
The October 2020 #EndSARS Protest and the Transformation of the Nigerian State

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Abstracts: On October 8, 2020, sequel to a viral video where a young Nigerian was shot and dragged out of a vehicle by officials of SARS, who drove off with the vehicle; Nigerian youths trooped to the streets of Lagos and Abuja etc.; within days it has spread throughout Southern Nigerian with the youths demanding for the end of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) with the hashtag: #EndSARS. Within two weeks it had metamorphosed to a number of other hashtags: #EndBadGovernment, #EndCorruption, #LekkiMassacre and others. On October 20, 2020, soldiers of the Nigerian Army, confronted the protesters at the Lekki Toll Gate, Lagos and opened fire point blank on Flag waving and National Anthem singing young Nigerians, killing scores of them. This drew condemnation and outcry in Nigeria and all over the world. Given that the extra-judicial killing of Yusuf Mohammed in 2007 triggered off the Boko Haram insurgency and the killings of IPOB members has also militarised IPOB: killed two DSS officials in Enugu, five Soldiers and scores of police personnel in Obigbo during the post-#EndSARS riot. This paper using the Marxian Post-Colonial State Theory, argues that the method of the #EndSARS protest; its non-visible collegiate leadership and the involvement of young people who are not under and influenced by the commodity mediating Nigerian post-colonial state, will lead to the resolution of the contradiction of the Nigerian state: from a Post-colonial state to a more inclusive state. The study used the qualitative method of study, with secondary data collection and content analysis to analyse data generated.

Keywords: #EndSARS, Nigerian Army, Nigeria 2023 Election, #LekkiMassacre Lagos, Nigerian State

1. Introduction

Major crises have major consequences usually unforeseen [22]. The resolution of apartheid in South Africa was speeded-up by some catalytically events with international moral shock like the shootings of African demonstrators at Sharpeville in March 1960 and the death in police custody of Steve Biko [54], these events heightened tension in South Africa and sensitised the International community on happenings in South Africa, which ultimately helped in apartheid demise.

The Nigeria state, an offshoot of colonialism, is an instruments of state coercion, through its apparatus of the military, police, courts and prisons, which embodied the metropolitan Europe's vested interest in maintaining their dominance in the colonial states [19]. At independence, the petty-bourgeoisie now in power was more desirous in imbibing the life styles and privileges of the colonialists than

in abolishing its unjust and oppressive acts against the Nigerian masses; thus emerged an indigenous ruling class which was contented to inherit the colonial economy with no aim of transforming it [19].

Accordingly, whenever there are demands on the state in Nigeria, it has always descended severely on the people. Two examples will suffice here: on 30th July, 2009 the police took to custody and later extra judicially executed the leader of the Jama'atu Alhlissunnah Lisdda'awati wal Jihad (Boko Haram), Mohammed Yusuf, which made the group's action to be, "driven by the desire for vengeance against politicians, police and the Islamic authorities for their role in the brutal suppression of the group that year" [42]. Another was that in June 2016, Amnesty International (AI) accused the Nigerian Army (NA) of "Opening fire on peaceful Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) supporters and bystanders who posed no threat to anyone in an outrageous use of unnecessary and excessive force, which resulted in multiple deaths and injuries", [16].

Meanwhile, the material base of the Nigerian state has changed; political authority which was centred on commodity mediation and distribution is no longer dominant, because of the dwindling income from petroleum, there have emerged productive forces out of the reach and mediation of the Nigerian state, like:

- i. The Social media
- ii. Nigeria Entertainers-Nollywood and Musicians etc.
- iii. Diaspora Remittances and
- iv. Taxation.

The traditional media which used to be the dominant information gatekeeper in Nigeria has yielded spaces to social media platforms like twitter, Facebook and others, where Nigerian Entertainers and others in technology, sports and various other fields have millions of followers globally, followers that include state and non-state international actors. Diasporas remittances now surpassed oil revenue [9, 13]. Also Nigeria tax to GDP which use to be very abysmal has grown to 6% in 2016 [11].

Indeed, the recent #EndSARS protest brought to the fore the convergence of the foregoing perimeters. In two weeks, the #EndSARS protesters held the Nigerian state at its jugular with their innovation and ingenuity: there was no discernable leadership for the Nigeria state to arrest; when thugs were sent by the state to disrupt the protest, they improvised with private security to keep at bay thugs sent by government agents; and they provided food and medics for protesters. Alas! On Tuesday, 20 October, 2020 around 6:45pm Nigerian time, young and defenceless Nigerians, singing the National Anthem and waving Nigeria Flags were shot and killed at Lekki Lagos by the NA, which had earlier said that they are loyal to the Nigeria president [17].

Meanwhile, the killing at Lekki Tollgate, though denied by the NA as fake news, has drawn worldwide condemnation, AI, Cable Network News (CNN) and other news media had painstakingly investigated and confirmed the killing at Lekki, Lagos. Therefore this paper argues that as major crises have major consequences usually unforeseen [22], and as the killing in Sharpeville in March 1960 and the death in police custody of Steve Biko had consequences on the apartheid regime [54], the #EndSARS protest and its aftermath; the Lekki Tollgate killing shall have consequences. Thus this study poses the question: will the EndSARS protest lead to the transformation of the Nigeria post-colonial state, to a state where citizens band together and make demands on the state and rather than being killed; the state listens and its policies reflects the demands of the citizens. This is accompanied with the corresponding hypothesis that the EndSARS protest will lead to the transformation of the Nigerian state to a citizens' oriented state.

This paper apart from its introduction and conclusion is divided into three parts: context and methodology, theoretical framework, Conceptual Clarifications and Operationalization of Variables with sub-sets like the Nigerian Police and the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), the #EndSARS Protest, the #LekkiMassacre and its umbrage, and the #EndSARS protest and the Nigerian State.

2. Context and Methodology

The study's context is Nigeria. The Nigerian state is a colonial creation, principally to maintain law and order for the extraction of resources and preservation of their dominance over colonial society, which was unlike in Europe, where civil society emerged before the capitalist state was formed. The Nigerian post-colonial capitalist state emerged when the society was just making an inroad into the civil society [19].

Thus, the ruling petty-bourgeoisie that has been in power in Nigeria sees the Nigerian state as their patrimony, hence they cannot stand opposition and competition that are hallmarks of democracy.

