RESTORING HARMONY IN THE DISARRAYED NATION OF NIGERIA: PHILOSOPHICAL ANTHROPOLOGY, A VERITABLE ARBITER

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Abstract

It is only in a few countries in the world that there is no major unrest. Nonetheless, the disarray in some countries is much tense and far ravaging than in the others. Nigeria happens to be one of such deeply disarrayed countries. This lack of harmony in Nigeria has led to brokenness in almost every facet of its national existence. It has also been observed for a very long time that the three major reasons among many others for the turmoil in the country: violation of freedom, inequality and insecurity worsen as the day goes by. Based on the said observation, this paper seeks to proffer a solution with Philosophical Anthropology – a fundamental science of the essence and essential organization of man, of his metaphysical essential origin, as well as his physical, mental and spiritual element in the world. It Places the value of man above every other value and places him as an end in itself instead of a means to an end. This paper believes that when this awareness is created, Nigerians will see insurmountable reasons for the need to respect the value of human life, hence addressing the major issues causing the persistent disarray in the nation. There will be an expose of some incidences that will aid in the understanding of the work.

Key words: harmony, disarray, Nigeria, philosophical anthropology and arbiter

Introduction

Harmony is what makes a nation great. It is a binding force that unites a people. According to Landauer & Rowlands (2001), ... harmony... brings men together in peaceful cooperation to benefit their lives. It is the bedrock of society. It is why people choose to live in a society. Unfortunately it is nowhere to be found in Nigeria. Ever since her independence in 1960, Nigeria has being moving from one crisis to another which culminated in the civil war of 1967 to 1970 where millions of lives were lost and properties worth billions of naira destroyed. The thinking was that the civil war will put an end to those things that led to the crisis and harmony restored, but little did Nigerians know that it will rather serve as a catalyst that will aggravate the disarray that will

consume the little harmony left in the country. Immediately after the civil war the state of nation became worst. Every string that binds the nation together became shattered and there came high level of disunity.

The people are made to be frustrated due to the fact that the basic things that are needed for harmonious coexistence of the constituent groups that made up the society were being toiled with, with impunity. The fundamental right and privileges that ought to be enjoyed by every citizen of the country are made to be the exclusive of the few that belongs to a particular tribe and religion in the country—rule of law are not respected. The government always fail their own part of the social contract that they willingly entered with the people and when the people do the needful as stipulated by the law by taking to the street through civil disobedience as can be seen in the write ups of many philosophers such as John Locke, Thomas Aquinas, etc. the government always tries to stop them with all the forces that one can imagine of, hence, disarray in the country.

The disarray always deepens as the day goes by without the government taken any correction in the sense that they repeat the same thing they always do with the hope of achieving harmony but to no avail. It is as a result of this that this paper seeks to introduce Philosophical anthropology as an arbiter in order to restore the harmony that has for long eluded Nigeria as a nation. In the sense that it will help in fixing the major three among the vital issues-absence of freedom, insecurity and inequality that led to brokenness and disarray being experienced in the nation today.

Clarification of Concepts

Harmony: Harmony/harmonization among many meanings it possesses could be said to mean an effective way to optimally coordinate differences and productively and positively transform reality. In present context, it could be said to mean ability of people whether of homogenous or heterogeneous background to live together in unity without partiality or marginalization against a group(s) that are existing within the society or community. Chenyang (2008)harmony i s best understood comprehensive process of harmonization. It encompasses spatial as well as temporal dimensions, metaphysical as well as moral and aesthetical dimensions. It is a fundamentally open notion in the sense that it does not aim to conform to any pre-set order. Harmony could simply said to mean orderliness.

Disarray: Disarray could be said to be the opposite of harmony. It is the state of disorganization, whereby things or events are not following the rightful or duly order/process that it ought to follow in the course of movement towards

achieving desired result(s). It can also said to mean the state of crisis or total breakdown of law and order in both physical and spiritual realms. It could also mean the state of conflict that leads to underdevelopment and backwardness.

