



TIV DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION (TIDA) NASARAWA STATE

Prof. Emmanuel I. Kucha
Acting President
08037402361

Dr. Azer A. Thomas
Acting Secretary
08033847677

Our Ref: _____ Your Ref: _____ Date: _____

28th May, 2025.

His Excellency, Sen. Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR,
The President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces,
Federal Republic of Nigeria,
Three Arms Zone,
Abuja.

Dear Sir,

**RECURRENT, CONSISTENT, BRUTAL AND SYSTEMIC GENOCIDE AND ETHNIC
CLEANSING AGAINST THE TIV INDIGENES OF NASARAWA STATE WITH THE AIM
TO WEAKEN AND DE-POPULATE: A PASSIONATE CALL FOR YOUR URGENT
INTERVENTION.**

1. **INTRODUCTION**

2. Your Excellency, may I on behalf of all the Tiv indigenes of Nasarawa State, both at home and in the diaspora congratulate you on your emergence as the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and pray God to continue to grant you health of mind and body and bestow on you the uncommon wisdom of leading this nation to the promise land.

3. Your Excellency, I am 75 years old, a teacher, father, husband, brother and indeed a lover of peace. I am a Tiv indigene of Nasarawa State, from Imon Village Obi Local Government Area. I was appointed the 5th substantive Vice-Chancellor of the University of Agriculture (now Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University), Makurdi in 2012. Currently, I offer my services in the Training of young and future Engineers, as the pioneer Dean, Faculty of Engineering, Nasarawa State University, Keffi. History has bestowed on me, at this age the burden of holding in trust, the leadership of the Tiv Development Association (TIDA) in Nasarawa State and I have the mandate of the oppressed, scared and marginalized, deprived Tiv indigenes of Nasarawa State whose traditional and cultural institutions have been weakened and suppressed to

forward this open letter to you as a last resort in pleading for your direct intervention as the Government of Nasarawa State led by His Excellency, Engr. A. A. Sule has not only failed to protect us but is taking active steps to depopulate and completely make Tiv indigenes of Nasarawa State extinct by taking over our lands where we have lived for over four (4) centuries which is our ONLY source of livelihood. Should that be allowed to happen, it will be complete act of genocide as our people who are predominantly farmers and live in the villages would certainly die of starvation and depression (a repeat of the 2000 – 2001 where more than 500 Tiv indigenes were killed) as they have no other source of livelihood in Nasarawa State outside farming.

4. **THE IMMEDIATE ISSUE OF TAKING OVER OF THE TIV LAND**

5. Sometime in 2024, the Executive Governor of Nasarawa State, His Excellency, Engr. A. A. Sule announced the takeover and compulsory acquisition of 10,000 hectares of Farm land situate and lying predominantly in the communities of Tiv indigenes in Awe, and Obi Local Government Areas, for alleged agricultural purpose. The Government had indicated that the agricultural scheme is a Federal Government initiative to encourage the production of rice, soya beans and sorghum. The affected communities in these Local Government Areas are Akaha, Utsuwa, Usula, Udugh (Angwan Anthony), China, Shankodi, Ikyochiha and Ayarkeke and wherein the Tiv indigenes are the predominant inhabitants of the areas. The boundaries of (a) Akaha Village, (b) Utsuwa Village, (c) Usula Village, (d) Udugh Village, cover a large span of over 6,000 (Six Thousand) hectares of land under Agwatashi District in Obi Local Government Area up to Jangwa village area in Awe Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, which our people have been cultivating for many centuries.
6. Villages such as (a) Ayarkeke Village, (b) China Village, (c) Ikyochiha Village, (d) Shankodi Village which covers a large parcel of about 4,000 hectares in Awe Local Government Area of Nasarawa State were also earmarked for the alleged project. The Tiv indigenes living in these areas have lakes, fish ponds, churches, ancient shrines, graves, community schools, economic trees, markets and other infrastructures developed by the indigenous communities personally over the years and the Tiv

indigenes of these areas who are predominantly agrarian in nature and have nowhere to call their home other than these portions of land are living in State of panic and fear as they are at the verge of permanently losing these sources of livelihood.

7. Your Excellency, Nasarawa State is made up of thirteen (13) Local Government Areas, but His Excellency, Engr. A. A. Sule did not find any portion of land to compulsorily acquire and set this project, except the areas belonging to the Tiv indigenes. The reason is simple, Engr. A. A. Sule has been deceived by Traditional Rulers, who are not Tiv indigenes, that the land belongs to them and since the Tiv indigenes do not have anyone, either in the State Executive Council, House of Assembly or on the Nasarawa State Bench, the Government will face no opposition, even if the farmers are displaced without any form of compensation. I refer to two documents signed by the Osoho of Agwatashi, Dr. Umar Abubakar Apeshi purportedly handing over our lands to the Nasarawa State Government in bad faith and we have it on good authority that he has collected compensation on same. Our ancestral lands do not belong to him in anyway, or the Governor of Nasarawa State. The physical features and facts on the ground and documentary evidence from British Colonial Government up to date, give evidence to the above stated assertion. For the record, we have been in these areas long before even the amalgamation of Nigeria.
8. These portions of land are our ancestral land which was deforested by our fore-fathers and fathers and we have continued to live and cultivate same for over 180 years as official record shows. Yet the Governor has been misled into believing that they belong to traditional Rulers who do not even know the location of these farm lands and how they were passed on to us from generation to generation.
9. **SYSTEMATIC ETHNIC CLEANSING AND GENOCIDE AGAINST THE TIV PEOPLE**
10. Your Excellency, I have attached to this letter a Certified True Copy of the Memorandum of the District officer to the Divisional officer, Lafia province dated 6th April, 1933 and 5th July 1933 obtained from the National archives (**ANNEXURE 1**) which indicates that the Tiv indigenes of Nasarawa State have been in occupation in the area now known as Awe, Obi, Keana, Doma and Lafia Local Government Areas of

