**Corruption and Lawlessness in Nigeria’s Unstable Democracy**

**Introduction to Nigerian Corruption**

* Legacy of colonialism and idealism of independent Nigeria
* Ethno-religious schisms undermine trust. Mutual suspicions beget a culture of fear. Mutual antagonisms beget opportunism.
* Endemic poverty amidst oil wealth
* According to TI, Nigeria is in bottom quintile.
* In 2000, suffused with euphoria, 84% of Nigerians reported satisafction with the their new democracy. Today less than 20% percent of Nigerians are satisfied with their democracy. (Afrobarometer).
* Nowhere is Nigeria’s democracy in deeper trouble than at **state and local levels**, where bruising contests for power take place in a bloody, winner-take-all system.

“Greedy politicians are literally killing their own people by stealing the money for health care, for schools, for clean water, for everything the state should provide its people.”   
 -Sola Adeyeye, Nigerian National Assembly Member

* Governors get their monthly cut of the national cake and have almost no one to answer to for how they spend that money.
  + Many governors steal with impunity
  + Buy loyalty of legislatures
  + Build patron-client networks
  + Buy elections
  + 2006-2007, 30 of 36 governors were under federal investigation for corruption, 6 were removed from office.

**The Puzzling Case of Ekiti 2007**

* Incumbent - Ayo Fayose: Governor of SW state of Ekiti 2003-2006
  + Fayose removed from office for diverting $100,000 to a US account and suspicion of ordering dozens of murders.
* Challenger - Kayode Fayemi: Doctorate in War Studies from King's College London.
  + Director of the Centre for Democracy & Development, Fellow of the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, OECD Consultant.
  + Lost bid for governor of Ekiti in 2007.
  + Won in 2011 and, again in 2018.
* “Since you continue to oppose Governor Fayose, we shall kill you. -THE FAYOSE M SQUAD”
* Fayemi tried to brush off the threat but six weeks later, another candidate for governor (a [World Bank](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/organizations/w/world_bank/index.html?inline=nyt-org) consultant) was bludgeoned to death in his bed.

“This is democracy at work in Nigeria…Murder and money, violence and fraud…Money is the language of Nigerian politics. As much as you want to get away from that, you also have to be mindful of those short-term things you must do.” – Dr. Fayemi

* Segun Oni won in 2007. Fayose refused to accept.
* 2014 Fayose won the governorship!
* 2020 EFCC extended Fayose’s years long trial for laundering N4.4 bil due to a missing witness.

**The EFCC: Institutions Matter?**

* **Economic and Financial Crimes Commission** (EFCC) est. in 2003 to combat corruption, fraud, money laundering, and other economic crimes.
* Mission to “rid Nigeria of Economic and Financial Crimes and to effectively coordinate the domestic effort of the global fight against money laundering and terrorist financing.’’
* Internet fraud & 419 scams
* President Obasanjo used the EFCC to divide and conquer his enemies. Later heads of state have tried to do the same.

**The Twisted Case of Abubakar and the INEC**

* **Independent National Electoral Commission** est. in 1999 const to safeguard elections
  + Ballot stuffing, intimidation, fraud, phantom voting booths, etc.
  + 1999 and 2003, even Obasanjo’s ally Jimmy Carter could not endorse his victories.
  + 2005-2010 INEC Chairman Maurice Iwu claimed the INEC was being guided by the president and the PDP. Charged with corruption, Iwu was removed from office by PDP President Goodluck Jonathan in 2010.
  + Those facing charges of corruption are barred from running for office. Section 137 of INEC states: “A person shall not be qualified for election to the office of President if he has been indicted for embezzlement or fraud by a Judicial Commission of Inquiry or an Administrative Panel of Inquiry…”
* 2006 - Obasanjo put in a bid to run for a third term. Atiku Abubakar, Obasanjo’s VP from 1999-2007 asked the Senate to investigate 127 impeachable offenses by Obasanjo, including the use of "phony accounts" for the president's political activities funded by the state oil company.
* Obasanjo unleashed INEC on Abubakar
* INEC members faced numerous death threats from Abubakar supporters.

“The onslaught by the Federal Government is not just against Atiku or the AC, but against all Nigerians as the ultimate goal of this PDP administration is either a stalemated election or no election at all…They know *what INEC has done is illegal*; they know we will challenge the action in court, and that indeed we are willing to go all the way to the Supreme Court…But here is the end game for these enemies of democracy and purveyors of anarchy: *When the court finally rules, they will plead there is no time to print 40 million ballot papers* hence elections cannot hold…**”**   
 - Action Congress Secretary, Alhaji Lai Mohammed

* Just days before the 2007 election Abubakar was cleared by the Supreme Court and allowed to run. His name was not on most ballots. Having gained only 7% of the vote, he came in third, losing to Yar’Adua.

**End Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS)**

* Police and military officers are underpaid (if paid at all)
* Set up illegal roadblocks, unwarranted searches, detain without warrants, rapes, and extort young Nigerian men who drive nice cars or use iPhones
* 2017, Nigerian activists, youth, and celebrities took to the streets in peaceful protest
* Trending videos and online activism #ENDSARS
* Amnesty Int. documented 82 cases of abuses and extrajudicial killings by SARS 2017-2020
* October 2020, the Nigerian Police Force announced it was dissolving SARS…