Nigeria: Nigeria is a country in the continent of Africa. It is located in the sub-Saharan part of West Africa. Its coast in the south lies on the Gulf of Guinea in the Atlantic Ocean. It comprises 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory, where the capital, Abuja is located. Nigeria is officially a democratic secular country (Nigerian Law, 2015). With 186 million inhabitants, Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa and the seventh most populous country in the world (The CIA World Fact Book, 2014). Nigeria has the third-largest youth population in the world, after India and China, with more than 90 million of its population under age 18(The CIA World Fact Book, 2014). The country is viewed as a multinational state as it is inhabited by over 500 ethnic groups, of which the three largest are the Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba; these ethnic groups speak over 500 different languages and are identified with a wide variety of cultures (Otite:2015). Official language is English. Nigeria is divided roughly in half between Christians, who live mostly in the southern part of the country, and Muslims, who live mostly in the north. A minority of the population practice religions indigenous to Nigeria, such as those native to the Igbo and Yoruba ethnicities. She is said to be the largest black nation in the world.

Philosophical anthropology: Philosophical Anthropology according to Crystalink.com, the discipline that seeks unify is several...investigations of human nature in an effort to understand individuals as both creatures of their environment and creators of their own values. It is the field of philosophy that seeks to interpret philosophically the facts that has been discovered concerning the nature of man and of the human condition. It presupposes a developed body of... thought, and accordingly, in its program it aspires to a new, scientifically grounded metaphysics. It seeks to elucidate the basic qualities that make man what he is and distinguish him from other beings. (iresearchnet.com). Philosophical anthropology is the study that places the value of man above every other value; the study that sees man as an end instead of a means to an end.

Consideration of the three Major causes of disarray in Nigeria

There are many factors that cause disarray in Nigeria but due to want of time and space this paper will be restricted to just the three that were depicted in the abstract of this work--- absence of freedom, inequality and insecurity.

Absence of freedom:

One of the rarest commodities in Nigeria today is freedom, irrespective of the fact that it is among the fundamental human right which is said to be the

"inalienable rights of people"--- the legal entitlements which every citizen should enjoy without fear of the government or other fellow citizens. They are said to be the rights which cannot be given to man by man but are earned by man for being a human because they are necessary for his continuous happy existence with himself, his fellow man and for participation in a complex society. Unfortunately, these rights of freedom are lacking in Nigeria. Even if they exist at all it is the exclusive of the leaders or the ruling class; akin to Thrasymacus saying that justice is an advantage of the stronger (Harlap, 347-370: 1979). In Nigeria today freedom is indeed the advantage of the stronger (the ruling party, the Fulani, the northerners, etc).

According 1999 Nigerian constitution (as amended), the citizens of Nigeria are entitled to some freedom such as: Right to Freedom of Thought, Conscience and Religion, Right to Freedom of Expression at the Press, Right to Freedom of Movement, Right to Freedom from Discrimination, etc. All these rights and freedom enumerated above have been consistently violated in Nigeria from time immemorial but it seems to be at its peak now.

For instance the right to freedom of Thought, conscience and Religion imply secularity in Nigeria---- guaranteeing the peoples entitlement to religious freedom including freedom to change religion or belief and manifest and propagate one's religion or belief in worship, teaching, practice and observance.

The law also provides:

- 1. No person attending any place of education shall be required to receive religious instruction or to take part in any religious ceremony relating to a religion not his own.
- 2. No religious community or denomination shall be prevented from providing religious instruction for pupils of that community or denomination in any place of education maintained wholly by that community or denomination.
- 3. Nothing in the provision of the Constitution shall entitle any person to form, take part in the activity or be a member of secret society.

Despite these constitutional provisions, however, there have been frequent reports of human rights abuses among cleric fundamentalists. Nigeria has witnessed many clashes between Christian and Muslim adherents over the years (naijalegaltalkng.com). In some states of the federation, the way the government are behaving or approaching the issue especially in this current dispensation makes it seems as if they are partners in violating this particular right and freedom in the country. The case of Kaduna State is one among the numerous examples where the state Governor Nasir El-rufai is making laws that are against Christians and confiscation of their properties, withdrawal of their C of O and suspension of Easter holiday in the state. This act goes a long

way to show that what is contained in the Nigerian constitution is a mere paper work for confusing the rest of the world or to be used when the tide is against the ruling class but truncated when they have advantage over others, hence the disarray in Nigeria.

