018). Buhari refused to obey the court order. There were insinuations that he probably received his share.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Favouritism has been defined by the Oxford dictionary as *the practice of giving unfair preferential treatment to one person or group at the expense of another*. It further defines *sycophancy as behaviour that praises important or powerful people too much and in a way that is not sincere, especially in order to get something from them.*

It could be inferred from these definitions that if favouritism and sycophancy are entrenched in government as social interaction mechanisms, undue preferential treatments will occur. This is not good for governance as far as fairness, ethics, integrity and the fight against corruption

are concerned. Favouritism has been further expantiated by Lee, (2008) who believes that *the word "favoritism" itself generally evokes negative images of corruption as common thinking suggests in a favoritist exchange two sides might gain something but everyone else loses.* Though favouritism and sycophancy could be seen as forms of corruption which uses the instrument of sentimentality, they are different from bribe and embezzlement which are concrete and verifiable forms of corruption that involve the physical exchange of the material object of currency. *Compared to bribery, favoritism creates a more implicit, indirect, and unspecified return of obligation* (Loewe, Blume and Speer, 2008). In a government where promotion is determined by hierarchy, it becomes problematic when somebody on a lower rung or from outside a particular institution, is brought in to head an office due to favouritism. On this ground, citations by Ozler and Buyukarslan (2011) in referencing the distributive justice theory of Homans, (1961) and the derivative equity theory of Adams (1965), were apt when they posited that employees that are not favoured and *perceive unfairness and inequities may engage in destructive behavior. Such employees may respond by working less, increasing absenteeism, quitting, going on strike, or even stealing from employers* (Arya and Glovery, 2003). Integrity and fairness are necessary for governance and the psyche of workers towards enhanced productivity and accountability. This must begin with the leaders.Kaptein, (2014), buttresses this by postulating that *integrity starts with the politicians who know what their position entails, because integrity tacitly relates to their position. Important virtues of politicians are faithfulness, humility and accountability.* When these virtues are maintained, the official becomes more conscious and focused in governance and corruption is reduced or prevented. The aim of sycophancy is to corrupt. Azelama (2002) defines corruption as *any action or omission enacted by a member of an organization, which is against the rules, regulations, norms, and ethics of the organization, and the purpose is to meet the selfish end of the member at the detriment of the organization.* The Nigerian society tends to overemphasize the individual goal attainment at the expense of the legitimate means of achieving these set goals (Anazodo, Okoye & Ezenwile, 2012). These goals are shaded when officials are distracted by the antics of praise-singers and beclouded with the expectation of receiving awards in social events.

It is pertinent to review the statements of Egorov and Sonin (2011) who believe that *some degree of bootlicking among elites can be considered a universal norm in autocracies, particularly in more personalist regimes where power is highly concentrated in the hands of the ruler.* To some extent, I disagree with their position because sycophancy and corruption also thrives in democracy. Within many democracies such as Nigeria, too much power is vested on the president through the constitution. For example, in the areas of appointments, the president has the power to appoint some persons in key positions such as the governor of the Central Bank, Inspector General of Police, Comptroller General of Immigration, Service Chiefs, Chairman of EFCC, etc. In a situation such as this, autocracy could occur because the president wields much power over the economy and security. When sycophants work with such a president, integrity could be compromised.

METHODOLOGY

This research uses secondary data to analysis and confirm the foreground and its objectives. This method is used because of its possibility to report, interpret, analyse and provide valuable insights into the complexities of the problems. It is also adaptable to capture and review existing literatures and other references, towards arriving at conclusions and results that proffer recommendations.

After identifying the research topic, the sources for this research were drawn from books, journals and internet materials. Online sources from newspapers have been extensively used because they provided the information that are yet to be vigorously and academically discussed. The awards and naming of infrastructures which are mentioned, were analysed with existing facts and reports with combination of other existing data and statistics. This offered the opportunity to make comparisons and further explorations towards the suggestions that evolved.
The samples of leaders have been selected from four categories of persons - those who either fought for independence; led the military or civilian governments; elected into office as governors or senators, or appointed by presidents.

DISCUSSIONS

You have selected different leaders from the past president both civilian and military, current president, governors, senators, ministers, individuals . What are the criteria for selection and comparison? What are your inclusion and exclusion criteria?

May be in the 1970s and 1980s, merit were used but today, a lot of things have changed. Could this be connected to corruption, bad leadership or what ?

Some leaders from both military and civilian governments have been used as samples to represent the four categories mentioned as a way of testing the issues of favouritism and sycophancy in awards and naming of infrastructures, across various forms of leadership. The first category includes people like Obafemi Awolowo and Nnamdi Azikiwe who used their passion for country to fight for her independence. Though there are several of them in this category, this paper is not intended to list all of them. Two of them were selected because they also appeared on the currency notes of Nigeria amongst others. The second category of people are those who became heads of state in the military era. That is the category of General Sani Abacha and General Muhammadu Buhari (who also served as civilian president). Both of them were randomly selected. The third category is made up of those that served in civilian governments through elections but had various controversies in the course of their services. This include the likes of Bola Ahmed Tinubu, James Onanefe Ibori, Senator Ishaku Elisha Abbo, Orji Uzor Kalu and Godswill Obot Akpabio. The governors of Plateau, Imo, Niger and Ogun states were used as samples to confirm actions of sycophancy in the system of governance. The fourth category include those that were appointed and received honours. The honours received by one (Wole Soyinka) were on positive grounds while the other one (Abdulrasheed Bawa), was on a negative ground.