Kolawole [28], compared the #EndSARS October 2020's destruction to the Nigeria the Civil War of 1967-70, though he acknowledged that a war, 'belongs in a different category' (p. 1). But this goes to show the earth-quaking effects that the October 2020 #EndSARS imbroglio had on Nigerian polity. He added "the scale of the destruction in the wake of the #EndSARS protests in Lagos state alone is heart-breaking. Ambulances and health centres were set on fire — and you just have to question the motive" (p. 2). The protest morphed to #BuhariMustGo and #EndNigeria etc. Fukuyama [22] noted that "Popular outrage will grow, and dashing citizens rising expectations is ultimately a classic recipe for revolution." Thus the research question of this study: will the EndSARS protest lead to the transformation of the Nigeria post-colonial state....

The researcher followed the protest, through the media, monitoring trends and reactions as the protest unfolds, thus the period of the research is October 2020 to December, 2020.

This study is basically qualitative and non-experimental; therefore, it is based on the ex-post-facto (after-the-fact) design. The study relied on documentary method of data collection. Documents that are used here are either in form of primary documents or secondary documents; like history of Nigeria police and SARS, interviews granted to the media and Op-eds by prominent leaders like the Head of the Church of England, Justin Welby, Catholic Bishop of Sokoto, Matthew Kukah, among others to interrogate the research question of the study. The study utilized content analysis to first organize and synthesize the large volumes of textual data generated. And to enhance clarity of thought and presentation, the study extensively utilized tables and figures.

3. Theoretical Framework

This study uses the Post-Colonial State framework of analysis to interrogate and bring to the fore the likely synthesis the #EndSARS protest will have on the Nigerian state. It is derived from the works of Alavi [6]; Ake [4]; Ekekwe [15]; Rai [47] and Mbembe [32]. Rai [47] conceptualized the state as a network of power relations

that are located in economic, political, legal, and cultural forms interacting with and against each other, noting that states take different forms in different historical, social, and economic contexts, as in the case of postcolonial states emerging from struggles against colonial rule. Likewise, Alavi [6] argued that post-colonial states, is a historical specificity which arose from structural changes brought about by the colonial experience and alignments of classes, this radical re-alignments created a state apparatus through which it exercises dominion over *all* the indigenous social classes.

Correspondingly, development in post-colonial states like Nigeria remains at a very low level of the primitive accumulation with massive intervention force by the state in the labour process [4, 14]. Equally, post-colonial states rely on key resources for export, in Nigeria's case, petroleum, which are used for allocation of privileges and livelihoods that most times are significant in underpinning social and political cohesion. However, recently, the acute lack of material resources, has caused an erosion of state control and made it difficult for the political class to exercise the use of patronages to command obedience and even the monopoly of the use of violence. This has exposed most post-colonial state, like Nigeria to the risk of internal dissolution and to serious destabilization, because the trade-offs they had previously used to govern the relationship between holding state power and pursuing private gain is waning [32].

In Nigeria, natural resources (coal, cocoa, groundnut and palm oil etc.) were uses in the colonial and immediate post-colonial period, and currently it is dominantly petroleum, which is no longer at its commanding height. As a result, the Nigeria's material base has changed with Diaspora remittances surpassing oil revenue [13]; entertainers earning large income and are globally acclaimed mega bucks earners, with large followership on social media platforms globally, independent of state control.

Similarly, there have been criticisms against Post-Colonial State Theory, among which is that it has been over fifty years that most of these states got independence and that whatever faulty system that was bequeathed on them ought to have been resolved. And examples are given of the Asian Tigers' countries that have industrialised and moved on. While, this may seem true, it has to be noted that these countries were also helped by massive Federal Direct Investment (FDI) from the West, which positively impacted on them, unlike Africa, where the West have not substantially invested in.

Therefore, as noted by Rai [47] that states may take different forms in different historical, social, and economic contexts: the Nigerian state productive forces have changed, with vibrant civil society independent of state control, which is antithetical to her post-colonial characteristics. Thus the post-colonial state theory is germane to interrogate the effect that #EndSARS protest will have on the Nigerian state: from post-colonial to more inclusive state.

4. Conceptual Clarifications and Operationalization of Variables

4.1. *The Nigerian Police and the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS)*

Indeed, an adequate analysis of problems and challenges must start from its history. There are consensus among scholars that the evolution and the role of Nigeria Police Force (NPF), from 1820-1960 were organized and deployed as an occupation force, which used instrument of violence and oppression to suppress the indigenous population and tramped down any challenges to colonial exploitation of resources that benefit their homeland. This gave the police, the reputation of brutal subjugation of communities. They executed colonial projects with violence and fraud, which made them unpopular. Therefore, the foundation of the NPF's brutality was laid during the colonial period and in the consciousness of the people, the police is a symbol of suppression, rather than the protector of the people [53]. Notably, from 1820 to 1929, NPF was associated with local governments (native authorities), however, the northern and southern regional police forces were merged in 1930, later it existed side by side with federal police, however in 1966 the local government police was disbanded by the military regime [34, 31].

SARS itself, was an offshoot of an anti-robbery units that existed as part of various states' Criminal Investigation Departments (CID) until 1984, when its commander in Benin, then Bendel state capital (now Edo state) Simeon Danladi Midenda, was transferred and given the task of uniting the three existing anti-robbery squads in Lagos, by the then Inspector-General of the police (IGP). Midenda amalgamated these units and named it SARS in 1992, which only operated in Lagos until 2002, when it expanded to the 36 states of the federation and Abuja; with the mandate to arrest, investigate and prosecute suspected armed robbers, murderers, kidnappers, hired assassins and other suspected violent criminals [31, 53, 7]. They were also trained by United Kingdom (UK) Police [21, 37].

Alas, the unit left fighting of crime and become a moneymaking terror squad with no accountability. According to Chimamanda Adichie, a celebrated International Author, SARS was random, vicious, vilely extortionist and arbitrarily arrest young men for such crimes as wearing their hair in dreadlocks etc., forces people to make bank transfers online to buy their freedom and dares their victims to report them to the IGP or even the President.