Freedom of expression is one of the costliest freedoms in Nigeria currently. One is expected to observe but not to talk. Once one says anything against the government in power he will be tracked by the Directorate of Secret Services (DSS), Nigerian Police Force (NPF) or Economic Financial Crime Commission (EFCC). These are the three major agencies used in intimidating people from expressing their views in Nigeria today. Many elderly statesmen, opinion leaders, opposition members, journalists, religious leaders that expressed their views against the ruling government have visited these agencies all in the bid to shun and cow them into silence. Some are still in their custody till date.

It was on a Tuesday September 4, 2018 that the house of Chief Edwin Clark one of the most vocal and elderly statesman and one time minister of information in Nigeria was searched by members of Nigerian Police Force because he and some elders condemned the evil they discovered in the present administration. All these acts are in a bid to cow him into silence but rather making him to become quiet it triggered disharmony in the country, which led to the dismissal of the officers that went on that mission after the denial of Inspector General of Nigerian Police that he is unaware of their illegal sojourn in the house of Chief Edwin Clark in search of ammunition. And Niger Deltas seeing it as an affront and insult to one of their patriarchs threatened to go back to the creek to start bombing of pipelines and kidnapping of expatriates. Vanguard Newspaper Reported it thus: "A coalition of Niger Delta militants said yesterday they were returning to the creeks to disrupt oil production in the Niger Delta, following last Tuesday's raid on the Abuja house of elder statesman, Chief Edwin Clark, by policemen over alleged illegal possession of arms and ammunition". One can see that more disarray is achieved because of looking for harmony the wrong way.

Inequality

One among the major causes of disarray in Nigeria today is inequality. There is inequality everywhere in Nigeria irrespective of the fact that equality is stated in our national policy on education--- that our education is geared towards the attainment of egalitarian society. And article 17 section 1 of 1999 constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended maintains that the State social order is founded on ideals of Freedom, Equality and Justice. Sub section 2 (a) of the same constitution maintains that every citizen shall have equality of rights, obligations and opportunities before the law. (Constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999). Unfortunately the issue as regards to

equality is nothing but a mere paper work. It will be said that theoretically equality exists in Nigeria but practically what we have is inequality in every sphere of our existence as a nation.

There is no equality before the law. For in Nigeria today, some people are above the law and have no respect for rule of law or decision of the court which in theory was said that everyone should be equal before. The current President of Nigeria Gen. Mohammadu Buhari and his government are typical example of people that are not equal with others; they are above the law and violate the rule of law at will. His penchant for violation of the law made him to say that rule of law should be subjected to national interest during the 2018 annual law conference. Here is his exact word:

Rule of Law must be subject to the supremacy of the nation's security and national interest. Our apex court has had cause to adopt a position on this issue in this regard and it is now a matter of judicial recognition that; where national security and public interest are threatened or there is a likelihood of their being threatened, the individual rights of those allegedly responsible must take second place, in favour of the greater good of society. (Oyenigbehin, 2018).

The above is an instance of a country where inequality reigns supreme when it has to do with the law. Not adhering to court orders as it affects the releasing of some people like El-Zakzaky the leader of Shia Moslem in Nigeria and Colonel Dasuki Sambo the former Defence Minister (which he later released late 2019 after so much pressure from International bodies) are some of the instances of Inequality before the law in Nigeria.

Apart from inequality before the law in Nigeria; there are many other spheres where inequality exist in Nigeria like was said earlier but due to want of time and space they will just be mentioned. The areas include: power sharing, education, government appointments, employment, state creation, infrastructures, scholarships, loans and grants, forces, etc. In Nigeria, these mentioned sectors do not operate as demanded by federal character, but are normally structured or designed in a way that it will favour the people of a particular tribe, sex, religion and class; hence, manifestation of disarray and disharmony experienced in the country today.