Nasarawa State since 1830 (I refer to page 10 of the Report). Yet your Excellency, our ancestral lands are being forcefully taken away at every given opportunity without compensation and in some cases the compensation paid to some other persons, and when we complain, we are told by people who the same history shows only arrived Nasarawa State in the 1980's, that we are not indigenes despite holding and residing on this land since about 1830.

11. We have written uncountable letters to the Executive Governor of Nasarawa State the orchestrated plan for systematic killing of Tiv indigenes due to the tension in our villages without remedy. We have also visited him personally to express our concerns and plead that he rescinds this idea of taking over our ancestral lands, but the Governor has refused to heed our call and has continued in the infamous act of expropriating our ancestral lands with impunity with the support of some Traditional Rulers, particularly, Osoho of Agwatashi, who are instigating the Governor to use compulsory acquisition as a decoy to hand over the land to them. Infact, to our shock, the Governor himself visited the affected area on the 4th day of May, 2025 and declared that the entire land belongs to Nasarawa State Government, clearly against the express provisions of the Land Use Act.
12. Your Excellency Sir, the present action of Engr. A. A. Sule is just one of the many atrocities meted out on the Tiv indigenes of Nasarawa State who have suffered and have continued to suffer from deliberate policies of government targeted specifically on our people. Your Excellency Sir, official record shows clearly that the various act of the Government of Nasarawa State against the Tiv indigenes of the State over the years is a clear case of systemic ethnic cleansing and systemic genocide. Permit me to state some of these negative policies.
 - a. **Land confiscation:** It is material to state that in 2023, the Nasarawa State Government had compulsorily acquired about 400,000 hectares of land from the Tiv indigenes for the Dangote Sugar Plantation at Awe Local Government, a private business venture. Notably, 28 Tiv settlements were affected and forcefully evicted by the compulsory acquisition without compensation. As if that was not

enough, the Government again acquired a large portion of land which were farmlands of the Tiv indigenes and handed over same to OLAM in Doma and now, the Executive Governor of Nasarawa State, His Excellency, Engr. A. A. Sule announced the taking over and compulsory acquisition of 10,000 hectares of Farm land, a large portion of which is situate and lying in the communities of the indigenes of Tiv people in Obi and Awe Local Government Areas. The Government of Engr. A. A. Sule has made it a deliberate policy to always expropriate Tiv lands for any purpose whatsoever, without any recourse to the plight of the people.

- b. **Deliberate refusal to employ Tiv indigenes into the civil service:** The present crop of Tiv employees in the civil service were employed by Abdullahi Adamu and Tanko Al-Makura administrations. In the entire employment exercise that had been carried out so far by Abdullahi Sule administration our children are deliberately sent away and the ones who have retired are deliberately not replaced. This policy is aimed at ensuring that we continue to be frustrated and psychologically traumatized. The Nasarawa State Government intends to make us STATELESS.
- c. **Depopulation:** The Tiv indigenes of Nasarawa State have continued to suffer consistent and deliberate acts of depopulation through sponsored armed attacks like what we suffered in 2001-2002, 2014-2015, 2017-2018 in Nasarawa State and now compulsory confiscation of land. This policy of compulsory acquisition of land is carefully intended to cause mass starvation and force our people to leave the state in search of land to farm. It is aimed at making us stateless. The crisis of 2018 sent away Tiv indigenes from Assakio and they have been refused to return, till date, by the Osakio of Assakio. Their farmlands have been taken away. In Kadarko, land grabbing by Sarkin Kadarko is at its peak. The matter is in the court of law. As we speak, in Keana, Tiv farmlands have been confiscated, specifically at Omagede (Igyo-Asen Village). Obosidoma, a Tiv settlement arae close to Keana was engulf in recent crises resulting to the chasing away of the Tiv indigenes of the area and they have been prevented from returning home with the

government doing NOTHING about it. They have cleared the land and are farming it. So, while our children cannot get employment in the civil service, the only source of survival which is farming is also being jeopardized as our ancestral lands have become the main target of the Engr. A. A. Sule's administration and the Traditional Rulers.

d. **Gerrymandering against the Tiv populace in order to skew electoral outcome against our interest:** By careful and deliberate government policies, most of our voting population has been marginalized, displaced and polling units' boundaries deliberately cancelled or taken to areas outside the reach of the people. We have continued to make a case without success and the only person who is supposed to protect us is not doing so. We ask for your intervention, Sir.

e. **Denial of political and other rights:** The position of the Tiv indigenes of Nasarawa State is very clear. We have lived in our ancestral lands as far back as the 16th century. We are mostly Christian who are proud of our own religion and culture. However we respect the religions and culture of other people, tribes and have continued to live peacefully with our neighbours.