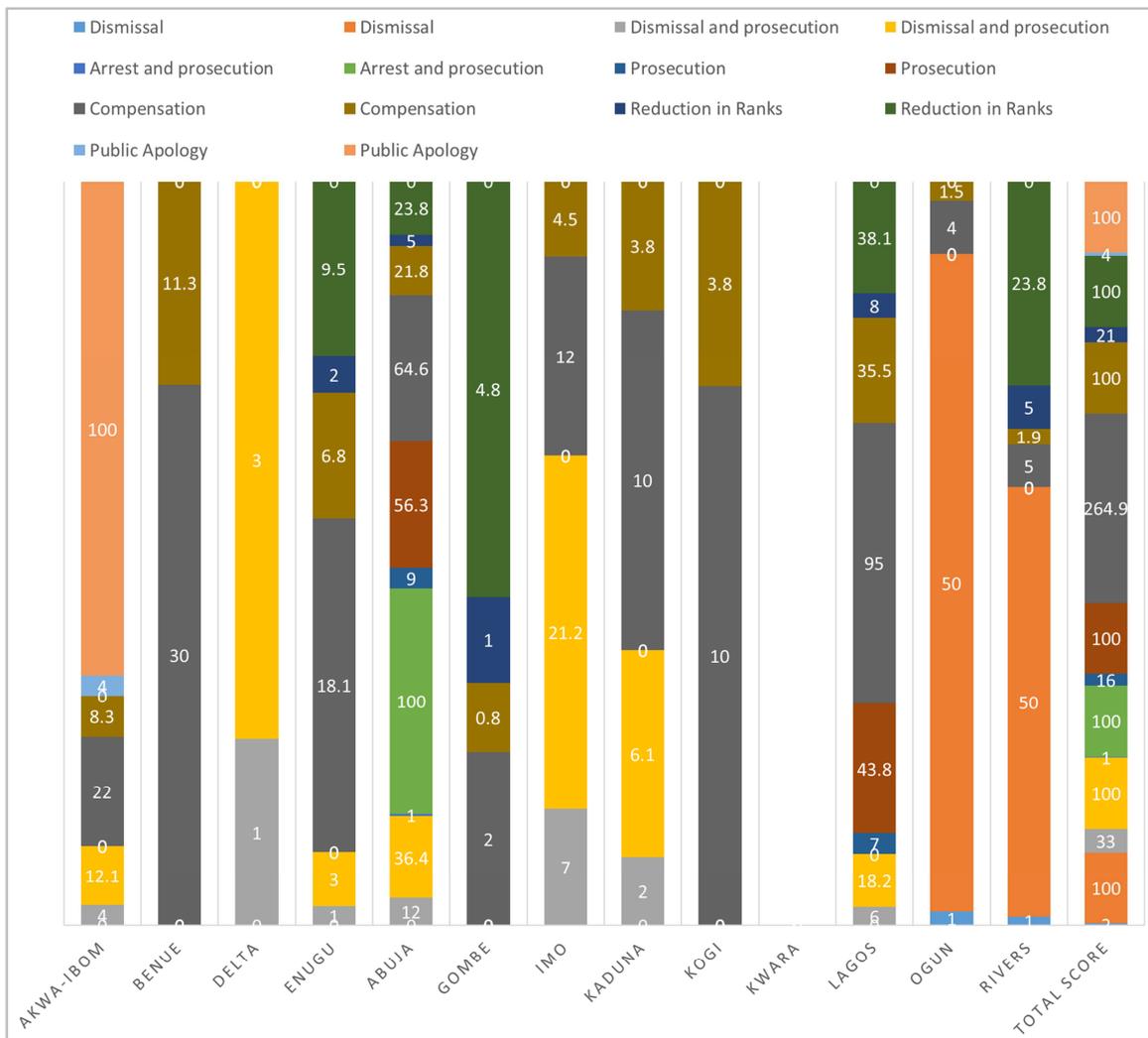
Overtime, Nigerians began to see SARS Operatives no longer as law officers, but as a pack of wolfish criminals. Adichie gave example of her cousin who was accused of being an armed robber; SARS ignored his work ID cards and threatened to photograph him next to a gun and claim he was a robber, unless he gives them a large sum of money, which her cousin gave. Thus the unit became implicated in widespread human rights abuses, extrajudicial killings, torture, arbitrary arrests, unlawful detention and extortion [2, 7, 26, 31, 52].

AI in 2016 visited SARS detention centre in Abuja, (named abattoir) and found 130 detainees living in overcrowded cells and being regularly subjected to various methods of torture. It documented 82 instances of SARS brutality between 2017 and 2020, including hanging, mock execution, beating, punching and kicking, burning with cigarettes, waterboarding, near-asphyxiation with plastic bags, forcing detainees to assume stressful bodily positions, and sexual violence [7].

In 2016, the World Internal Security and Police Index rated Nigeria’s police as the worst in the world. Additionally, a recent study by NOI Polls found that 32% of Nigerians who reported that their human rights had been infringed upon, 2/3 of which is by the police. Despite the widespread abuse by SARS, few cases were investigated, and in spite of the Nigerian government adoption of the law criminalizing torture in December 2017, SARS officers were not prosecuted, [44, 7].

Correspondingly, the International Society for Civil Liberties and the Rule of Law (ISCLRL) in its analysis of

extra-judicial killing of unprocessed detainees within 16-year period showed that SARS squad committed more than 30,400 extra-judicial killings around Nigeria since 2004 [46]. This means that SARS has killed more Nigerians than Boko Haram, which is estimated to have killed about 30, 000 plus people [5]. Figure 1 below shows the analysis of the state by state reports and recommendations by the Nigeria Human Right Commission (NHRC) on SARS activities in twelve states in Nigeria, preceding the #ENDSARS protest. They are police officers of various ranks including an Assistant Commissioner of police, recommended for various punitive measures: 33 for dismissal and prosecution; 16 for prosecution only; 21 for reduction in ranks; 4 for public apology and a compensation to be made, to the sum of two hundred and sixty four million, nine hundred thousand naira (N260,900,000= or \$695,344.7861). It was sent to the Attorney General of the Federation (AGF) and Police Service Commission (PSC) for implementation. Till date, no SARS officer has been found responsible for torture, ill-treatment of detainees or unlawful killing.



Source: Author’s computation, 2020.

