

Nigeria: The Politics of June 12: The Public Holiday and the Annulment

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Abstract

This paper examined the government's rationalisation for the declaration of June 12 as a national public holiday in Nigeria. June 12 is a significant date in Nigeria, being the date on which the annulment of the presidential election of 1993 took place. The identified problem is that while Nigerians have accepted June 12 as a national public holiday, and whereas many commentators, researchers and writers have written on the decision by the Federal government to shift democracy day from May 29 to June 12 to commemorate the annulment of the presidential election of June 12, 1993, none of them has written on the politics behind those declarations. In the course of the investigation, some questions were asked. They included: if the winner of the 1993 presidential election had been Alh Tofa, would IBB have annulled it, and why did Buhari declare June 12 a public holiday, 8 months to the 2019 general election? Adopting the historical methodology of political inquiry and decision-making frame of analysis, it was concluded that in admitting that Chief Abiola won the June 12, 1993, presidential election after 25 years and declaring June 12 as a national public holiday (8 months to the 2019 general election), Buhari and his administration were not benevolent but conscious of their interests.

Keywords: June 12, annulment, democracy day, national public holiday, NEC, LGBTQ.

Introduction

The world is inundated with several calendars, as there are diverse people and cultural backgrounds. Calendar, as a chart showing days, weeks and months of a year, does not just occur; there are, or there were, several considerations, including superstitions, religious festivals, and imperial influences that determined the introduction and use of a particular calendar (U.S. Naval Observatory, n.d.). There are six principal calendars in current use in the world. They are the Gregorian, Jewish, Islamic, Indian, Chinese and Julian calendars (U.S. Naval Observatory, n.d.). Nigeria uses the Gregorian calendar, and June is the sixth month of the Gregorian calendar. "June 12" is a popular phrase in Nigeria. Why and what happened on June 12? There are many June 12s

in each year for many centuries. Which June 12 are we talking about here? Let us turn to the answers to these questions.

General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida, alias IBB, (GCFR) (born August 17, 1941), is a Nigerian retired Nigerian Army General. He came to power as the Military Head of State in Nigeria on August 27, 1985, in a military coup d'état and later transformed himself into a Military President - the first and the only one in the life of Nigeria's political history (Udoh, 1997). That coup d'état overthrew the Military Government of General Muhammadu Buhari, who, on December 31, 1983, had overthrown the Civil Government led by the first Executive President of Nigeria, President Shehu Shagari of the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) (Udoh, 1997).

On assumption of office, Gen Babangida ruled Nigeria for a thumping eight years. Apart from Gen Yakubu Gowon, who ruled Nigeria for nine years, including the Civil War years and the years of rebuilding and reconstruction of the war-torn country, IBB was the longest Military Ruler in Nigeria (Udoh, 2007). For eight years of steering the economic, political and social re-engineering of Nigeria, IBB brought about several socio-political reforms in the country. On June 24, 1993, he annulled the Presidential Election conducted on June 12, 1993.

Events led to the declaration of June 12 as a public holiday in the Federal Republic of Nigeria by President Muhammadu Buhari on June 6, 2018. Some of those events include public cries, calls and demands for the immortalisation of Chief M.K.O. Abiola's name in Nigeria, sectional, regional and private commemoration of the infamous annulment of the Presidential Election of June 12, 1993, by President Babangida and his military junta regime. When he came to power, IBB and his regime built fantastic socio-political and economic institutions and structures which could have launched Nigeria into a gigantic economic and political limelight in Africa and the rest of the World; but unfortunately, he built those structures with the tax payers money with one hand and with the other, he pulled them down, demolished and destroyed them when it was time to put them into use (Okorie, 2021). One of the institutions established by Babangida's government was the National Electoral Commission (NEC), and one of the most significant and laudable strategies put in place by NEC, to midwife a new civil government, was the system of voting called "Open Secret Ballot". The Open Secret Ballot, otherwise called "Option A4", was a method of casting votes in an election during the regime of IBB. The method allows the electorate to line up in a single file, pick up a ballot paper, move to an enclosure within the polling booth and cast a vote without anyone else having knowledge as to which of the contestants the voter has cast the vote for. The National Electoral Commission, headed by Professor Humphrey Nwosu, designed that wonderful and beautiful voting system which successfully eliminated rigging, fear, intimidation, witch-hunting, etc, which were the features of the "Open Ballot" introduced by the same NEC in the previous elections, building up to the presidential election in June 1993.