This is why we wonder why the state government looks the other way when we are being systematically massacred from 2000 till date, so that undemocratic, and genocidal forces in Nigeria can unjustly establish themselves into oligarchies by subverting the democratic process.

f. **Traditional Institution:** It has been reported by the farmers and residents in the affected areas that the representations made on their behalf to Government are basically from traditional rulers, none of which is of Tiv extraction and indeed do not live in the communities where the farm lands are situated. In addition, the traditional Rulers have been carrying out personal threats on the Tiv indigenes and presenting a false narration to Engr. A. A. Sule administration. Recently, precisely on Thursday, 23rd January, 2025, the Osoho of Agwatashi, Dr. Umar Abubakar Apeshi, invited some traditional rulers and leaders from the Tiv areas for a meeting in his palace in Agwatashi. During the meeting, the traditional rulers and leaders

were coerced to sign consent forms to part with their land under the guise of attendance register. Those who could not sign because of their illiteracy were given ink to thumbprint. This action by the Osoho of Agwatashi is suspicious and shows the height of desperation to dispossess the Tiv people of their ancestral farmlands through dubious means because it is not in conformity with any legal procedure. It is claimed that someone has no right over the ancestral farmlands but in turn, want to have the people consent to document ceding such lands to either government, individual or company for a farming project. What a contradiction!

- g. It is indeed of serious concern that despite our population and contribution in Nasarawa State, we are the ONLY ethnic group in Nasarawa State without a recognized Traditional or Village Head at the moment. ALL our traditional institutions have been dismantled. Your Excellency, the record shows that as at 1926, the Tiv indigenes of Nasarawa State were having large numbers of existing village heads spread across the present Southern Senatorial District of Nasarawa State such as Jangargari in Awe Local Government, Buair/Gyargun in Obi Local Government, Gborigyo, Oluwa, Tugudu, Zegeiyo, Ategher in Doma Local Government, Kuduku and Umagede in Keana Local Government, Chorun in Lafia East, to mention but few. These village heads ought to have been transformed to district heads or even beyond. However, by deliberate Government policies, these recognized traditional institutions have been cancelled. The Administration of Abdullahi Adamu (Sarkin Yakin Keffi) revived and created additional 14 stools for our people, unfortunately and most shockingly, the government of Nasarawa State has employed a very dangerous policy of appointing persons who are not of Tiv indigenes as village heads to these stools and therefore are always against our interest.
- h. **The unfortunate position of government as evinced in the filing in court:** In a recent case instituted by the farmers in the affected areas against the Government of Nasarawa State, for taking steps to compulsorily acquire their land, it is

shocking and surprising that the position of government was that the Tiv indigenes are not entitled to compensation because the land in question, which they have deforested, lived on and cultivated since 1830 (as shown by official records), does not belong to them because they are settlers. It is shocking that a State Government, elected to protect its people will depose to this blatant falsehood in a Court process. The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria forbids this aberration. This manner of statement is capable of causing unrest, but we have continued to prevail on our people to remain calm and peaceful.

Further, in an Affidavit deposed to in Suit No. NSD/LF44/2025 at the High Court of Nasarawa State, the OSOHO of Agwatashi, Dr. Umar Abubakar Aposhi repeated the same falsehood of claiming that our ancestral lands belong to the Agwatashi community which is the same falsehood he sold to the Governor to hand over our land and collect compensation without any recourse to our people. I have attached the Court document to this letter as **ANNEXURE 2**.

13. **Our humble demands**

14. Your Excellency Sir, I have taken the liberty to show our history line in Nasarawa State and have as well narrated the remote and immediate challenges faced by the Tiv indigenes in Nasarawa State. On this premise we humbly;

- a. appeal that the forceful acquisition of the ancestral farmlands of the Tiv indigenes in Nasarawa State for whichever farming projects be suspended forthwith.
- b. request for immediate investigation into this complaint and seek the intervention of Your Excellency to impress on the government of Nasarawa State to do everything within the law to restore the dignity of Tiv indigenes in the whole of Nasarawa State.
- c. appeal that the Tiv farmers in Nasarawa State should be jealously protected and encouraged for massive agricultural activities in order to contribute their quota in feeding the nation as they have always been doing.

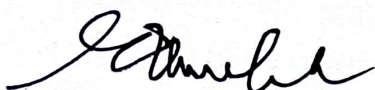
d. request for restoration forthwith of all our statutory village heads.

Finally, I humbly and further seek your intervention to protect the legitimate lands of the Tiv indigenes of Nasarawa State and to safeguard their major source of livelihood.

Thank you, sir, in anticipation of your kind intervention.