Insecurity

Insecurity is one among the major challenges faced in Nigeria presently. Neither people's lives nor their properties are protected irrespective of the fact

that the constitution made it clear that; "Every person has a right to life, and no one shall be deprived intentionally of his life, save in execution of the sentence of a court in respect of a criminal offence of which he has been found guilty in Nigeria" (Constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999). Like all other things that have to do with the masses that are contained in the constitution this is also a paper work. Every day people lose their lives and properties in Nigeria with little or no effort made to protect them. From East to West, North to South of Nigeria, the news of killing and maiming of people abound. The most unfortunate thing is that this killing and maiming is done by both Nigerians and foreigners with the government making flimsy excuses to justify the killing and their inability to protect the people. The Punch News paper corroborates:

President Muhammadu Buhari demonstrated his cluelessness afresh on Sunday when he blamed herders' act of horrific violence on the shrinking Lake Chad and alleged biased media reports. His narrow narrative seeks vainly to explain away the campaign of terror and mayhem by bandits on the displacement of herdsmen from the lake area and hang the seeming helplessness of his administration in curbing the rampage on the mass media. This is ghastly. (Editorial Board, Punch News paper September 4, 2018).

The above is just an instance of the way the government reacts to the insecurity going on in Nigeria, especially in this present regime.

By September 2018 Punch News paper quoting Coalition for Conflict Resolution and Human Rights reported that Fulani terrorists killed over 2,000 persons across the country that year, in Nigeria. A tally by Saturday Punch attributed 3,094 persons killed by Boko Haram terrorists and Fulani herdsmen between May 29, 2015 and May 2016; Amnesty International counted 168 killed in January alone, while the Benue State Government said Fulani marauders killed over 1,500 persons, including soldiers and policemen, in 47 different attacks in the three years to February this year. At least, 14 persons were again brutally murdered in Plateau State yesterday (Punch News paper September 4, 2018).

The above instance is just a tip of an ice berg on the cases of insecurity currently existing in Nigeria with little or no effort made to stop them. Hence, the disarray experienced everywhere in the country.

The effect of disarray in Nigeria

There are hundreds of effects resulting from disharmony and disarray in Nigeria which will be too much for this paper to document. Be that as it may, we are going to consider the effects in the area of poverty level, governance, fear and mistrust.

Poverty level:

Due to the disarray and disharmony in Nigeria, her poverty level has increased greatly. There has never been any time in the history of Nigeria she was tag the headquarters of poverty except this period. Theresa May the British Prime Minister observed during her August, 2018 visit to Nigeria that, ".... 87 million Nigerians live on less than \$1.90 a day - making it home to more very poor people than any other nation in the world." (Pulse.ng).

This is in line with, June, 2018 release of Poverty Clock, where it was stated that the current estimate of poor people living in Nigeria is 44.2% considering its current estimated 196 million populations living on less than \$1.25 a day (Kharas & Hamel, 2018). Kharas & Hamel (2018) opine Nigeria has already overtaken India as the country with the largest number of extreme poverty in early 2018.... At the end of May 2018, our trajectories suggest that Nigeria had about 87 million people in extreme poverty, compared with India's 73 million. What is more, extreme poverty in Nigeria is growing by six people every minute, while poverty in India continues to fall.

This extreme poverty experienced in Nigeria as has been said before is due to disarray because most bread winners in the course of the disarray were displaced or killed and businesses destroyed, hence their source of livelihood and survival put to shambles and this invariably affected the GDP of the nation.

Governance:

There is no time it seems tough to govern a state than in her period of disarray; when there is no harmony. Nigeria though not officially in a war situation is facing and experiencing a very big challenge more than some countries that have situation of full blown war. This is as a result of insurgency and pockets of terrorism going on in almost every part of the country. And this has made governance very difficult in the country as it stands. This also has made the execution of government policies difficult especially in those areas where disharmony is on the high side. The funds that are meant for the running of the government are spent in restoring peace and harmony. The funds that are meant for other developmental projects are being diverted into security in the quest to restore the country to a stable situation.

Pertinent to mention here is that disarray has led to absence of fundamental human rights which are very good ingredients for good and democratic governance. As it is well known, for there to be good government there should be room for expression of certain fundamental human rights most especially that of speech but absence of such rights and privileges have led to the exclusion of many from meaningful participation in the nation building and from other opportunities to better their own circumstances and advance their personal liberty in a country in which they are members and they are supposed to contribute to its governance.

Fear and mistrust

There is high level of fear due to disharmony and disarray in Nigeria today. People are afraid of everything, even afraid of the unknown. Even the high and mighty is afraid; nobody is left out of this fear bedeviling Nigeria. This fear is not farfetched. It could be ascertained to emanate from lack of peace, and this lack of harmony has made everyone to be a suspect to everyone. There is no trust any longer even when there is genuine reason for carrying out an action or doing anything due to fear and lack of trust it will be given a negative and bad interpretations and this has taken too much toll on the nation's development.