The candidates who stood for election in the 1993 presidential poll were Chief Moshood Kashimawo Olawale (M.K.O) Abiola of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and Alhaji Bashir Tofa of the National Republican Convention (NRC). These two political parties were part of the structures which the IBB regime put in place to usher in a new civilian regime, as the military, supposedly, prepared to hand over rulership to the civilians after ten (10) consecutive uninterrupted years of military rule in the country.

On June 12, 1993, in the then 30 states of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, voters trooped out and cast their votes for the candidates of their choice. At the end of the collation of the ballots, the results (though not officially declared by the NEC, but widely known) showed that M.K.O. Abiola of the SDP clearly won the presidential poll with 8,341,309 votes, or 58.36% (Okorie, 2021; Egbejule, 2023). However, for reasons which Nigerians and those interested in African

political development are yet to understand, the IBB regime woke up on June 24, 1993 and announced the annulment of the election adjudged by Nigerians, election observers and the international community to be the most transparent, freest, fairest election in the chequered history of elections in Nigeria to date.

That annulment engendered ugly and unprecedented negative consequences. There were riots in many parts of Nigeria, particularly in the South-West region, where Chief M.K.O. Abiola hailed from. There was the formation of National Democratic Coalition (NDECO), there were political self-exiles, there were riots, there were deaths, there was the “mother of all strikes” - a national strike declared by the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC), there were other ugly negative consequences, actions, inactions and reactions that tended to destroy the polity.

On June 6, 2018 (8 months away from the 2019 presidential election), President Buhari announced that henceforth June 12 would be observed as a National Democracy Day as well as a public holiday in Nigeria in honour of the late Chief M.K.O. Abiola – the perceived winner of the June 12, 1993 presidential election (Historyville, 2023). It is true that politically, economically, socially, morally and legally, the unhealthy and absurd annulment of 1993 and the 2018 announcement of June 12 as a Democracy Day, writers, researchers, scholars and social commentators have written on the two Federal Government important political decisions/pronouncements – June 24, 1993 and June 6, 2018, respectively. However, none of these writers has touched the “politics” behind these pronouncements by the Federal Government, and particularly the “politics” played by the Northern oligarchy both in the military and civilian population; and most importantly, the way forward. That is exactly the task of the present paper.

Conceptualisations

The Politics of the Annulment of the Presidential Election of June 12, 1993

The word politics has been understood differently by different people and societies at different times. Bearing what is trending in Nigeria, particularly during and after the 2023 general election, if an average Nigerian on the street is asked what politics is, the person would most probably (depending on who the person is) reply that “politics is a dirty game” or that politics is played by “419” people (dupes). Another likely answer would be that politics is a dubious game of insincerity, cheating and robbery of the electorate’s political mandate. But for David Easton, politics is the “authoritative allocation of values.” (Roling et al., 2023). When one ponders, reflects and/or meditates deeply on this definition, one would agree that politics really has to do with the subjective allocation of society’s values by an identifiable authority (political power holder). Such allocation is done subjectively, not minding the general feelings of the people in the society. It does not matter whether such allocation is rational or irrational, right or wrong, good or bad, arbitrary or democratic, objective or subjective and whether the allocation or distribution would serve the common good or not. All these are not the concern of the allocator or distributor of values. He aims to allocate the societal values the way his perception directs him. David Easton was an American Political Scientist. According to him, a “political system is that system of interaction in any society through which binding or authoritative allocation is made ((Roling et al., 2023).

Callahan & Mau (2024), quoting Van Dyke, said that politics is the study of political actors chasing after competing interests or desires on public matters. But understanding politics in this version only limits politics to the pursuit of competing interests and/or desires alone. A Greek Philosopher and the father of politics, Aristotle, said that the state is an association intended to enable its members, in their households and the kingships, to live well, its purpose is a perfect and self-sufficient life (Lord, 2013). So, what is really important is who has the power, but whether

that power is deployed skillfully towards the desired end is another question. For Max Weber, politics is striving for a share of power for influence on the distribution of power. His perspective was power politics (Tan, 2015). Professor Harold Dwight Lasswell (an American Political Scientist and Communication Theorist) defined politics as who gets what, when and how. (Sage Publications, 2020). However, Thomas Hobbes' concept of the state of nature grounds or pins down politics in the individual's desire to preserve his life and goods and stipulates that the role of government is to serve these ends. Happiness or "felicity" is continual success in obtaining what we desire (Nguyen, 2022). In his understanding of politics,