Yours faithfully,

FOR: TIV DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION, NASARAWA STATE



.....
Professor Emmanuel Iornumbe Kucha

Ag. President, Tiv Development Association, Nasarawa State.

CC:

1. The President of the Senate

Three Arms Zone,
National Assembly Complex,
Abuja,
FCT.

2. The Speaker, House of Representatives

Three Arms Zone,
National Assembly Complex,
Abuja,
FCT.

3. The Secretary to the Government of the Federation

Shehu Shagari Complex,
Three Arms Zone,
National Assembly Complex,
Abuja,
FCT.

4. The National Security Adviser

Three Arms Zone,
National Assembly Complex,
Abuja, FCT.

5. The Minister of Agriculture

No. 3 Idris Ibrahim Crescent,
Garki, Abuja,
Nigeria

6. The Governor, Nasarawa State

Nasarawa State Government House,
Shendam Road, Lafia,
Nasarawa State.

7. The Speaker, Nasarawa State House of Assembly.

Nasarawa State Government House,
Shendam Roa, Lafia,
Nasarawa State.

MEMORANDUM.

Annexure 1

RESIDENT B. E. N. U. E. PROVINCE
Makurdi.

No. 284/1.

THE DIVISIONAL OFFICER, L. A. F. I. A.

Date: 6th April, 1933.

Kaduna. 271/32.

Tribal and Social Organisation: Lafia Emirate.

I attach an extract from a report by Mr. A. A. Cullen, District Officer, on Umaisha District, Nasarawa Emirate.

2. Please inform me whether similar succession customs occur among the Arago of Doma or Keana.

Resident Benue Province.

TNB.

MEMORANDUM

From THE RESIDENT B. E. N. U. E. PROVINCE
Makurdi.

No. 284/1A.

To THE DIVISIONAL OFFICER, L. A. F. I. A.

Date: 5th July, 1933.

Kaduna. 272/32

Tribal and Social Organisation: Lafia Emirate.

With reference to my memorandum No. 284/1 of the 6th of April, 1933, I have to enquire whether a reply can now be given.

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Outline History of Lafia Division.

The earliest known inhabitants of Lafia Division were members of the Koro/tribe, who say they migrated here from near Kororofa (in Adamawa Province) where their ancestors married the Jukun Chief's daughter. They say they lived then as they do now, in secluded patches of tall forest, energetically farming the more open country round. There are about 6,000 of them today, and they are remarkable for the love their young men have for ornaments and Raleigh bicycles.

The next arrivals - this is said to have been in the thirteenth century - were the Arago, an offshoot from the Jukun stock from Kororofa. The elder brother settled at Doma where there was a Koro settlement while the younger stayed by the way at Keana. Other Arago settlers came from the same direction and settled in other villages such as Agwatashi, Obi and Assaikio. Meanwhile the Jukun moved their capital from Kororofa to Wukari. Some of those who stayed behind at Kororofa then settled at Awe and Wuse. These, however, remained in the Jukun kingdom and today their descendants speak Jukun and not Arago, the languages having become distinct.

The Arago and Jukun are remarkable for their developed idea of supernatural kingship. The customs of the villages in the east of the Division, closest to Wukari, correspond fairly closely to those of the Jukun. In the west the Doma people retain a number of them but have either lost or, as they say never acquired that of providing a sacred maze (the Kunguni) in which their Chief eats and performs certain ceremonies. The Arago chieftaincies prospered, retaining a loose allegiance to Wukari. Doma began a connection with the emirate of Zazzau which was continued with their Fulani successors. A number of Gwandara (a tribe who speak a primitive form of Hausa) settled amongst them. About 5,000 remain today. Shabu, six miles north of Lafia on the Jos road is thought to be their oldest village. Although the Division was protected from the full force of the Fulani Jihad of 1805 by the presence of tsetse fly, which makes it impossible to keep horses here for any length of time, nevertheless the movements of people which were stimulated in the setting up of the Sokoto Empire and the replacing of the Sultan of Bornu by the Shehu, affected it by bringing a group of Beri Beri settlers who had come from Bornu via Kamberi near Lau on the Benue River. After two false starts at Shabu and Kwandiri, these settled in 1777 under their Chief Dunama on a site given to them by the Chief of Doma, with the wish that they might be fortunate and peaceful there - Lafiya in Hausa. Hence the name of the town Lafia Beri Beri. The settlement prospered and by 1780 was recognized as a separate chieftainship by Wukari who still exercised suzerainty over the country. Lafia Beri Beri was sufficiently well known to appear on the map Sultan Belle of Sokoto gave Captain Clapperton in 1825. Meanwhile other groups of settlers from the North were entering the Division and settling principally at Awe and Azara. At Awe they were a mixture of Hausa and Fulani - at Azara, Birawa from Bauchi who had at one time been joined with the Bornuans who settled in Lafia.