Obafemi Awolowo (6 March 1909 – 9 May 1987)Obafemi Awolowo was an exemplary politician who merited the institutions and infrastructures that were named after him. He was a Nigerian nationalist and politician who played a key role in the realization of the Nigerian independence through the struggle of Nigeria`s independence movement between 1957–1960 (Britanica, 2024) after writing the book titled *Path to Nigerian Freedom* in 1947. In 1950–51 he founded the political party known as the Action Group with which he called for the end to British rule. His active politics later took him to the position of leader of the opposition in the federal House of Representatives. Awolowo later became the leader of the Unity Party of Nigeria where he contested. for president in the elections of 1979 and 1983.
Awolowo was imprisoned in 1963, based on the allegation that he conspired to overthrow the government. In 1966, General Yakubu Gowon granted him pardon and he was later appointed as the Federal Commissioner of Finance and Vice Chairman of the Federal Executive Council.

The Nigerian currency known as the *Naira, was* replaced with the Nigerian pound in 1973 through the instrumentality of Awolowo (The Inner Temple, n.d).
Many years after his demise, Awolowo holds a pride of place as one of the patriarchs of today`s Nigeria.

He served in various positions such as Federal Commissioner for Finance, Vice Chairman of the Federal Executive Council, Chancellor of the University of Ife (which was later named as Obafemi Awolowo University) and Ahmadu Bello University. Several streets in Nigeria were named after him such as Awolowo roads in Sapele, (Delta state) in Ikeja, Ikoyi, Ikorodu (Lagos state), Ibadan (Oyo state), Ilorin (Kwara state), etc. Obafemi Awolowo deserved the honour. His photograph is on the one hundred Naira currency note of Nigeria.

Nnamdi Azikiwe November 16, 1904— May 11, 1996

He belonged to the generation of Nigerians that deserved to be honoured in life and after death. He was the first president of Nigeria after independence (1963–66). In 1944, he founded the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) on which platform he was elected as a member of the Nigerian Legislative Council. Thereafter, he became the premier of the Eastern region between 1954 and 59. Azikiwe took over the honorary position of president of the Senate and later became governor-general and president.
Azikiwe was one of the fathers of Nigerian nationalism as well as one of the major driving forces behind the country's independence in 1960 (Kumarasingham, 2020). In 1962, Azikiwe encouraged African leaders at a Lagos conference, on the need to establish an organization made up of African states. A charter was drafted which was known as the "Inter-African and Malagasy Organization" chaired by Azikiwe. It later evolved to be established in May 1963 and known as the Organisation of African Unity. The name was changed to the African Union in 2002.

Apart from various traditional titles such as the Nnanyelugo of Onitsha (1946), Oziziani Obi (1962), Owelle-Osowa-Anya of Onitsha (1972), several institutions and infrastructures were named after him (Pulse, 2017). They include the Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka Nnamdi Azikiwe international Airport, Abuja; Nnamdi Azikiwe University Teaching Hospital Nnewi; Nnamdi Azikiwe road, Port-Harcourt, Nnamdi Azikiwe street, Nnamdi Azikiwe Library Nsukka, Nnamdi Azikiwe road, Kaduna; Nnamdi Azikiwe road Idumota Lagos; Nnamdi Azikiwe Road, Bauchi State; Nnamdi Azikiwe Way, Abuja, etc. His photograph is on the five hundred Naira currency note of Nigeria. His awards and national recognitions cannot in any way be considered as consequences of sycophancy.

Sani Abacha 20 September 1943 – 8 June 1998

He was a Nigerian military dictator who came into power through a coup and ruled with an heavy hand between 1993 and 1998 when he died. He executed environmental activist Ken Saro-Wiwa in November 1995 and other political opponents (BBC, 1998). He charged Wole Soyinka in absentia for treason and Moshood Abiola was jailed for declaring himself as president after winning the presidential elections of 1993. He was detained and died mysteriously during the regime of Abacha (Human Rights Watch, 1996). Abacha also jailed a former head of state (1976–79) Olusegun Obasanjo for treason. Abacha was described as one of the twentieth centuries` most corrupt dictators. He was an insatiable kleptocrat who allegedly embezzlement an estimated US$5 billion which he and his family hid abroad in Switzerland, as well as in other jurisdictions including Liechtenstein, the United Kingdom and the United

States (Barrett, 2024). Abacha reportedly created a personal security force of 3,000 men who were trained in North Korea. He announced the coup that removed the democratically-elected government of Shehu Shagari in 1983 and announced the coup that removed Muhammadu Buhari in 1985. Some civilians were in support of Abacha during his attempt to transmute from military head of state to civilian president. They used sycophancy and the denigration of the opposition. Walter Ofonagoro, the Minister of Information had no reservations when he said that *Some characters calling themselves pro-democracy groups have been sponsored by the Western world to make noise here and cause trouble, but they are being ignored because they only have nuisance value. Hence, there is no opposition; every Nigerian is with us. This is the achievement of Abacha's administration,* (Tell, 1995). This sycophancy further emboldened Abacha.