Abraham Lincoln believed that the government's job is to do what a community of people could not do for themselves. One of his greater preoccupations as a political thinker was the issue of self-governance and the promise and problems that could arise from self-governance. Abraham Lincoln was a member of the Whig Party and later a Republican (Cantrell, 2022). The choice of some to allow the expansion of slavery was one of such "problems" and was central to the American Civil War. Although opposed to slavery from the outset of his political career, Lincoln would not make its abolition the mainstay of his policy until several years into the War. Harold Lasswell's famous definition of politics is that politics is the study of influence and the influential. Thus, unfortunately, writers have arbitrarily narrowed the discipline of political science to the science of government. Be all the forgoing definitions and understanding of what politics is, we see politics as the total of all the activities, processes, procedures, programmes and events in a political system or a society that would eventually culminate in the acquisition of power or authority either in the public/governmental or private setting to use the acquired authority and/or power to determine the allocation of patronages or values within that particular system or setting.

The Politics of June 12 Public Holiday

As if to buttress and/or demonstrate the fact that politics is actually the authoritative allocation of societal goods and services (values) as well as "who gets what, when and how?", President Buhari changed Democracy day (a public holiday in Nigeria) from May 29 to June 12 just a few months to the 2019 general election – an election that would herald his second tenure in office as the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Of course, his end (winning the next election) justified his means (admitting the fact that the late Chief M.K.O. Abiola won the presidential election of 1993 and the declaration of June 12 as a national public holiday). This was not all; President Buhari and his Executive Council also posthumously conferred a National Honour of Grand Commander of the Federal Republic (GCFR) on the late Chief Abiola. He went on to give the inaugural address of his second tenure in office on June 12, 2019. This was nothing but a conscious decision – a grand strategy to impress on the consciousness of the Yoruba nation comprising Lagos, Ondo, Ogun, Ekiti, Oyo, Oshun, Kwara, some parts of Edo and Delta States and indeed other parts of the country who believed that the annulment of the presidential election of June 12, 1993, was a day-light political robbery.

The victims of that political robbery were not only Chief M.K.O. Abiola, his immediate and extended families, but also the mass of the electorate in Nigeria who came out in their numbers and voted in that ill-fated presidential election. What then is the "politics" in that declaration of June 12 as a national public holiday in Nigeria? The answer is obvious and could easily be conjectured. Buhari and the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) did not want to lose the next general election in Nigeria. By that declaration, the APC government wanted to score a political point, and they did.

The second question is: what was the politics in the annulment of the presidential election of June 12, 1993? To answer this question, we need to ask other questions and those questions are:

If Alhaji Bashir Tofa of the NRC (a Northern of the Fulani stock) had won that presidential election of June 12, 1993, would the Babangida government have annulled it? What would have been the government's reason for taking such action in an election that a Northern Muslim had clearly won? How would the Northerners, both within and outside the military, including the Northern traditional rulers, have received the news, and what would have been their reactions? Now that it was a Southerner who won the election and it was annulled without any hesitation whatsoever, what were the feelings and reactions of the people and groups mentioned earlier? Why did it take the Federal Government of Nigeria a whopping 25 years to admit that Chief M. K. O. Abiola of the SDP won the election under reference? Why did the Buhari Administration's recognition of June 12 yearly as a public holiday come just a few months before the 2019 general election? What did the government aim to achieve, and did it achieve it? The answer to the last question is "yes", the Buhari government achieved the objective of the declaration. In politics, "the end justifies the means" (Nnamdi & Organ, 2019). It was politically expedient to declare June 12 a public holiday on June 6, 2018. It is not of sheer charity that the butcher, baker and brewer give us dinner; they are mindful of their interests (Jost, 2021). Adam Smith had written: "It is not from benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker, that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest" (Jost, 2021).

Methodology

The historical and descriptive research approach was adopted for this study. Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias (2016) rightly posited that historical research deals with the determination, evaluation and explanation of past events essentially for the purpose of gaining a better understanding of the present and making a more reliable prediction of the future. On the other hand, the main aim or objective of descriptive research in political inquiry is not just mere description but to establish or discover the meaning or essence of a given phenomenon. That is why it is argued that descriptive research is connected with conditions or relationships that exist, practices that prevail, beliefs, points of view or attributes that are held; ongoing processes; effects that are being felt; or trends that are developing. We also used the decision-making framework of analysis during our investigation. Pollock (2011) said that an exercise in political analysis is primarily an exercise in using the Political Science Method to study Political Phenomena. The very purpose, he said, is to explain, predict, and control political behaviour with a view to contributing to the rationality of political life. One of the tasks of this paper is to explain what led to June 12, 1993, becoming a significant date in the life of Nigeria to the extent that the Federal Government of Nigeria had to decide that the date be observed as a National Public Holiday in the country.