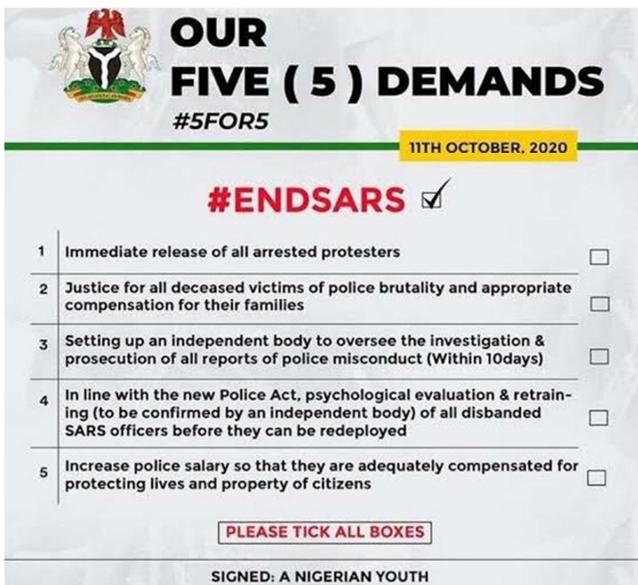
Figure 1. Analysis of the 2020, Endsars Report of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC).

Since 2017, EndSARS protest has been gaining ground across Nigeria, stemming from online advocacy to street protests. The anger about the unit’s activities culminated in a nationwide protest (#EndSARS) on the streets of 21 states in Nigeria and globally, in the UK, USA, Canada, South Africa and other nations [31].

4.2. The #EndSARS Protest

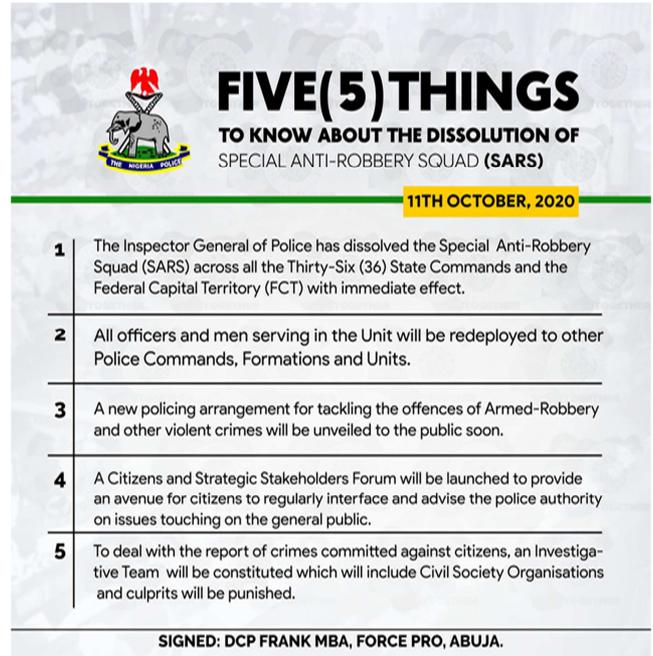
Indeed, police brutality is an age-long problem in Nigeria, people relate easily to it, because it includes stories of their neighbours, friends, students and family members. Hence, when the video footage of SARS officers that shot a man and drove off in his car in Ughelli, Delta state, went viral, the tipping point of SARS brutality had been reached. The protest, organized under the hashtag #EndSARS, was done by young people, who initially campaigned for disbandment of SARS and its officers prosecuted for extortion, rape, murder etc. It signalled the overturning of convention: the protesters insisted on not having a central leadership, it was social rather than traditional media that documented the protests and, in a country with firm class divisions, the protest cuts across classes. The protests were nonviolent and demonstrated hope and the possibility of what Nigeria could become [26, 45].

Accordingly, the government announced the disbandment of SARS, which it had purportedly disbanded thrice, previously in 2016, 2017 and 2018 [30], and the acceptance of the protesters’ five-point demands (figure 2). Nevertheless the authorities infuriated the protesters anew by announcing that it would immediately set up a new outfit: Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT), to replace SARS (Figure 3), which the protesters saw as merely relabeling SARS, which will make no difference [26, 45].



Source: [51].

Figure 2. Five Demands by the Protesters.



Source: [49].

Figure 3. Disbandment of SARS and the acceptance of the five-point demands.

Consequently, the protesters dug in and expanded the demands to include wider reforms in governance and saw a sustained protest as the only means of holding the political elites accountable for Nigeria’s high unemployment, galloping inflation, deepening poverty and others. While demonstrations across Nigeria remained peaceful, security forces responded with brutality and crackdowns; with officers firing tear gas canisters, water cannons and live bullets to disperse protesters. On 11 October, Jimoh Isiaq was killed in Oyo state when a police team opened fire at protesters with live bullets; on 12 October, police officers in Lagos, killed 55 years old Ikechukwu Ilohamauzo; Kimba Kakanda, a journalist was attacked, injured and his phone smashed (28).

Then came the counter-protesters, who were armed with cudgels, machetes and guns, they attacked anti-SARS protesters. It was alleged that government was behind them, because they were seen getting into SUVs that belong to the government and some young men admitted they were paid to join the counter-protests. However, the #EndSARS protesters improvised, by engaging private security to protect them and repel the attackers [31, 26].

The #EndSARS movement attracted attentions all over the world, with celebrities such as musicians Kanye West, Cardi B; footballers Odion Ighalo, Mezt Ozil; actor John Bodega and prominent global female celebrities and influencers like Hilary Clinton, Beyoncé, Rihanna, and Lizzo actively lending their voices to the course. Their tweets thrust the hashtag #EndSARS and its demands into the spotlight, even Twitter CEO, Jack Dorsey endorsed the #EndSARS hashtag and shared links of an organization supporting the protesters

with water and food. The scale of the movement on social media was massive, in the first 14 days, #EndSARS and its related hashtags were 18 times more mentioned than the 4th August, 2020 Beirut explosion, with 173 billion impression (and climbing) for the campaign, dwarfing the 29.3 billion impressions for the Beirut blast [1].



Source: [1].

Figure 4. One of the Pro-SARS thugs.

Meanwhile, it was not only youths that was prominent in the #EndSARS protest; the Feminist Coalition (FC), a non-governmental organisation raised over \$385,000 (£290,000) through crowd-funding and spent the money

on legal services for those protesters who were arrested; paid medical bills for those wounded; provided private security at protest Points and daily refreshments. At the end, they gave account and stated that the remainder of the fund will be used to provide support, including mental health counselling, for victims of police brutality, the families of those who died in the course of the protest and sponsor a memorial for those killed by the police. Aisha Yesufu, the co-founder of the #BringBackOurGirls Movement's portrait of defiance became a symbol of the movement. She stated that any protest that had ever led to change has always been led by women, example: 1929 there Aba women's riots [40].