Naming various infrastructures after Abacha preserves his dangerous legacies, promotes corruption and coup plotting. For example, the Sani Abacha Road in Port Harcourt, Rivers state, was named after him. As of 2023, Rivers state is the third largest producer of crude oil in Nigeria (Within Nigeria, 2023). Ironically, it was during the regime of Abacha that all the four refineries in Nigeria - Port Harcourt, Warri and Kaduna - packed up. Since then, Nigeria has been importing fuel. Naming important infrastructures after him in an oil-producing region which he impoverished, was abhorrent.

In 1998 a multi-purpose stadium with a capacity of 16,000 was named after General Sani Abacha in Kano state. An area of the stadium is now notorious for the sale and use of illicit drugs such as *Cannabis, Kush, and different types of pills like Rochi (Rohypnol), Exol 5, Tramadol, and Diazepam* (Daily Trust, 2024). *General Sani Abacha Specialist Hospital in Damaturu, Yobe State in north-east Nigeria* is another edifice named after Abacha. The peculiar aspect of naming infrastructures after this obviously corrupt dictator is that this aberration continued after his demise. It means that people saw nothing wrong in what he did. Even in death, he was honoured.

President Muhammadu Buhari

In display of unbridled sycophancy, various infrastructures were name after President Muhammadu when he was in office. Buhari was a military head of state who overthrew a democratically elected government through a coup and forcefully came into power in 1983 before he was overthrown in 1985. After retirement, he contested elections several times to be civilian president but to avail. After he lost the 2011 elections, his supporters went on rampage. *The protests degenerated into violent riots or sectarian killings in the northern states of Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Niger, Sokoto, Yobe, and Zamfara. Relief officials estimated that more than 65,000 people have been displaced* and it *left more than 800 people dead* (Human Rights Watch, 2011). He contested elections in 2003, 2007 and 2011 and eventually became a civilian president between 2015 and 2023. In his tumultuous years in office, he left a legacy of kidnapping, massive corruption and an economy which was referred to as dead. The insecurity in Nigeria was so tragic that as much as 63,111 people were killed during his eight years in office (Punch, 2023). Buhari met a public debt of $60bn and left a debt of $150bn. As of 2020, Nigeria had an unemployment rate of 33.3%. Before Buhari took over, that figure was less than 10%. He left Nigerians less secured, poorer and more in debt than when he came to office in 2015 (Orjinmo, 2023).

Buhari left the power of the naira terribly weaker than he met it. At the Central Bank of Nigeria's official window, the naira has weakened by 264 (57.26 percent) to 461 per dollar as of May 16, 2023 from 197/$ in 2015 when Buhari assumed office (Ashike, 2023). This was

the same man who was desperate to be a civilian president after being part of a military coup that made him a military head of state. Does it mean that he had nothing good to offer?
On the other hand, Buhari disobeyed court orders and kept activists and protesters in detention. He was accused of a *brazen disregard for the rule of law and human rights, ignoring Nigerian judges on, at least 40 occasions* (International Center for Investigative Reporting, 2023).
He spent state resources for his medical care in the United Kingdom without disclosing his ailment.Throughout his tenure, he spent 225 days on medical trips and visited 40 countries (Angbulu, 2022) without making meaningful impact on Nigeria.
He appointed himself as minister of petroleum and *437,000 barrels of crude oil was stolen on a daily basis, while the country experienced 99 serial collapse of the national power grid. By and large, Buhari failed simply because he lacked the wherewithal to govern.* (Council on Foreign Relations, 2023). Nigeria struggled economically after Buhari left office, that the National Security Adviser Mallam Nuhu Ribadu, declared that former President Muhammadu Buhari's administration bankrupted Nigeria (Arise News, 2023).
When the controversial2023 presidential election result was finally announced in favour of Bola Tinubu who was Buhari`s candidate, it left Nigerians more divided and the electoral process less trustworthy.

Despite his many failures, various infrastructures were named after Buhari while he was in office. A peculiar trace of sycophancy in Nigeria, is that when some state governors seek a second term in office, they are quickly name infrastructures after the sitting president as a way of soliciting his support for endorsement. This is common when the governor and the president are in the same political party. For example, in 2018, governor Simon Lalong of Plateau state named a street after Buhari. He was in the same political party known as the All Progressives Congress and he was working towards a second term. In the words of Lalong, *We are pleased to inform you that the Mararaban Jama'a road is a federal road that has been abandoned for a very long time; it is one of the projects that was inherited by my administration and it has been completed today*. *The road will be named as President Muhammadu Buhari Way, from Jos South to Jos, the state capital (*The Sun, 2018).

Governor Dapo Abiodun of Ogun state also named the Sagamu-Abeokuta Express Way and an Estate after Buhari. During the ceremony, Buhari used the opportunity to endorse Abiodun for a second term in office. They also belonged to the same political party.
In another instance, Buhari previously named an expressway in the nation's capital after the Niger Republic President, Issoufou Mahamadou (Arise News, 2021). According to Buhari, it was in recognition of Mahamadou`s contribution to peace in Africa. Many Nigerians disagreed and felt that the action was unjustified. In return, a highway was named in Niamey the Niger Republic capital, after President Muhammadu Buhari. In less than a month, Nigeriens defaced the street in condemnation of the honour on Buhari, which they felt was a misplaced decision. According to the people, Buhari was *a criminal* (Peoples Gazette, 2022).