Among other models and approaches, the decision-making approach was preferred for obvious reasons. Babangida and his cabinet decided on June 24, 1993, when he announced the annulment of the very election adjudged as the best in the history of elections in Nigeria (Chima & Essien, 2016). Again, making June 12 Democracy Day and a public holiday in Nigeria is also a function of conscious decision-making. Research and studies based on the theory of decision making seek to find out who makes political decisions, whether such decisions are rational or irrational and the impact of rational or irrational decision making on the target/affected by the decision so made.

Daniel Bernouli formulated the Decision-Making Theory in 1738 (Okere, 2000, p.1). Okere maintained that in the twentieth century, John Neuman and Oscar Morgentern's games theory inspired decision-making theory. He opines that Anthony Down's formulations of governmental decision-making in terms of economic theories equally contributed to the growth of decision-making theory. In the words of Mbachu (2008), the theory fully accepts that only a few,

the elite group, are involved in decision-making. It assumes that the decisions of these few are a product of conscious effort based on adequate knowledge and guided by skill and training. It also assumes that decision makers are aware of their responsibilities and obligations. The decision-making framework involves the analysis of five elements: the decision situation, decision participants, decision organisation, decision process, and decision outcome (Mbachu, 2008).

Decision-making Approach has two fundamental purposes: (a) the identification of “crucial structures” in the political realm where changes take place, where decisions are made, and where actions are initiated and carried out; (b) the other is the systematic analysis of the decision-making behaviour which leads to action. In other words, the decision-making approach focuses enquiry on actors called decision-makers and also on the state called the decision unit. Thus, the actions of the state are seen through the actions of decision-makers. The decision-making approach insists that the behaviour of the decision-makers should be described and explained in terms of action analysis, which means that decision-makers should be treated as “actors in a situation” (Udoh, 2007, p.11). The approach also stresses the importance of the perception of the situation by the actors as a basis of decision-making. It suggests and/or opines that decision-makers are influenced in the first place by their own definition of the situation. It is because of all the foregoing that we fancied the Decision-making Theory as the most preferred approach to this study because the annulment of the 1993 presidential election was a decision; in the same vein, designating June 12 as a National Public Holiday was also a decision by actors in different situations in the decision unit - Nigeria.

Analysis

The Educated Nigerians/the Intellectuals and President Babangida

The formation of the Political Bureau was a significant event for many reasons. The composition of the Bureau could hardly be faulted as it included men and women of character and learning; it also served as an early move for Babangida to co-opt, cultivate and involve intellectuals in the elaborate Transition to Civil Rule Programme. In preparation for this, Babangida released political detainees, repealed the obnoxious and cantankerous Decree Number of 1984 and promised to respect fundamental human rights. Within two years of seizing power, Babangida had the support of a large swathe of the country against the rejection of the highhanded and dragonic General Buhari/General Idiagbon government; Be that as it may, there were few dissensions against Babangida’s regime. Eventually, when General Babangida's intentions became obvious to discerning members of the Bureau, only a few of the members took decisive action after what was perceived as a relapse to the military authoritarian tendencies experienced under General Muhammadu Buhari. Edwin Madunagu, a prominent journalist of The Guardian Newspaper, was dropped from the Bureau for "extremist" and "uncooperative" views and attitudes. He would later release an unofficial Bureau report via Newswatch Magazine. Mr Madunagu was then threatened and intimidated by the Secret Police (NSO, later SSS, before its current name: DSS).

During the IBB regime, Professor Sam E. Oyovbaire served as the Special Adviser to Admiral Augustus Aikhomu and engaged in rationalising the regime's political programme. (Aikhomu became Babangida's Deputy (Chief of General Staff) in October 1986, after the regime’s fallout with Commodore Ebitu Ukiwe). Oyovbaire extolled the virtues of the Transition Programmes of Babangida’s regime, such as the National Electoral Commission (NEC), Mass Mobilisation for Self-Reliance, Social Justice, and Economic Recovery (MAMSER), Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) - the "home-grown" version implemented by Babangida’s regime without the standby facility of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). In February 2002,

Oyovbaire, along with Chidi Amuta, wrote in defence of Babangida's programmes (www.nigerdeltacongress.com). By 2002, Oyovbaire could be read defending Babangida's regime: The socio-economic reforms of the IBB regime created the enabling environment for a generation of Nigerian professionals who were self-reliant, confident and challenged to break new grounds in the Nigerian political economy and presented Babangida's regime as the "... architect and founder of the process of modernisation of the Nigerian political economy..." Regarding the missing \$12.2 billion Gulf War oil windfall, Oyovbaire wrote that the IBB regime did what it had to do with the dedicated funds. Therefore, the divergence of opinions between the Okigbo Committee and the IBB regime on this matter was essentially conceptual and not substantive.