Source: [40].

Figure 5. Aisha Yusufu, her Portrait became the symbol of the Protest.



Source: [40]

Figure 6. A Statement Released by the Feminist Coalition.

Alas, as thousands of Nigerian protesters assembled for the 13th straight night of the protest at the Lekki TollGate. Government officials reportedly cut the security cameras, put off the floodlights. Shortly before 7 p.m., as the demonstrators sang Nigeria’s national anthem, soldiers walked toward them, and they shot, not up in the air, but with their guns at arm level: shot and killed. After the army withdrew from the scene, members of the police, including the dreaded SARS unit (allegedly disbanded by the authorities on 11 October) moved in, and killed more protesters. Amnesty International reported that more than 50 people died since the #EndSars protests began, with 38 deaths recorded on October 2020 alone [2, 33, 39, 43]. The Nigerian state has turned on its citizens: to murder one’s citizens, in such a perceptibly premeditated way, with no care of consequences. The army and police denied shooting protesters but witnesses told a different story.

DJ Switch (Obianuju Catherine Udeh), streamed the shooting live on her Instagram feeds, with more than 150,000 people watching live around the world as protesters tried to treat those with bullet wounds and shout of “Gunshot wounds. Get ambulance for us!”, “Ambulance! Ambulance! Ambulance!” Several witnesses gave accounts of soldiers refusing to allow ambulances reach the wounded [39, 45].



Sources: [12].

Figure 7. Soldiers shooting at the protesters.



Sources: [12].

Figure 8. The protesters are Lekki Tollgate.

Meanwhile, a mass murder of unarmed and defenseless protesters which was captured in real time on social media, archived on the web, and reported in the domestic and international media, is not only being denied, but government is insisting that it never happened. This had made people that witnessed the shooting and killing to question their own perceptual stimuli, recollections, and even sanity. Immediately after the shooting, the army denied it (figure 9) as "fake news," This propaganda and mind management tactic is called gas-lighting, its goal is to de-familiarize reality and the truth through intentional, in-your-face obfuscation of facts or to give “alternative facts.” But the extrajudicial murder of citizens at Lekki (figure 10) by the Buhari regime is real and the regime gave its imprimatur to the military to murder protesters, when he threatened to be decisiveness and use FORCE to restore law and order [29].



Sources: [12].

Figure 9. Press Release by the NA.



Source: [12]

Figure 10. One of those killed at LekkiTollGate.

Indeed, bullet casings (from Serbia, imported by NA) from the scene match those used by the NA (figures 11 and 12), which contradicts the army's claim that they fired blanks bullets. Verified video footage (using timestamps and data from the video files) and eyewitnesses show soldiers shooting in the direction of protesters. And the NA is notorious for killing civilians: in December 2015, in Zaria, it killed Shiite Islamic Movement of Nigeria (IMN) members, no fewer than 347 lives, including women and children; NA had also, killed and denied killing many members of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), most time carting away their bodies, just like eyewitnesses at Lekki told CNN they saw the army remove a number of bodies from the scene [3, 29, 12].



Source: [12]

Figure 11. Sample of Bullets Found at scene of NA shooting at Lekki Tollgate.

72.015.00	пиштољи и делови пиштоља; супстанце за логонско гориво; барутно пуњење; аутом.башач граната	1.170.180 кд 18.550 кг	Бугарска	ц/в
27.255.98	mortars; machine guns; automatic, sniper, assault rifles; pistols; long-barrelled firearm, pistol, revolver ammunition; mine;	7.079.985 кд	Afghanistan; United Kingdom; Georgia; Iraq; Nigeria; Oman; U.A.E Saudi Arabia; USA	в/ц
56.565.00	пиштољска и револверска муниција	1.355.000 кд	Гватемала	ц
14.000.00	снајперске пушке и њени делови;	72.232 кд	САД	ц
31.656.00	карабини; муниција	450.006 кд	Данска	в

Source: [12]

Figure 12. Analysis and Tracking of Bullets type used to the NA.

More so, if there was any doubt about the shooting of protesters by soldiers, they were dispelled by Governor Sanwo-Olu in his interaction with CNN's Becky Anderson, where he stated that from the footage, they could see that the army was there and that two people died. Testimonies from dozens of eyewitnesses and family members interviewed by CNN and a forensic examinations of videos and dozens of photographs captured before, during and after the two shooting incidents show graphic injuries and people bleeding on the ground. Protesters were seen carrying bodies with flashlights of their phones illuminating the darkness as the sound of ambulance sirens wail in the background. Dr. Ayo Aranmolate, executive medical director at Grandville medical centre, in Lagos stated that he and his colleagues received around 15 injured people that night with various gunshot wounds and cuts. The Lagos state government gave directive to Dieners (morgue attendants) to release only corpses deposited before and after the #ENDSARS protests [12, 20].

Rather than fulfilling its promise to the protesters, the President Buhari's regime has initiated a massive crackdown on the perceived leaders of the protest. Moe Odele, a prominent lawyer who was giving legal advice to demonstrators was arrested and prevented from leaving the country, her passport seized and placed under military

investigation. The Central Bank of Nigeria freeze accounts of protesters, on alleged involvement in terrorism financing. Several eyewitnesses have fled the country, including DJ Switch, while others are living in Safe Houses. Interviews with 18 activists, lawyers representing protesters and human rights advocates depict a pattern of intimidation, detention, threat to life and even bribery (ten million naira/\$26,000), if they could post a message on social media that the Lekki shooting did not happen. Access to #EndSARS related websites: radioisiaq.com; endsars.com and Feminist Coalition were blocked on Nigerian Mobile Networks and other internet service providers. A group of lawyers providing legal aid to protesters said it has logged more than 300 detentions nationwide of people they believe to be innocent but that they expect the total to be higher [12, 18, 24].