In September 2022, in anticipation of endorsement for a second term in office, Governor Hope Uzodimma of Imo state renovated a road which he named as Muhammadu Buhari Drive.
Other structures named after Buhari while he was in office, were all displays of sycophancy. The structures include the Muhammadu Buhari Specialist Hospital in Kano - named by Governor Ibrahim Shekarau of Kano state; the Muhammadu Buhari Police Hospital which was commissioned on the 23rd of January 2018 when Inspector General of police Ibrahim Kpotun Idris, an appointee of Buhari was in office; the Muhammadu Buhari Main Library, Kwara State University, etc.
When Buhari finally left office, no infrastructure was named after him thereafter.

Bola Ahmed Tinubu

He is a Nigerian politician who became the 16th president of Nigeria in 2023 after a very controversial election which were conducted amid a very heated and bitter campaign season. He was the governor of Lagos state from 1999 to 2007, and represented Lagos West in the senate in 1992 before it was dissolved.
Tinubu holds two traditional chieftaincy titles as the "Asiwaju" of Lagos and the "Jagaba" of the Borgu Emirate in Niger State (The Economist, 2017).
In 1993, his assets were frozen by the government of the United States in relation to a court case asserting that the American government had "probable cause" to believe Tinubu's American bank accounts held the proceeds of heroin dealing. He forfeited $460,000 later that year. The case followed a probe by the Internal Revenue Service and other agencies into a trafficking network involving Nigerian suppliers. Court documents and reporting on the case suggested he worked in league with two Chicago heroin dealers. (Clowes, 2022).

A street was named in Lekki, Lagos as Bola Ahmed Tinubu Way based on his politics.
In May 2024, to mark his one year in office as president, Nyesom Wike the minister of the Federal Capital Territory named the Southern Parkway road in Abuja after President Bola Tinubu. Many persons saw this as political sycophancy for somebody who was just one year in office. Nigerians were already complaining and protesting about the harsh economic policies, insecurity and corruption under the Tinubu administration. There was no achievement or basis to name a road after Tinubu. Wike abused his office by that action which he intended to attract more favours from Tinubu. The Bola Ahmed Tinubu Primary Health Center, Lagos was another mark of honour. In March 2024 when Bola Tinubu was less than a year in office, the Niger State Governor, Mohammed Bago renamed the Abubakar Imam International Airport after Tinubu. Thereafter he named the State Polytechnic Zungeru, after the late literary icon, Abubakar Imam. In the words of governor Bago, *the State Government under my leadership has been enjoying tremendous support from the Tinubu-led government and the President is an astute politician and a great leader that should be celebrated* (Punch, 2024). Mohammed Bago became governor on the platform of the APC - same political party with Tinubu. He believed that by honouring Tinubu against all odds, it will be easy for him to be endorsed and supported towards returning to office in 2027. Bago must have learned from the support received from the presidency for a second term in office when governor Dapo Abiodun of Ogun state named an highway and estate after Buhari.
The irony about Bago`s sycophancy, is that Niger state was under siege by terrorists at this period. Some communities have been deserted because of continuing terrorist attacks. Most of the people took shelter at different camps for Internally Displaced Persons located in Erena, Gwada, Sarkin-Pawa and Kuta. *Farming communities suffering from bandits' and terrorist attacks in Shiroro, Munya and Rafi LGAs of Niger State are paying millions of naira "dialogue fee" to their killers with a promise to allow them access to their farms for cultivation* (Daily Trust, 2024). In August 2023, thirty six soldiers were ambushed and killed in Niger state by terrorists. Renaming an airport after somebody who has been weak in securing the country through his role as commander-in-chief, become very questionable. Another pathetic angle to this situation, is that, when Tinubu was busy commissioning the renamed airport in Niger state, 137 students who were kidnapped from their school in Kaduna state (CNN, 2024), were still in kidnappers` den. Kaduna and Niger state share a common boundary. Tinubu did not have the empathy to visit the community where the students were kidnapped. Kaduna also has a boundary with Abuja the federal capital territory where Tinubu`s office and residence are

located. Rather, than visit Kaduna state to commiserate with the people, he flew into Niger state from Abuja and quickly returned to Abuja after the commissioning of the airport.

Few months after the renaming of the airport in Niger state, governor Ahmad Aliyu of Sokoto state took sycophancy to another level by naming a street in Sokoto, after the son of Tinubu known as Oluwaseyi Tinubu. This street was was named after this young man despite the fact that he had no national or local accomplishments. Again, the idea was to curry-favour his father for political gratifications. Indigenes were furious at the decision of the governor. They described the action as *denigrating* (The Cable, 2024).