The Kamberri of Lafia as they now call themselves continued to expand and destroyed Jonkwoi the chief Migili town. They continued intermittent raids on their neighbours throughout the nineteenth century. Sometime about 1820 they re-embraced Islam from the practice of which they

appear



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appear to have lapsed during their wanderings. In 1873 the town was invested and taken by Bayero son of the Sultan of Sokoto with the assistance of Kean and Doma. Fortunately for Lafia, Bayero was not long afterwards recalled by the intervention of the Emir of Zaria. A memorial of this raid is the great carved door of the Emir's Palace of Lafia which was carried off to Keana as a prize and is still to be seen there. The Arago chieftainships had varying fortunes, but those, Doma and Keana, who made judicious alliances with the surrounding emirates, chiefly Zaria, managed to retain their independence of Lafia until the coming of the British. Those, like Agwatashi who omitted to get outside support were overwhelmed and survive as part of Lafia District. The settlers in Awe gradually became too strong for their Jukun hosts who removed to the now small village of Akyekura. There was some competition between Azara and Awe as to which should become leaders of the District but Awe succeeded in getting support from the Emir of Bauchi.

With the coming of the British in 1900 Lafia and Awe were recognized as independent chieftainships while Doma and Keana were placed under Lafia. A Native Treasury at Lafia serves the whole Division. Since that time important migrations have taken place and are still in progress. The Tiv having crossed the Benue some 70 years ago have settled in the Division in such numbers as to become the largest tribe, about 20,000 of them. Similarly the Eggon are moving down from their hills in the north and now number 10,000. Ibos too, chiefly from Onitsha and Bende have moved up the railway which came here in 1927 and handle a considerable share of the trade by the expansion of which Lafia has grown to a town of nearly 10,000 inhabitants.

The economic strength of the Division lies in its abundant farmland near the railway to the North and about 8,000 tons of guinea corn with perhaps half that weight of yams are raised annually. Christian Missions have made some slight progress among the Arago, Tiv, Eggon and Migili, and Islam rather more among the Arago, though not among the other tribes. The administration of such a mixture of tribes naturally presents problems. At present there seem to be indications that in the future the course towards responsible indigenous control may lie though the use of new conciliar forms of organization together with such features of traditional tribal organization as remain. Though the Arago (about 16,000 of them) remain in coherent social entities, they are being outnumbered by immigrants who have lost a good deal of their social organization in transit, and the Kamberri, threatened at least commercially from the south, tend to become more and more deeply divided among themselves under the stress caused by the impact of new ideas.

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D. R. ...
 District Officer,
 i/c Lafia Division.



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IN LAFIA DIVISION.

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General
There are, according to 1950 census, about 6500 Koro in Lafia Division. All of them are to be found in Lafia Emirate. The Koro are thus the fourth largest of the different peoples of the Division. Unlike the other tribes of the Division they are to be found within a fairly compact area between the Eastern edge of Lafia N.A. Forest Reserve in Doma District in the West to Assaiko Village in the East. They are said by the other peoples of the Division to be rich and miserly. Their reported wealth of which there is little outward sign on a visit to one of their villages comes entirely from farming. They are usually to be seen in large numbers at Lafia and Agyaragu markets and all the men while retaining their native dress are usually to be seen mounted on bicycles. Bicycles are in fact the only visible signs of wealth among the Koro.

The dress of the men, usually a skirt with a bodice dyed in a shade of maroon and ornamented with cowrie shells and nickel coin, hair plaited and usually fastened to the rest of the hair with variously shaped metal clips, is familiar to all who go along the Lafia-Makurdi road. The women wear less clothes than the men but usually have more ornaments at the wrists and ankles and carry a greater proportion of nickel coin and bangles as ornaments than the men or the women. Ear rings are not worn and the practice of wearing a wooden plug in the middle of the upper lip by the women is probably dying out and is now to be seen more among the older women but one does see younger women with a small plug. The size of the plug increases with the age of the woman and the largest plug seen up to date was about $\frac{3}{4}$ " in diameter. But the chief characteristic of all Koro, men, women and children is the maroon dye in which they from time to time apparently immerse their entire bodies, after which it is the fashion among the women to polish their faces, and seemingly the higher the polish the more fashionable the woman. Undoubtedly this application of dye by sealing the pores does not make for healthy bodies, as the records of Lafia N.A. dispensary can show. The Koro are not given to washing their bodies frequently, presumably so that the fashionable dye does not come off.

Villages.

I have visited 90% of the Koro villages in Lafia Emirate and have only found three which are not in the middle of a forest. There is usually one thick belt of forest surrounding each village. Some times as at Gudan Rai there are two such belts. Often the different wards of the village are again divided from one another by forest as at Agwade where there are four wards all divided by thick belts of forest. There are two reasons given for continuing living in the forest. The first is that it is the Koro custom. As hunters they had little alternative when their ancestors came to Lafia. The

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second reason is that forest barriers were found to be great protection during the various wars. For, besides the forest belts most Koro villages will be found to have an old wall. Of the villages mentioned as not being in a forest two have been opened up as a result of road construction while the third is a new settlement.

Within each village there is usually a large open space in which the local boka hut is to be found. Only the elders of the village may enter this and the powers of the charms are renewed once a year. Round and giving off this open space are the households with the huts closely set and the spaces between the huts palissaded with strong timbers. Sometimes in the entrance passage there is a further fence making the intruder turn in order to negotiate it. (Eastern ward of Agvade). Inside the household area the vacant space is of rammed and beaten earth as hard sometimes as concrete.