The above appears to confirm the conjecture of public commentators, including intellectuals and academics, of the success of Babangida's patronage politics. The creation of several programmes maintained a steady income for many academics, even as the programmes were rife with the corruption that marked Babangida's regime as exceptional. The members of the Political Bureau were promised active roles in the implementation of their recommendations; personal loyalty developed in the course of time. In reference to the Transition Programme of General Babangida, Prof. Adebayo Williams in his work: *Intellectuals and the Crisis of Democratization in Nigeria: Towards a theory of Postcolonial Anomie*, wrote that a substantial faction of the intellectual class is implicated in this democratic debacle, and its behaviour provides rich insights into the dynamics of intellectual affiliations in a neo-patrimonial military state (Williams, 1998). By 2010, Oyovbaire had become coordinator for the activities of the PDP presidential aspirant, Atiku Abubakar. Oyovbaire has also co-authored a book: *Portrait of a New Nigeria Leader: Selected Speeches of IBB* (Olagunju & Oyovbaire, 1989). In the preface of the book, Adele Jinadu wrote: "President Babangida's enunciation of human rights as a cardinal aspect of his regime is not merely accidental or an opportunistic rationalisation to take advantage of the opprobrium in which the Buhari regime was held and thereby win popular acclaim. Rather, it runs deep in his liberal and populist convictions and is based on a reasoned and well-thought-out conceptualisation of the military role in African politics". Jinadu, another Nigerian intellectual, appears blind to (as Williams wrote) the unprecedented and well-documented assault on human rights by the Babangida government.

In 2010, when Babangida again nursed the ambition of contesting for the presidency, Professor Oyovbaire was named as his Director of Policy and Strategy. In December 2010, when Babangida had been ruled out of the 2011 elections, Oyovbaire moved on and was reported as the head of Atiku Abubakar's campaign for the presidency in the South-South; this followed the "harmonisation process of the Babangida, Gusau, Atiku and Saraki Campaign Teams in the South-South following the adoption of Atiku Abubakar as the consensus candidate by the Ciroma-led wise men from the North..." (African Herald Express, 2010, p. 12). Oyovbaire's high opinion of Babangida could be contrasted with the assessment of two other scholars. In the assessment of Rotimi and Julius Ihonvbere: "Babangida's character... left much to be desired. He was corrupt, manipulative, unpredictable, ambitious, unreliable and uninterested in leaving office" (www.nigerdeltacongress.com).

June 12, Foreign Influence, LGBTQ Policy, and Goodluck Jonathan's 2015 Electoral Defeat

The 2015 Nigerian presidential election that brought President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan's tenure to an end remains one of the most analysed transitions in Africa's democratic history. Among several narratives surrounding his defeat is the belief that the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and other Western powers actively worked against him because he refused to endorse same-sex marriage and LGBTQ rights. This paragraph critically examines that claim,

distinguishing between verified facts and speculative interpretations. It argues that while Western governments expressed disapproval of Nigeria's Same-Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Act (SSMPA) of 2014, there is no credible evidence that such disapproval translated into a coordinated effort to unseat President Jonathan. Instead, his electoral loss resulted mainly from internal governance and security challenges.

The Same-Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Act and Western Reaction

On 7 January 2014, President Jonathan signed the SSMPA into law, criminalising same-sex marriage and public advocacy for LGBTQ rights (BBC News, 2014). The legislation prescribed penalties of up to fourteen years' imprisonment and enjoyed broad domestic support across Nigeria's religious and cultural spectrum. However, Western governments immediately condemned the law. While the U.S. Secretary of State, John Kerry, described it as a "dangerous restriction of fundamental freedoms", the U.K. Foreign Office called it "deeply regrettable" (U.S. Department of State, 2014; The Guardian, 2014).