James Onanefe Ibori

He was the governor of Delta state of Nigeria from 29 May 1999 to 29 May 2007 on the platform of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). He was involved in massive fraud which impoverished the people he was supposed to govern and to provide for. Most of the loots were stashed in foreign countries such as the United Kingdom, United Arab Emirates and South Africa. In April 2010, Ibori fled Nigeria, prompting the EFCC to request the assistance of interpol who arrested him in Dubai on 13 May 2010 (Punch, 2010) and whisked him to the United Kingdom where he was arraigned for fraud totaling at least £50m ($77m). In 2012, Ibori was sentenced to 13 years in prison for money laundering and massive looting of the treasury of Delta state. After the sentencing hearing, Sue Patten, head of the Crown Prosecution Service central fraud group, said it would bid to confiscate the assets Ibori had acquired *at the expense of some of the poorest people in the world* (BBC, 2012). In 2023, a decade after his sentencing, £101.5 million was confiscated as part of Ibori`s loot laundered into the UK with the help of close associates (Spot Light, 2023).

When Ibori was finally released from prison after serving his jail term, he received a rousing welcome in his Oghara home town (Punch, 2017) with several traditional titles from various parts of the state. Sycophancy took center stage. For example, Ibori was honoured with the traditional title of Ezi-Oyi Anioma (the great and highly cherished friend of the Anioma people), by HRM Obi Dr. Emmanuel Efeizomor, 11 (Punch, 2017). The Ijaw nation also rallied at a reception in Akugbene Town to honour Ibori, with a chieftaincy title (This Day, 2018). His Royal Majesty King Oweipa Jones Ere III, The Ebenanwei of Ogboin Kingdom honoured Ibori with the Opu Ekie title and honoured the late Alamieyeseigha, who was also involved in fraud, with a posthumous chieftaincy title (Independent, 2024). Several other titles followed.

Despite looting Delta state, Ibori receives life pension from the Delta state government for being a former governor of the state. The Pension Rights and other Benefits Law was approved by Ibori in 2005 when he was governor. The law was amended in 2009 as the Delta State Governor and Deputy Governor Pension Rights and Other Benefits (Amendment) Law, 2009. The law makes provision for ex-governors to be paid allowances and other benefits pegged at N50m yearly. It also include a furnished duplex in Delta State or any other state in the country worth over N300 million; 350% gratuity of his basic salary for the first tenure; Gratuity of 450% of his basic salary for second tenure; Pension of 70% salary of first term; Pension of 80% salary of second term; Medical treatment for him and members of his immediate family; Two vehicles, including a utility vehicle, not below the sum of N20 million each, every two years; Two armed policemen and one Department of State Security officer; 15 days' annual vacation in any place of his choice and other benefits; An office with four aides, each of the four domestic workers will earn N100,000 monthly (Daily Post 2023). These are happening in a state that is heavily indebted to the tune of N334. 90 billion as of the first quarter of 2024 (National Bureau of Statistics, 2024). 30.9 percent of Nigerians lived below the international extreme poverty line of $2.15 per person per day. World Bank projections states that about

40.7 percent of Nigerians are estimated to live below the international poverty line by the end of 2024 (World Bank, 2024).

When the young generation see how people who were involved in fraud are being honoured, they become more attracted to crime. The EFCC has arrested several youths who are involved in fraud from different parts of Delta state state. In 2023, the commission arrested 52 suspected internet fraudsters at their in Abraka, a university town in Delta State (EFCC, 2023). 20 fraudsters were also arrested in Sapele; 41 in Warri; 22 in Ughelli; others in Agbor, etc.

Senator Ishaku Elisha Abbo

He was the senator who represented Adamawa North Senatorial District in Adamawa State in Nigeria`s 10th national assembly, on the platform of the All Progressives Congress. In May 2019, in a video that went viral, Abbo was seen assaulting a lady at an adult toy shop in Abuja. Abbo was found guilty by the court and was ordered to pay ₦50 million to Osimibibra Warmate, the shop-owner (Center for Investigative Journalism, 2020).

Despite his public anti-social behaviour, Abo was later rewarded as senate committee chairman on Culture and Tourism (This Day, 2023). Few months after the incidence at the shop, sycophants honoured Abo with an "ICON at Democracy" award by the Intercommunity Awareness for Change and Development Initiative, IACDI (Pulse, 2019). He also received the “Excellence in Leadership” award by the Royalty Academy Numan (Vanguard, 2019). It was reported that he probably bought the awards to save his face and to neutralize the impact of the offence he committed at the adult toy shop. He further received an award as the Patron North East New life for all Gospel singers (Daily News Time, 2024). Violence against women in Nigeria has been a huge societal challenge. Women in Nigeria are still at risk of various forms of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), as the country recorded over 27,000 cases in five states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) between 2020 and 2023. This has been worsened by the fact that, despite being a signatory to the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, also known as the Maputo Protocol, Nigeria’s failure to domesticate and implement its provisions has continued to pose devastating consequences on girls and women in the country (Premium Times, 2023).