Each ward and each village has a profusion of sarauta attached to it. Very often there is no reason for the sarauta except that it is thought to be the done thing to hold some kind of title.

3. Origins.

I have not been able with any certainty to trace the origins of the Koro. They themselves are unanimous that they came from Wukari where they say the Jukun were their abokin wasa. This is confirmed, though not convincingly, in Wukari Division. Above all, I have not been able to ascertain the meaning of the word 'Koro'. It is undoubtedly a name given to these people by the Hausa but it is a name given indiscriminately. Thus there are Koron Huntu and Koron Zanne in Keffi Division and Koro are mentioned extensively in 'Report on Band Zanne -- Niger Province'. I had not had the opportunity of following up any relationship that there might be between any of these Koro. It seems probable, however, that Koron Zanne at least in Keffi Division are Gwandara. Representatives of Koron Huntu who came to visit the elders of Duduguru Village could find almost nothing in common between themselves and their hosts. Conversation was conducted in Hausa as no common words could be found and the elders of Duduguru decried the wearing of ear-rings and thought little of the farming efforts of Koron Huntu. It would appear that the name 'Koro' implies no common origin among the people so named. Koron Huntu had no idea of their origin except that they used to live in forests. They also appear to have some affinity from what the visitors said to Koro in Zaria Division. In any event Koro of Lafia Division have always said that they have no connection with what they call Koron Waje. As the name Koro is misleading and as it has yet no discovered significance I would like to suggest that the Koro of Zaria Division are called

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I have not been able with any certainty to trace the origins of the Koro. They themselves are unanimous that they came from Wukari where they say the Jukun were their abokin wasa. This is confirmed, though not convincingly, in Wukari Division. Above all, I have not been able to ascertain the meaning of the word 'Koro'. It is undoubtedly a name given to these people by the Hausa but it is a name given indiscriminately. Thus there are Koron Huntu and Koron Zanne in Keffi Division and Koro are mentioned extensively in 'Report on Band Renue - Niger Province'. I had not had the opportunity of following up any relationship that there might be between any of these Koro. It seems probable, however, that Koron Zanne at least in Keffi Division are Guandara. Representatives of Koron Huntu who came to visit the elders of Duduguru village could find almost nothing in common between themselves and their hosts. Conversation was conducted in Hausa as no common words could be found and the elders of Duduguru decried the wearing of ear-rings and thought little of the farming efforts of Koron Huntu. It would appear that the name 'Koro' implies no common origin among the people so named. Koron Huntu had no idea of their origin except that they used to live in forests. They also appear to have some affinity from what the visitors said to Koro in Zaria Division. In any event Koro of Zaria Division have always said that they have no connection with what they call Koron Waje. As the name Koro is misleading and as it has yet no discovered significance I would like to suggest that the Koro of Zaria Division are called

3. *Origins*

'MIGILI' which is what they call themselves and which means hunters'.

Only one elder in any of the villages could give any reason why every Koro believes rightly or wrongly that his ancestors came from Wukari. This elder was the village head of Kyaragu in Doma District. He tells a story as handed down to him by his parents that the Koro were expelled from Wukari Division by Aku, not one gathers in a high temper but because Aku thought it would be wiser for his own safety, on his being discovered that one of Aku's daughters was pregnant by a Koro. Aku agreed that they should marry and led them to an outlying part of his dominions where he told them to settle down. This outlying part is said to be on the site of the present palace of Chief of Doma where two large trees are shown as being the original site of Koro settlement. The fact that the Koro were there when Arago arrived is admitted by Arago in Doma and Sarkin Doma is at some pains to perform the rites asked of him annually by Koro of Kyaragu (the name of the original village and now some 3 1/2 miles East of Doma Village) when they send him a cock and some oil. If any of this be true and if it be true as recorded that Arago arrived in Doma some time in 14th century then Koro have some claim to be the oldest inhabitants of Tafia Division.

The Koro themselves admit that either Kyaragu or Anisae (2 miles South West of Tafia Town) are supposed to be the earliest Koro settlements in the Division. There is a fairly general legend among them that two weary hunters from Kyaragu were one day lost in the forest when they to their surprise and thinking there were no other inhabitants near Kyaragu heard the sound of wood being chopped and on approaching found other Koro. They had come 13 miles from Kyaragu to Anisae, now a village of 72 inhabitants. Mushi family also say that they found Anisae here when they came. How other Koro families or family groups came to Tafia is uncertain. Some such as the Atabara family claim that they came from the South via Keana. This is probable as they have affinities with Obi and its Arago inhabitants. Others say that they came from the West having followed the Arago settlers there.