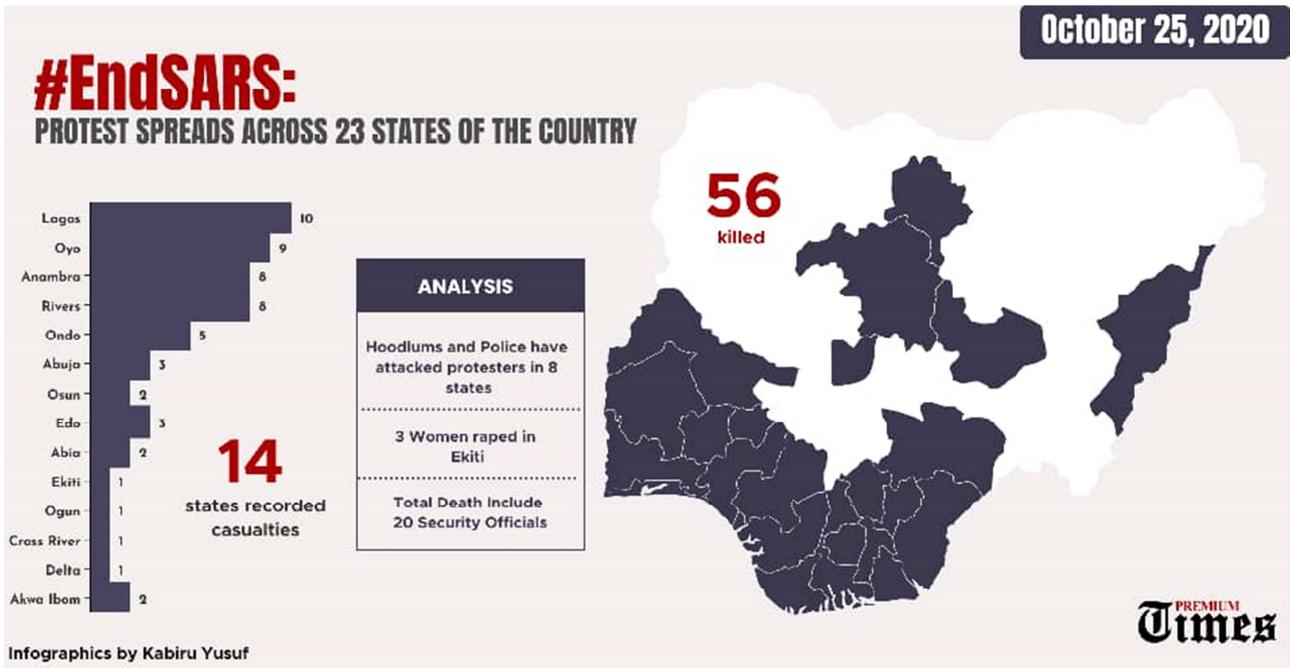
The Nigerian government has constituted itself into an accuser, judge and executioner in violation of the rights to freedom of expression and fair hearing, guaranteed by the Nigerian Constitution as well as regional and international human rights instruments to which Nigeria is a party to [23]. This is the typical characteristics of post-colonial states like Nigeria.

On Friday, 23 October, Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari reported that at least 51 civilians, eleven police

officers, seven soldiers were killed during the protests, 37 civilians injured and Nigeria loss N26.6 million naira (USD \$70,000) daily [44].

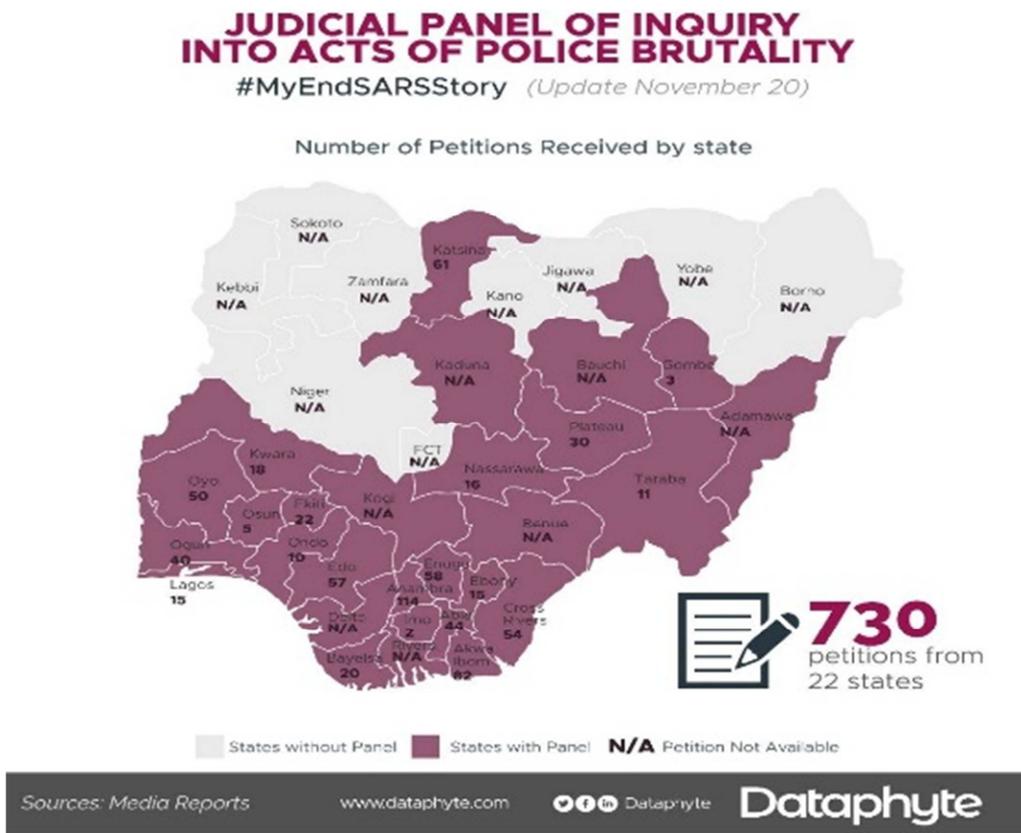
The Government setup Judicial Panels of Inquiry to

receive and investigate complaints of Police brutality or related extrajudicial killings in the 36 states of the federation (figures 13 and 14), show destruction and number of petition received.



Source: [56]

Figure 13. The Spread of the Protest in 23 states.



Sources: [14].

Figure 14. Number of Judicial Panel of Inquiry Constituted and Petitions Received at the time of this Study.

The #LekkiMassacre and its Umbrage

ALL THESE GONE IN LAGOS STATE.