Orji Uzor Kalu

He served as governor of Abia state from 29 May 1999 to 29 May 2007. In 2019 he was elected to represent Abia North Senatorial District in the senate. Kalu was convicted by the Lagos Division of the Federal High Court on 5 December 2019 and sentenced to 12 years in prison for N7.65 billion fraud (AfricaNews, 2019). He was held in custody at the Ikoyi prisons in Lagos. On 8 May 2020, the Supreme Court of Nigeria ruled that his trial was wrongly conducted and released him from prison while ordering a retrial (Premium Times, 2020). His retrial was not conducted probably because he was a member of the ruling party known as the All Progressives Congress (APC). It is on record that during a campaign rally, the former National Chairman of the All Progressives Congress, Adams Oshiomhole, urged members of the opposition party to join the APC so that their sins could be forgiven (Punch, 2019). It literally means that, no matter the crime or fraud you committed against the people and government of Nigeria, once you join their political party, your crimes will for forgiven.

As if the APC was dancing to the tune of Adams Oshiomhole, Kalu was rewarded by the national assembly. On 8 August 2023, he was named the Chief Whip of the Senate and chairman, Senate committee on privatization in the 10th senate (This Day, 2023). Though Oshiomhole later said that his statement was twisted, he also made other similar careless and

undignified statements. For example, when he was the governor of Edo state, he told a road side seller who was a widow, to *go and die* (Independent, 2024). He later apologised. When Oshiomhole was vigorously campaigning for Senator Monday Okpebholo in the 2024 governorship elections, he called Betsy Obaseki the wife of the sitting governor (member of the opposition party known as the Peoples Democratic Party, PDP) *childless.....this is a woman who has no child. Between her and Obaseki, they have no child; they are childless* (TVC News, 2024). Such reckless statements from somebody who make laws at the national assembly as a senator, promotes hate speech and division. When Kalu became a senator, he extensively publicized constituency projects on facebook as if he was spending his private funds. For this, his followers frequently congratulated him in ignorance and sycophancy (facebook.com/orjiuzorkalu01).

Godswill Obot Akpabio

He is a Nigerian politician and lawyer who was the governor of Akwa-Ibom state between 2007 to 2015. He became a senator in 2015 and emerged as the Senate Minority Leader. He contested and lost re-election in 2019. Prior to the 2019 senatorial election, he threatened violence when he promised that the election will be likened to the 1939 invasion of Poland by Nazi Germany under Adolf Hitler. In his words, *in 2019 Warsaw shall see war and war shall see Warsaw. The return will be victory...*(PMNews, 2018). He was minister for Niger Delta Affairs between 2019 and 2022 when he resigned to seek election as president in the 2023 election. He stepped down at the election venue for Bola Tinubu and opted to be in the senate. His emergence as a senator representing Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District, despite contesting as a president, contradicted the electoral law which does not permit a candidate to contest for two positions in one electoral cycle. It was a surprise to many Nigerians when the supreme court ruled in his favour. Godswill Akpabio and Ahmed Lawan the former senate president, did not contest senatorial primary elections in their respective constituencies as a result of their involvement in the Presidential Primaries of the All Progressives Congress (APC), the apex court ordered the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to recognise them as candidates for the February 25 elections (Daily Trust, 2023). He later emerged as the 15th senate president of Nigeria in 2023 after a controversial election.
As governor, Akpabio was accused of looting around N100 billion and was under investigation by the EFCC. As minister of the Niger Delta Affairs, he allegedly diverted N19.25 billion meant for the development of the region to his personal accounts. He was also accused of awarding contracts worth N81.5 billion to his cronies and relatives without due process (Nairametrics, 2024). When the forensic report was released, Akpabio got hold of it in September 2021 and handed it over to Abubakar Malami the then-Minister of Justice (People`s Gazette, 2021). Though Malami said that over 13,000 projects which were executed under the supervision of the NDDC were compromised despite receiving N6tn in 19 years (Punch, 2021), details of the forensic report was never released to the public. There were insinuations that Akpabio bribed Malami not to release the indicting report.

In all of these, various infrastructures were named after Godswill Akpabio. For example, the Godswill Akpabio International Stadium which is a 30,000 capacity national sports arena and multi-purpose center located in Uyo, the state capital of Akwa-Ibom state. The stadium was built in 2012 when Akpabio was governor and it was formally known as the Akwa Ibom International Stadium or Nest of Champions before it was renamed on May 29, 2015 by governor Udom Gabriel Emmanuel the successor to Akpabio. The audience was apparently disillusioned and disappointed at the renaming and *some of those who had gathered were heard*

discussing among themselves that the governor's decision was not a good way to start his administration as it portends his being a stooge to his predecessor (Daily Post, 2015).
It was probably in sycophantic appreciation of the support which Akpabio gave to Emmanuel during his election. The aberration where people with cases of corruption are recycled into the system of governance, occurs because of the delays in court processes. Will the national assembly be courageous enough to take concrete steps towards establishing separate courts that could prosecute corruption cases within the shortest possible time?