This fear is glaring among the government of the day hence, their intimidation and incarceration of anybody that tries to challenge them. And due to the high level of intimidation going on in the country recently many people are no longer willing and ready to talk. When one goes to various security offices in Nigeria, so many people are in their custody just for the fact that they did what is expected of them but the government fearing that they will be exposed by them want to silence them by keeping them there. Some are even silenced forever by killing them.

The ordinary people on the street are also afraid. The fear of uncertainty possesses everyone because the nation is not secured in all spheres. Nigerians fear for lost of lives and properties as could be seen in most regions of the country, people fear for the lost of job as could be seen in the recent release that Nigeria has lost over 10 million jobs. Mr. Peter Obi the former governor of Anambra State in one of the Channels Television breakfast show in August 2018, maintained that, "unemployment is worsening. In 2017 our employment ratio moved from 14.8 to 18.8% this year 2018. This means that more people have lost their jobs" and many more are still losing their jobs. One tribe is afraid of the other, one religion afraid of the other, employer afraid of the employee, politician afraid of the governed and the ruled afraid of the government etc. there seems to be the fear of all by all. All these fear and mistrust is as a result of disarray and disharmony being experienced in Nigeria.

Nigeria should not be allowed to continue on this path of trepidation. Therefore, there is the need to find the solution to the unease hence the need for application of philosophical anthropology as a harmonious option for the stability and restoration of Nigeria.

Philosophical anthropology and harmony restoration in Nigeria

One cannot claim to be ignorant of the degree of disarray in Nigeria currently. The disarray in no small measure has crippled almost everything in the nation. And as it stands now, everybody and tribe in Nigeria are ready to be on their own, irrespective of various efforts being made to make Nigeria harmonious. The implication is that there is something not gotten right by these other approaches that have been previously applied. The thing not gotten right is the failure of the nation to understand and place properly the human person in its appropriate place when it comes to importance and value. It is the absence of the above that made this paper to consider philosophical anthropology as an avenue to harmony restoration in Nigeria. This is because Philosophical anthropology is that aspect of philosophy that studies the human person in its entirety together with its relationship with its fellow man and its environment most especially as it affects man's value and worth.

So for harmony to be attained in Nigeria, it should be understood that the human person should be placed and considered above every other thing irrespective of the tribe, religion and sex of the person. Neglect of these factors has been the cause of major disarray in Nigeria today. But with the knowledge of Philosophical anthropology the consciousness of the people will be equipped with the idea that all men are equal and the same; that some are not more equal, important and valuable than the others. According to Aristotle, all human beings are the same in respect to form (that which constitutes them as human), and their individual differences are to be accounted for by reference to the matter in which this common form is variously instantiated (just as the different properties of golf and squash balls are derived from the materials of which they are made, while their common geometrical properties are related to their similar size and shape (Crystalink.com).

In Nigeria just as already mentioned, inequality has held sway for a very long time. Different treatment has been mated for different people, tribe, sex, religion, etc. Philosophical anthropology will assist us to bring such practices to the bare in the sense that it will make the people to see our actions in the light of 'Categorical Imperative' which holds that, "one should act always in such a way that one could rationally, will the principle on which you act be a universal law" (Moore & Bruder, 2002, p. 238). When such is done the people will see the need for the equitable sharing of national cake, especially power.

This will go a long way in assuaging the feeling of domination and marginalization by some ethnic group, religion, sex, etc. especially, the ethnic minorities (Uduigwomen, 2013, p. 323), which often lead to quagmire and disarray in the nation.

Another importance of philosophical anthropology in bringing harmony in Nigeria is that, it will help us to understand that the disunity that is experienced is not caused by any supernatural forces or God but rather by Nigerians themselves. Hence, reducing the rate of prayer that we say when we fail to do what we ought to do for ourselves, especially when the repercussions of what we fail to do start manifesting. This is because Philosophical anthropology is the study of oneself by oneself and study of 'I' by 'I'. That is to say in philosophical anthropology, man is both the subject and object of study (Iloanya, n.d.). Thus being the case, man is supposed to understand himself very well and if a person understands him/herself it will have no need of blaming another or divinity for what s/he fails to get right as is the case with Nigeria where blame game is order of the day and which has drifted the nation from purposeful development but to disarray and underdevelopment. So, Philosophical anthropology will enable Nigerians to see that the nation is neither threatened by nature nor by the God who made nature, but by his own use of nature. That man's enemy is man, manmade structures, not the God who made man. When Nigerians understand this they will be able to put their house in order for harmony to be restored.