1. Nigeria Port Authority Lagos - set ablaze
2. Orile Police Post, Lagos - set ablaze
3. Lekki Toll Gate, Lagos - totally destroyed
4. BRT Terminal, Oyingbo - New Buses set on fire
5. Television Continental, Ketu, Lagos - set ablaze
6. VIO, FRSC Office, Ojodu - FRSC branded cars, generators set ablaze.
7. BRT Terminal, Ojodu, Lagos - buses set ablaze.
8. BRT Bus at Berger - set ablaze
9. Lagos Television, Agidingbi, Ikeja - shut down
10. Recreational Center, Oregun, Lagos - set on fire.
11. Oba's Palace, Lagos - burnt to ashes. His scepter of authority seized.
12. Sanwo Olu Mother's House, Surulere, Lagos - set ablaze
13. Kings college on fire
14. Many lives lost already to the protests all in Lagos and south west.
15. Oriental Hotel, Victoria Island Lagos burnt
16. GTBank Branches burnt down
17. AccessBank Branches burnt down
18. Channels Television shut down
19. Ajeromi Local Govt Secretariat
20. Lagos-Island Local Govt destroyed
21. Lagos-Island East LCDA Secretariat set on fire
22. Lagos Mainland Local Govt Secretariat Destroyed
23. Ibeju Lekki LCDA Secretariat destroyed
24. Sanwoolu's Uncle's house on Lagos Island.
25. Ejigbo LCDA burn.
26. Many local council SECRETARIATS burn down now. in Lagos state. Still counting....

Source: [28].

Figure 15. Properties Destroyed in Lagos State alone.

Nigeria's Independence Day is 1st October, 1960. But 20th October, 2020, will go down in Nigerian history as the day the whole world saw images of the green-white-green flag of Nigeria stained with the blood of her citizens, bludgeoned by the forces of the Nigerian state, which is a crime under the international law. Consequently, leaders of the protest retreated. Those hoodlums imported by state actors to do pro-SARS protest and other criminal elements on the fringe took over the streets in many states, for days anarchy reigned: videos went viral where soldiers were asking looters to loot peacefully and those who imported the pro-SARS protesters shouting at them in Abuja, to leave some places because 'BABA' has interest in them. Figure 15 shows some of the properties destroyed when hoodlums took over the protest after the killing at Lekki.

4.3. The #EndSARS Protest and the Nigerian State

This paper does not strictly problematize change in the substructure as a catalyst for the transformation of Nigeria's post-colonial state, however Nigeria's substructure has changed: Diasporas remittances now surpass revenues from petroleum, taxes which was neglected at the heydays of Nigeria's commodity boom is now one of the mainstay of Nigeria economy and Nigerians in the entertainment and technology industries have become globally known and high earners. These have grossly reduced Nigerian government

patronage regimes as an instrument of influence and coercion.

Rotberg cited in Okoli [38] opined that state failure is man-made, that it is the oppression of the citizenry by the state; avarice by the ruling class occasioned by wealth of natural resources such as petroleum deposits or diamond fields; loss of legitimacy arising from citizens' lack of trust in the ruling class and the concomitant reactions by the oppressed that plunge a weak state into failure and the attendant transfer of citizens' allegiance to ethnic warlords. He further stated that state failure occurs in stages: weak state, failing state, failed state, and finally collapsed state:

- i. weak states characterized by internal conflict, management weakness, corruption, despotism;
- ii. failing states by ethnic, religious, linguistic and inter-communal tensions which lead to uncontrollable violence; deteriorated security situation; per capita GDP and other indicators of economic prosperity have all declined; and greed and corruption are rampant;
- iii. failed state is characterized by complete absence of security and order; which are abdicated to warlords and other non-state actors and
- iv. collapse stage, where nothing works.

The Nigerian state today has all the indexes of both weak and failing state.

Certainly what the cynical and brutal response, to the #EndSARS protests by Nigeria state agents will succeed in doing, will be taking the agency of these protests from the hands of concerned, peaceful, orderly protesters and delivering Nigeria's streets to hoodlums and arsonists as experienced after the brutal crackdown of the protest. Just like killing of the leader of Boko Haram, Mohammed Yusuf and IPOB members have militarised these organisations.

The Nigerian state is already riddled with crises: the third and fourth most deadly terrorist organization (Boko Haram and Fulani Herdsmen) are in Northern Nigeria; Biafra separatist movements is in the East; banditry in the North and rampant kidnapping is all over Nigeria. Youth unemployment in Nigeria has jumped from 55% in Q3'2018 to an all-time high of 63% in Q2'2020. With over 56% of Nigeria's population, under 25 years, which constitutes the largest demographic in the country [8]. Any struggle undertaken by them must be for the very soul of the Nigerian state and for the future of generations to come [33, 37].

Indeed, reactions to #EndSARS and its outcome indicate that something must give way. Bishop Matthew Kukah noted that #EndSARS might be the David that killed the Goliaths of Nigeria politics. Pastor Tunde Bakare declared that the protest was a tip of an iceberg against political subjugation, insecurity, poverty and underdevelopment. The Archbishop of Canterbury in a passionate Op-ed in *Thisday Nigeria*, called for heroism in Nigeria: a single non-party approach but of a national determination, agreement and declaration that has a common effort for the common good of the nation.

He urged Nigeria to begin with security, build food and shelter; and work. He noted that underemployment and

unemployment deny human dignity. Corruption, violence, banditry all pervert the proper purpose of work. Along with work, the nation, especially the poor, needs healthcare and education. He further observed how gifted is Nigeria: diverse, brave, intelligent, imaginative and that there is little limit to Nigeria's future. Additionally, he reminded Nigerians of their ability to overcome challenges, as exemplified in fight against Colonial rule and during the civil war. And that the Federal Republic of Nigeria, has a great need of heroes to build itself out of the era of kidnapping, terrorism, and militancy; thence, the prize of a greater nation is within Nigeria's grasp, not in the future, but today [10, 30, 55]. These eminent clergies were beckoning on Nigeria that this a golden opportunity to transform itself.

Emeritus professor Richard A. Joseph, of Northwestern University emphasised that the Sharpeville killing of March 1960 and the Soweto Uprising of June 1976 in South Africa, where hundreds of student protesters were killed and thousands wounded, intensified the struggle against apartheid. He further noted that though the number of those reportedly killed on 20 October, 2020, appears small compared to those killed in Sharpeville and Soweto; but their felling in a hail of soldiers' bullets, should shake Nigeria to its core. In line with the Archbishop of Canterbury, he subscribed to a national non-partisan movement similar to the anti-colonial, anti-apartheid, and anti-racism movements—to mobilize organizations across Nigeria, and its diaspora, to transform the existing destructive Nigerian state [48].