4. Family Groups. *Chas? C*

Among the Koro twelve family groups are recognised. Each group has its name but the origin of the names is not known. (Picturesquely, it is supposed among the small Umme group that as 'Um-me' means 'my back aches' that Umme village was founded after long wanderings). Koro never appear to have had an overall chief. Each family group has its villages and among the villages there is an order of seniority according to the length of time a village has been established. Each family group has its head. This head

is the senior member of the leading family still inhabiting the original or senior village of the family group. Apparently, a family group made its first village and this village had its head. In time the sons of this head went away from the parent village and in the course of their hunting founded their own villages. But the eldest son of the village head did not on his father's death claim ~~that~~ that he was the senior member of the family group nor did he claim that the headship of the group was now vested in his village. Instead, he went home to claim his portion of the inheritance and confirmed that the leading member of the family group was now the son or the elder of the sons who had stayed at home with their father. This son or these sons might be the youngest of the father's sons. Thus, the Mazare family group (one of the most numerous among the Koro) when asked to choose a representative unanimously referred the matter to village head of Kyaragu as they said he was their head. Mazare contains the large village of Duduguru (1200 inhabitants) while Kyaragu has only 45. Village head of Kyaragu while admitting that he was the head of the family group by virtue of being head of the senior village in the group declined the honour and asked that Duduguru should choose as being the most important village of the group. The family group agreed to this. On inquiry it was learnt that Duduguru was founded by a branch of the family senior to that at Kyaragu. In Appendix A is a list of the family groups with the villages which they now occupy. These villages are shown in order of seniority. Some villages no longer exist but were once occupied by the family group under whom they are shown. These former villages are underlined. With the desertion of these villages the headship of the family passed to next senior village. (In all cases the deserted villages ~~xxxxxxx~~ were senior to those inhabited by the family group now.) As a further example, in the Mapano family group Akyerakun Jatau is the senior village but an older line of the family is to be found in Atukwasa which is one of the more recently established villages in Mapano. But if the succession ~~from~~ to headship of the family which normally goes from father to son should fail through lack of heirs the headship of the family passes to Akyerakun Sidi, the village next in seniority to Akyerakun Jatau. It does not pass to an elder branch of the family established in a comparatively junior village. Again, in Mosha family group Sarkin Kwangwa (Gidan Ausa) is the senior member of the family but the head of the Mosha family group is admitted to be one Abaka who lives in the senior village of the group, Agirgba.

But Abaka is not the village head of Agirgba nor is Jatau the head of the Mapano group the village head of Akyerakun Jatau. In the larger villages it is often not the practice for the senior member of the family to be the village head. The headship of the village passes from ward to ward but election is done by the village council, confirmed by the senior member of the family ~~and~~ resident in the village and re-confirmed by the head of the family

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group sitting in council with the remaining ^{elders} members of the family from the various villages of the group.

Some family groups have only one village extant e.g. Alwikpo (family group)--Adabi; Muguni family group-Anisae; Mukpa family group-Umae. It is claimed that the other villages were wiped out during the course of wars. Wars figure largely in any account by Koros of themselves and because of this Gidan Rai holds a special place in their history. This was their refuge. Between the double 'wall' of forest there was ~~an~~ a marsh which it is said no horseman dared approach.

On any formal occasion the family group (or its more important members) are to be found assembled and a great amount of hand-shaking and greeting goes on. The family groups are becoming more and more intermingled and it is probable that their significance to the Koro will not last much longer.

The position of Madaki in a village is an interesting one. He will usually be found to be a man whose father, ~~member of another family group,~~ married outside ~~the~~ his own group and sent one of his sons back to help his wife's family e.g. Madakin Kirayi (Agyela family group) whose father was a native of Duduguru (Mazare group). Madaki usually has powers of operating certain charms and this power is given to no one else. These charms are usually associated with farm fertility. Every man when he is old enough is given an 'oribo' prepared by Madaki to bring him farming success.

Each household has its own 'akolaba' which is kept by the head of the house and is used for casting spells. Koro pay great heed to spells cast however distant may be their effects. Sarkin Atukwasa who recently died (April 1950) is said to have offended against a spell some years ago but he is believed to have died as a result of offending the spell. He was an old man. It is one of the less attractive traits of the Koro that they have no use for old men who cannot work and take no pity on them and drive them to starvation.

5. Koro funeral.

As a tail piece to this report I should like to put on record a short account of a Koro funeral which I witnessed.

In this case the funeral was that of a village elder. He died at 3 o'clock one afternoon. The fact that he had died was an open secret but no one was allowed to do anything about mourning his death until a gun was let off at 4 a.m. the next morning. Then the corpse was hoisted onto a bier which was covered with a bright red cloth. On this bier the women of the family climbed and until the body was buried at 12 p.m. were engaged in telling the deceased how happy he was. Meanwhile, the young men of the village armed with spears and with all their finery danced round the bier and broke away occasionally to dance up the village street. Their dancing consisted of a series of high leaps when they clacked their heels together ~~xxxx~~ with a most resounding noise. To the same dancing the deceased was buried. For some days afterwards members of the family group were coming into the village paying homage at the grave. ~~All the ceremony took place in the middle of the~~

6.

All the ceremony took place in the middle of the village market with the market in full swing.

Attached as Appendix A -- list of Koro family groups and their villages past and present.