Looking at the three major causes of disarray in Nigeria as said earlier in this paper one will see that absence of freedom is one among them. There is no freedom in Nigeria today and in Philosophical anthropology one is made to understand that the human person is an independent substance of a rational nature (Boethius, 1342). In the word of Sartre (2009, p. 409) man is condemned to be free. So any activity that stops the human person including the Nigerian person from enjoying his/her freedom is reacted against because it dehumanizes and decreases ones value. According to Kierkegaard (n.d):

it is the 'existential value' of freedom which determines the worth of *individual*(italics mine) and one's actions, that is to say, an action has 'existential value', it is the result of a freely chosen commitment. Free choice is the mark of the 'truly existent individual', which sets him off from the 'crowd'. Freedom is not a measure of the value of one course of action as opposed to another, but it is a measure of the value of a person in choosing some course of action (30).

In fact, the central theoretical insights of philosophical anthropology consist in an affirmation of the individuality and sociability of man as ultimate values. This theory would seem to suggest a social organization that combines an optimum of free choice with the minimum encroachment on individual liberty that is compatible with a viable social coexistence. This is in fact the utilitarian image of man that has prevailed since the early nineteenth century in the English-speaking world, where this image of man has been internalized to such an extent that the discussion of ultimate metaphysical questions has predominantly given way to the discussion of means to assure the accepted end of mutual accommodation and individual discretion (iresearchnet.com). So, Philosophical anthropology exposes the nation to the idea and understanding that people's freedom constitutes part and parcel of their actions, authentic existence and living. Freedom ... means the power to realize one's authentic self (Bhadra, n.d.). So, any attempt to deprive them of such freedom will lead to nothing but anarchy and disarray which as one can see is very glaring in Nigeria.

Finally, philosophical anthropology if harkened to and channel properly will help in arresting bad governance and high level of insecurity in Nigeria which is resultant effect of bad government. This responsibility philosophical anthropology has been able to achieve in Facist Italy, Soviet Union under Stalin and Nazi Germany under Hitler. All these governments undermined the value of the human person and caused a lot of insecurity in their countries till Philosophical anthropology intervened. Crystalink.com succinctly puts it:

The use of philosophical anthropology ... emerged in the first half of the 20th century with the tendency both in Germany and in France to treat the problems of anthropology as the centre of all philosophical studies. Its emergence at this time may be seen as a reaction to the totalitarian systems of the 20th century: Italian Fascism, Soviet Communism under Stalin, and German Nazism were powerful ideologies calling for the annihilation of the individual character of the person. The philosophical protests of the German phenomenologist Max Scheler, of the Russian existentialist Nikolay Berdyayev, of the Jewish philosophical theologian Martin Buber, and of the French personalist Emmanuel Mounier offered answers to this challenge; the philosophies of the person and of existence present to each individual the means to centre himself upon himself.

The citizens of these affected countries adhered to the teaching and ideas of philosophical anthropologists hence, the relative harmony in those countries. Therefore, if Nigeria should like the countries mentioned above adhere to ideas and dictates of philosophical anthropology the peace and harmony that has eluded us over a long time now will be restored.

Conclusion

Everywhere in Nigeria today there is strife. Harmony has really eluded us but some of the reasons for the absence of harmony in Nigeria this paper has been able to point out which are absence of freedom, inequality and insecurity. Some of the effects were observed in some areas among which are: poverty level, poor governance, fear and mistrust. It is due to the above variables that philosophical anthropology has to come in because it has been observed that in Nigeria, man has been alienated from his authentic nature through the replacement of its intrinsic value by means end relationships which heralded the age of crisis as can be seen everywhere in Nigeria currently. So, the salvation of Nigeria this paper believes is contained in understanding and implementing the ideas of philosophical anthropology as posited and suggested in this paper. Once this is done, the peace and harmony that has for long missing in the country will found.

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