Although these statements created diplomatic tension, none of the governments involved severed relations with Nigeria or imposed sanctions, as they had done in Uganda under similar circumstances. Nigeria remains an essential strategic partner of the United States and Europe in counter-terrorism operations against Boko Haram, in regional trade, and in oil supply (Campbell, 2019). Therefore, Western criticism was largely moral and rhetorical, not punitive.

The 2015 Election and Alleged Western Interference

Claims that the West plotted Jonathan's downfall gained momentum after he lost to Muhammadu Buhari of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in March 2015. Proponents cited President Barack Obama's pre-election video message urging Nigerians to vote peacefully as indirect support for Buhari. Yet the content of the video, released by the U.S. State Department, made no mention of either of the two candidates and aligned with Washington's long-standing policy of encouraging peaceful polls in fragile democracies (Campbell, 2019).

Furthermore, there is no documented evidence — in U.S., U.K., or Nigerian government records — of any financial or political support given to Buhari by Western states. Indeed, Obama and other Western leaders later praised Jonathan for conceding defeat and strengthening democratic norms in Africa (Premium Times, 2015). Such commendations undermine the narrative of a Western conspiracy against him.

Domestic Factors behind Jonathan's Defeat

Analysts broadly attribute Jonathan's loss to domestic factors rather than external interference. These included public frustration over corruption scandals, such as the alleged \$20 billion unaccounted for in the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC); escalating insecurity caused by Boko Haram insurgency; persistent power shortages and fuel scarcity; and a strong coalition of opposition parties that united regional blocs against the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP) (Agbu, 2020; Obadare, 2019). The combination of these issues eroded public trust and created momentum for change that even Western opinions could not manufacture or prevent.

A Balanced Assessment

While the anti-gay law strained relations between Nigeria and the West, interpreting the 2015 election outcome as a direct consequence and/or punishment for Jonathan's refusal to support LGBTQ rights oversimplifies a complex political landscape. Although Western states publicly criticised the legislation, such human-rights advocacy is typically balanced against broader

strategic interests. Given Nigeria's demographic weight, economic significance, and regional leadership role, sustained hostility or active political destabilisation would have been neither rational nor practical. Moreover, Jonathan's peaceful concession won him international acclaim, contradicting claims that he was targeted for removal. The episode, therefore, reveals how postcolonial sensitivities can magnify diplomatic disagreements into perceived conspiracies (Adebajo, 2021).

Finally, although President Jonathan's signing of the Same-Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Act attracted strong Western criticism, available evidence does not support the assertion that the United States or its allies orchestrated his electoral defeat. The 2015 transition reflected Nigeria's internal democratic evolution more than external manipulation. Nonetheless, the controversy underscores the enduring tension between African sovereignty and Western moral influence, a theme central to understanding contemporary African diplomacy.

Conclusion

Politics is actually the authoritative allocation of societal goods and services and whoever holds the political power determines "who gets what, when and how?", President Buhari changed the yearly May 29 (Democracy day) observed as a public holiday in Nigeria to June 12 just before the 2019 general election – an election that was to bring about Buhari's second tenure as Nigeria's President. His aim (winning the next election) justified whatever means he used, including admitting the fact that the late Chief M.K.O. Abiola won the presidential election of 1993. The declaration of June 12 as a national public holiday was politically strategic. President Buhari and his Executive Council also posthumously conferred a National Honour of Grand Commander of the Federal Republic (GCFR) on the late Chief Abiola. Having won the 2019 presidential election, through whatever means, he gave the inaugural address of his second term in office on June 12, 2019. All these decisions and policies were politically motivated strategies - conscious decision and ploy to impress on the psych of the Yoruba nation comprising Lagos, Ondo, Ogun, Ekiti, Oyo, Oshun, Kwara, some parts of Edo and Delta States and indeed other parts of the country who had believed that the annulment of the presidential election of June 12, 1993, was a day-light political robbery. The victims of that political robbery were not only Chief M.K.O. Abiola, his immediate and extended families, but also the mass of the electorate in Nigeria who came out in their millions and voted in that ill-fated presidential election. Buhari and the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) did not want to lose the 2019 general election in Nigeria. By that declaration, the APC government wanted to score a political point, and they did. Buhari Administration's recognition of June 12 as a public holiday came as a surprise, but the government was mindful of its interest. In politics, "the end justifies the means" (Nnamdi & Organ, 2019). It was politically expedient to declare June 12 a public holiday on June 6, 2018. It is not of sheer charity that the butcher, baker and brewer give us dinner; they are mindful of their interests (Jost, 2021).

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