Odumakin [36], noted that EndSARS was the tipping point of the frustrations with the rudderless management of the Nigerian state, which the government read as a destabilisation plot, just like the colonial authority that did not believe the people have a right to protest, which is completely at variance with the whole essence of a modern state: to maintain a balance between contending forces in the society in a way to avert anarchy. Odumakin [36] further stated that all the ingredients of a major conflict are in Nigeria and a careful reader of history would see the EndSARS protests as signs of a major calamity on the way. He advocated a reset and remaking of Nigeria to a productive country that uses its resources to guarantee a happy environment for her people. The President of the Senate, Senator Ahmad Lawan, also warned that Nigeria as a country, will not survive another citizens' restiveness in the mode of #EndSARS protest, when those who are in rural areas join.

Meanwhile, after the entire frightening #ENDSARS imbroglio, government is confronted with choices of either the pursuit of reprisals or address the pervasive inequality that spiked the anger, rampage, looting and criminal lawlessness. The second option is a painstaking hard work uncommon to post-colonial states like Nigeria. And as a typical post-colonial state, the President Buhari's regime has taken the lazy path of seeing and treating the young protesters as political adversaries that need to be vanquished, thereby enlarging the coast of the regime's adversaries,

amongst the many adversarial measures was: censoring the social media, a platform where sons and daughters of the poor, have used to break away from poverty and acquire international fame as entertainers and celebrities of unimaginable wealth and influence.

Really, 'things are falling apart' for the Nigerian post-colonial state. The international arena is also becoming very hostile to Nigeria, NA was recently indicted by the International Criminal Court (ICC), for war crime [41]. Mr. Joe Biden (the president-elect USA), during the #EndSARS protest, pledged his support for the Nigerian people, the #BlackLivesMatters group got involved also; therefore the attention #EndSARS protest generated was far and wide; thus given that one of the legs that post-colonial states stand on is its metropolitan patron, hence, the Nigerian state is at the threshold of something new. There is a Nigerian Igbo-nation proverb: 'onye nwere ihe agha na eri, anaghi ekwe ka agha daa' (one who has what war consumes does not allow war to start). The Nigeria's ruling petty-Bourgeoisies and their Metropolitan Patrons; the Nigerian Diasporas, who are fiercely proud of their Nigerianess; and the newly emerging globally acclaimed entertainers and tech innovators, all have stakes in Nigeria, but the ruling petty-Bourgeoisie will be the greatest loser.

Correspondingly, as the Post-colonial theory conceptualizes the state as a network of power relations that are located at sub-structure (economic) and super-structure (politics, culture, legal etc.), which interact with and against each other, and make states to take different forms at different historical period. One example is Postcolonial states that emerged from struggles against imperialism and colonial rule. Thus, given that post-colonial states like Nigeria, is a historical specificity, which arose from structural changes through colonial experience and alignments of classes with special role for the politico-military-bureaucratic oligarchy, which is maintained by specific relations of subjection informed by the distribution of wealth, derived from natural resources [19].

Consequently, just like the Atlantic Charter and USA's opposition to colonialism, World War II, veterans of the War of Africa descent and educated Africans, especially those educated abroad, among other external and internal dynamics led to the colonialist's loss of monopoly of means of coercion and ultimately, the emergence of the Nigeria post-colonial state. The #EndSARS protest externally has global reach/support and internally, the Nigerian state internal mix: its lack of the monopoly of the legitimate use of violence and waning leverage of natural resources as a means to dispense largess; its diaspora, whose remittances are now greater than Nigeria's income from petroleum; her young population-many with global influence in entertainment, science and tech among others. These factors will lead to a new Nigerian state where the demands of her citizens are reflected in government policies, actors in state institutions will see themselves as servants, not lords and the state is able to neutrally mediate the struggle between classes and the struggle within the dominant class.

As a corollary, as the preceding factors led to the emergence of the Nigerian post-colonial state, the EndSARS protest with its monumental consequences and concomitances, shall have a synthetic effects on the Nigerian state, especially in subsequent elections in Nigeria. Thus, the research question is answered positively and the hypothesis proven that the EndSARS protest will lead to the transformation of the Nigerian state to a citizens' oriented state.

5. Conclusion

The hashtag #EndSARS movement attracted attention all over the world and brought the demands of Nigerians youths to the spotlight. The management of the movement gave a glimpse of how a state should care for her citizens with the way they attended to their problems as they arose, within two weeks, they raised over \$385,000 (£290,000), which was judiciously spent on legal services for those protesters who were arrested, paid medical bills for those wounded, provided private security at protest Points and daily refreshments. At the end, they gave account and stated that the remainder will be used to provide support, including mental health counselling, for victims of police brutality, the families of those who died in the course of the protest and sponsor a memorial for those killed by the police. These acts are a microcosm of their anticipations of what the state should do for her citizens.

The Nigeria state must come to terms with the reality of the day: vast majority of the over 200 million Nigerians are now more aware and would expect all the things obtainable in a free and egalitarian society governed by rule of law, from the Nigerian state. #EndSARS is just a tip of the iceberg of what could happen in the future if situations are not addressed properly to avert the impending implosion. Militarisation employed by Nigeria, will not resolve the contradictions within the Nigerian state, rather it will undermine sustainable peace building and engender recurring incidents of rebellion, insurgency and separatism that will pitch the citizenry, with the international community against the Nigerian government and served as an opportunity to breed more state adversaries into their folds, against the Nigerian state. DJ Switch, has joined the league of anti-Nigeria state campaigners, she addressed ICC on December 17, 2020 on Nigeria [27].

Nigeria as a country, may not survive another citizens' restiveness in the mode and scale of #EndSARS protest, when those who are in the rural areas will get involved. Therefore, Nigeria leaders should read the destabilisation events in Nigeria, like the colonial authority did and granted independence to Nigeria, because EndSARS was a tipping point of the frustrations with the rudderless management of the Nigerian state, it offers another opportunity for a peaceful resolution of Nigeria's post-colonial state status, to a state where citizens band together and make demands on the state and rather than being killed; the state will listen and its policies reflect the demands of the citizens.

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