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE OF NASARAWA STATE
IN THE NASARAWA STATE JUDICIAL DIVISION
HOLDEN AT OBI

SUIT NO: NSD/LF44/2025
MOTION NO:

BETWEEN:

1. AONDOTIVLUMUN L.
2. DR. FRANCIS UGER
3. UPAV FELIX SAAIOR
4. SHITILE MOSES
5. DENNIS ALYEGBA
6. TERWASE PEVKYAA
7. ERIC GBAGYIOR
8. VARTYAV DANIEL NYIBIAM
9. ZAKI IORSHASE ANCHILE
10. ZAKI AKAANGEE GUDU
11. ZAKI UKUM BYA
12. ZAKI ANTHONY UMANGER UDUGH
13. ZAKI AKAACA WUA
14. VITALIS AKOM
15. ZAKI CHINA ANGBIANBEE
16. ZAKI TEGHTEGH SHANKODI
17. ZAKI WILLIAM KWAGHTSER

(FOR THEMSELVES AND ON BEHALF OF MEMBERS OF THE INDIGENOUS TIV COMMUNITIES OF AKAHA VILLAGE, UTSUWA VILLAGE, USULA VILLAGE, UDUGH VILLAGE, CHINA VILLAGE, CHABO VILLAGE, WACHI VILLAGE, UTSWA VILLAGE, TYUNGU VILLAGE, UVIRKAA VILLAGE, UGBA VILLAGE, DAAH VILLAGE, SHANKODI VILLAGE, IKYORCHIHA VILLAGE, AYARKEKE VILLAGE, UKAA VILLAGE, USHITILE VILLAGE, CHIAWA VILLAGE, IGBOUGH VILLAGE, AGON VILLAGE IN AWE AND OBI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS OF NASARAWA STATE)

PLAINTIFFS/
RESPONDENTS

AND

1. THE GOVERNOR OF NASARAWA STATE
2. THE NASARAWA STATE GOVERNMENT
3. THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF NASARAWA STATE

DEFENDANTS/
RESPONDENTS

4. NASARAWA GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION SYSTEM (NAGIS)
5. THE MINISTRY OF LAND AND SURVEY, NASARAWA STATE
6. THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, NASARAWA STATE
7. THE NIGERIAN ARMY

IN THE MATTER OF APPLICATION FOR JOINDER:

1. HRH. DR. UMAR ABUBAKAR APESHI
(OSOHO OF AGWATASHI/OLOSOHO)
(SUING FOR AND ON BEHALF OF AGWATASHI
COMMUNITY, OBI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA,
NASARAWA STATE) } APPLICANT/ INTERESTED PARTY

AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF THE MOTION ON NOTICE

I, Dr. Umar Abubakar Apeshi, Male, Adult, Muslim, Medical Doctor and the Paramount Ruler of Agwatashi chiefdom, Nigerian Citizen of Agwatashi, Obi Local Government Area, Nasarawa state do hereby make Oath and state as follows:

1. That I am the Applicant in this application and the paramount ruler and custodian of the lands for and on behalf of Agwatashi Community, in Agwatashi Chiefdom of Obi LGA, and by virtue of my position as such I am conversant with the facts deposed herein.
2. That I have the consent and authority of the people of my community and all other traditional rulers in my Chiefdom who I made this application on behalf to depose to this affidavit.
3. That I was in receipt of a letter from the Ministry of Justice, Nasarawa State dated 22nd April, 2025 notifying me of the pendency of the instant suit. The said letter is hereby annexed and marked **Exhibit A**.
4. That I have the consent of members of my community to seek and be joined as a party on their behalf in this suit.

5. That I have carefully studied the originating summons and the supporting affidavit, and arrived at the conclusion that we are necessary parties in the suit.
6. That all the lands in issue that falls under Agwatashi chiefdom of Obi Local Government Area are within my domain.
7. That plaintiffs have been occupying and enjoying some of the lands in my domain under Obi LGA in question peacefully at the pleasure of Agwatashi community as customary tenants for years now.
8. That Agwatashi community whom I made this application on behalf are the owners of the land.
9. That joining me will not prejudice the Plaintiffs, rather it will enable the court to adjudicate upon and settle all the questions involved in the matter.
10. That my interest and indeed the interest of Agwatashi community will be irreparably prejudiced if I am not made a party.
11. That Agwatashi community and its people will be affected by the result of the litigation.
12. That it is just and convenient to join me as a party to the proceedings.
13. That it is in the interest of justice to grant this application.
14. That I swear to this affidavit in good faith conscientiously believing its content to be true and in accordance with the oath Act in force.

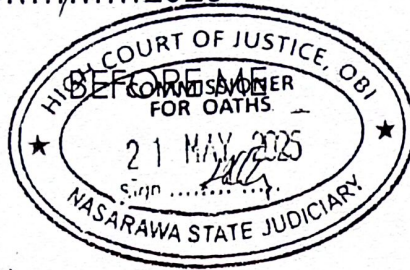


Deponent

KANA & CO. HOUSE OF LAW

Sworn to at the High Court Registry, Obi

Dated this *21st*..... Day of *May*.....2025



COMMISSIONER FOR OATH