Wole Soyinka

He is a Nigerian playwright, novelist, poet, and essayist in the English language. He is the recipient of the 1986 Nobel Prize in Literature thereby becoming the first sub-Saharan African to win the Prize in literature (Aljazeera, 2019).
He was active in Nigeria's political history and its campaign for independence from the colonial rule of Britain. In 1965 he held up the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation's western region studios in Ibadan at gunpoint, in protest against an "electoral robbery". He swapped a tape of a speech by the new premier for one telling him to "get out of town", and spent three months in detention for this swashbuckling gambit (Guardian, 2002). He was later commissioned to write a play for the celebration of Nigeria`s independence in 1960 and Soyinka came up with *A Dance of the Forests which was an allegory to political stillbirth.*
Literary tools and courageously spoken words were his weapons. *Often he's used those "weapons" to take aim at oppression, corruption, the legacy of colonialism and slavery, both in his work and more overtly in his political activism*. *He has been in and out of detention due to his political belief and political activism* (CNN, 2009). He founded the National Association of Seadogs (Pyrates Confraternity) with six other students in 1952 at the University College Ibadan (National Association of Seadogs, n.d).
He was antagonistic to military regimes and stood against Sani Abacha the military dictator. In awareness that his life was at risk, in November 1994, Soyinka fled from Nigeria on a motorcycle via the border with Benin (Guardian, 2007) and then went to the United States on exile. The only notable time that Soyinka served in government was when he was appointed by former head of state, General Ibrahim Babaginda as the first board chairman of the Federal Road Safety Corp, FRSC. The corp was established in February 1988, through the Federal Road Safety Commission through Decree No. 45 of the 1988 (Federal Road Safety Corp, n.d).

The Wole Soyinka Annual Lecture Series was founded in 1994 *aimed at promoting good governance, social justice and the advancement of democratic ideals in Nigeria and beyond* (Wole Soyinka Lectures, 1994).
Soyinka has won over 30 awards and recognitions in and outside Nigeria, including the national honour of Nigeria known as the Commander of the Order of the Federal Republic (CFR). His awards and the structures named after him had no political undertone. They were all results of his literary prowess and outstanding contributions towards a justiciable Nigeria. He is the recipient of six honorary doctorate degrees. In 2011, the African Heritage Research Library and Cultural Centre built a writers' enclave in his honour in Adeyipo Village, Ibadan, Nigeria (Okoh, 2018). In 2018 the University of Ibadan`s arts theatre was renamed as Wole Soyinka Theatre (Sahara Reporters, 2018). In July 2024, President Bola Tinubu renamed the National Arts Theatre in Iganmu, Lagos after Soyinka in commemoration of his 90th birthday (Vanguard, 2024). Soyinka merited all his awards by reason of his hard work.
However, after participating in various protests and speaking against bad governance during military and civilian administrations, he was heavily criticized for being active at a point but became silent to bad governance when his friend Bola Tinubu became president.

Abdulrasheed Bawa

He is a detective and law enforcement agent who was appointed to serve as chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC). He served from 24 February 2021 to 14 June 2023. His appointment was suspended by President Bola Tinubu over allegations of corruption (BBC, 2023). He was detained for 134 days without trial. It was believed that he refunded part of what he stole, based on plea bargain. The level of secrecy with which his looting was handled by the government was equally suspicious and unlawful. It made the fight against corruption appear like mere rhetoric. When stolen funds which are recovered are not published, it makes it possible for such funds to be easily re-looted. In a related circumstance, the High Court ordered the federal government to account for $5bn recovered Abacha's loot (Punch, 2023) but Tinubu disobeyed the court order. It was very disappointing that Bawa who was given the responsibility to fight and prosecute corruption, became corruption personified. In 2021, Bawa took over the helms of affairs at the commission under similar circumstances when his predecessor,Ibrahim Magu, was suspended from office by then-President Muhammadu Buhari, over allegations of corruption (Premium Times, 2023). It was while he was in office, insidiously indulging in corrupt practices, that Bawa received an award of "distinction and quality service" from Service compact with all Nigerians (SERVICOM). Prior to this award, the EFCC was honoured as the best parastatal in service delivery in Nigeria, while Bawa was equally honoured as the second best Chief Executive for his commitment to improved and customer-focused service delivery (EFCC, n.d). Apart from sheer sycophancy, the criteria for arriving at such awards are always unclear and unreliable. Some of such criteria are either politicized or expected to curry favour. Immediately Bawa was released from detention, just like James Ibori, his people saw it as their turn to honour their son for corruption. Therefore, the ex-EFCC boss Bawa, was conferred with Kebbi's traditional title of 'Tafidan Jega', by the Jega Emirate Council of Kebbi State (Punch, 2024).

On several occasions, EFCC had paraded people who were involved in various forms of fraud. However, it deliberately refused to parade its officials who were involved in worse forms of fraud. It is actions like this that contributed to how Nigeria is rated in the corruption index. Nigeria is the 145 least corrupt nation out of 180 countries, according to the 2023 Corruption Perceptions Index (Transparency International, 2024).

What is the implication of this discussion on good governance in Nigeria? This has not been addressed

There are various implications of favouritism and sycophancy in the government of Nigeria. When cronies are appointed into office because of favouritism, mediocrity is enthroned above competence. For example, just after his first year in office, there were several calls from Nigerians that president Tinubu should remove some of his non-performing ministers (This Day, 2024). Some of them were either familiar persons with whom he worked when he was governor of Lagos state, or those that were appointed allegedly because they supported his election campaigns by making huge financial donations. It was based on this situation that somebody like Bello Matawalle, a school teacher who had no security experience, was appointed as minister of state for defense. He was alleged to have heavily supported Tinubu financially during his presidential campaign. When Matawalle left office as governor of Zamfara state, he was accused by his successor that he stole 50 official vehicles while leaving office and misappropriated 250 billion naira from the coffers of the impoverished state. The court later ordered that Matawalle must return the vehicles he stole from the government (Daily Post, 2023). These allegations attracted further investigation by the EFCC (Vanguard, 2023). Based on favouritism, Tinubu did not bother about the calls from Nigerians for the removal of Matawalle from office and to call for further investigations into his alleged corrupt practices

and involvement in terrorism. The incompetence of Mattawalle in office began to show because security worsened in Nigeria. Between May 29, 2023 when President Tinubu was inauguration and 7 September 2024, Nigeria saw *a dramatic rise in violence, with 13,346 people killed and 9,207 abducted across the country. This surge in violence, spanning 667 local government areas, is attributed to terrorism, banditry, farmer-herder conflicts, and other forms of social upheaval* (Punch, 2024). The insecurity which worsened in Nigeria, is the consequence of favouritism. Another dimension to the accusations against Matawalle was that he was a sponsor of terrorism. This allegations were made by his successor (September, 2024), by Bello Turji Kachalla, a notorious leader of terrorists (Politics Nigeria, 2024) and by others who confidently and publicly challenged him to prove otherwise. Favouritism lead to a general conflict-of-interest.

Another consequence of favouritism and sycophancy is that the persons involved usually exert a greater influence over an official than a stranger might do. They know how to praise-sing those in government in order to get appointed or receive special and undue favours. When they are finally appointed, they know who to share when they become corrupt. They share their proceeds of corruption with top government officials who are capable of shielding them in times of crises. When they get the support of such top-ranking officers, they may end up using plea bargain to refund some of their loots. Such persons may be suspended from office but are never prosecuted. On the long run, the economy of the country suffers as a consequence of this interaction. Two examples will suffice. The Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Alleviation Minister Betta Edu was initially suspended from office over her alleged diversion of more than 585 million naira ($640,000) of public money into a personal bank account. It was later discovered that the missing money was more than that. 30 billion naira ($24m) was later recovered as part of a corruption probe into her activities as the funds were traced to more than 50 bank accounts (BBC, 2024). She was never prosecuted for corruption. It was believed that she had some accomplices in higher offices who might have shielded her from prosecution. Meanwhile, the Public and Private Development Centre (PPDC) reported that *53,000 inmates are awaiting trials across 253 custodial centres in the country* (Daily Trust, 2024). These are people who committed lesser offences than Edu.

Secondly, after detention for misappropriating stolen funds, Abdulrashhed Bawa, the chairman of EFCC was never prosecuted. His predecessor Ibrahim Magu was also accused of corruption during the administration of president Muhammadu Buhari. Though the panel that was set up to investigate Magu found him guilty, he was not prosecuted (The Street Journal, 2022). Rather, while on purported suspension from office, he was promoted to the position of Assistant Inspector General of police (Premium Times, 2022). Magu was severally rejected twice for confirmation by the senate but due to favouritism, then-president Buhari, for reasons best known to him, insisted that Magu must continue to stay in office. Corruption was the outcome of that insistence. What Magu refunded was never published. These actions have colossal consequences on the economy of the country.

When younger generations see how corrupt government officials are being promoted or left off the hook, they end up in dilemma between what is good and acceptable, and what is wrong but `acceptable`.

CONCLUSION

Those who looted the economy of Nigeria are walking freely because they have backing from those in higher offices. Those that are arraigned by the anti-corruption agencies invest in ensuring that technically, the cases take a very long time. This is happening because of teleguided delays and several adjournments in the court processes. On the whole, this is a

challenge to the fight against corruption in Nigeria. Some of those involved in corruption were appointed as a result of either favouritism or sycophancy, despite their being incapacitated to perform effectively in the offices they are assigned to. Development is further impeded when some public office holders who looted the treasury receive unmerited awards and life pensions in the midst of high unemployment and poverty among the majority of the masses. Such awards are either given to them when they are in or out of office.

Recognition for failure has led to the increase in the number of youths who venture into fraud as a way of survival. Thereafter, the same people that destroyed the economy and political system, are recycled into political offices because they indulge in sycophancy and make financial donations to candidates who aspire into public offices. This is with the expectation that they will be compensated with appointments when their candidates win. Some governors that seek second term in office, indulge in unbriddled sycophancy by naming public infrastructures after sitting presidents. Their goal is to curry personal favours towards political appointments or endorsement and support to return into office. When sycophants surround a president, the presidents become too powerful and autocratic against the rule of law. Concrete actions and new laws must be taken to address the aberrations caused by favouritism and sycophancy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

National infrastructures must not be named after serving officials. When they perform well in office, such honours could be awarded after their time in office.

The senate may consider passing a law that prohibits persons with corruption cases from being given any form of award in and out of office. Such persons must not be allowed to contest elections into political offices until their cases have been concluded.

Separate courts must be established to prosecute corruption cases within the shortest possible time. This will prevent corrupt persons from being recycled into the system of governance.

Life pension paid to former governors must be stopped. Such funds should be invested in areas that could generate employment for the youths.

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