

Yakubu Abdullahi Yakubu

# CHRONICLES

Of A

# GOLDEN ERA

A biography of

**ALIYU MUSDAFA**  
11TH LAMIDO ADAMAWA



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# CHRONICLES OF A GOLDEN ERA

## A BIOGRAPHY OF ALIYU MUSDAFA 11TH LAMIDO ADAMAWA

Yakubu Abdullahi Yakubu

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Dedicated to  
Modibbo Adama  
who started it all

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## Foreword

The biography of Aliyu Musdafa, Lamido Adamawa, tells how much one man has given to his people, his country and his heritage. More than four decades of his life has been dedicated to his stewardship as traditional ruler while in the preceding ten years, he served as a police officer.

A literary portrait of Aliyu Musdafa is a picture that tells the story of the traditional institution, Adamawa history and our national development. From the pre-colonial through colonial to post-colonial Nigeria, the traditional institution and rulership in Nigeria have undergone a lot of transformations to the extent that in recent times, they are wrongly seen as an anachronism. To critics, it is just a matter of time for it to fizzle out of relevance. But the point is that the present status of traditional rulers does not suggest that the institution is anachronistic and, therefore, is about becoming irrelevant in the scheme of things. On the contrary, the institution is moving with time and according to the logic of human nature which is dynamic.

For instance, while the author re-opens the claim of some critics that the emirate's size and sphere of influence have been reduced to the physical landmass of the present Adamawa State (against the background that 150 years ago, its size and sphere extended to Garua and Ngaundere in the Cameroon Republic), it is, however, noteworthy that evidence in the book and on the ground suggest otherwise.

The tinkering with the traditional institution by colonial government and national governments has not undermined the fact that the institution remains the most veritable instrument for social mobilisation for community development, national consciousness, maintenance of public order and peaceful co-existence in a pluralistic society like ours.

Against the background of the dearth of literature on Aliyu Musdafa, Lamido Adamawa, and indeed contemporary Adamawa, historical commentators are at a loss to objectively periscope the life of a man who is, today, Nigeria's longest

-serving emir, having been on the throne for forty-three years. Even as the author has ventured to do so, I can imagine the pains he went through groping his way through the maze of oral tradition and scanty colonial literature. It is, therefore, my view that this book on the Lamido is most auspicious in time and content. It is a welcome development, especially at this time, in filling a yawning information gap on the Lamido and indeed the Adamawa Emirate.

I have the pleasure of being a title-holder of the Adamawa Emirate and witness to the efforts of the Lamido to serve his people conscientiously, with dedication, fairness and impartiality.

While I commend the efforts of the author, I urge other young intellectuals both within and outside Adamawa to take the challenge of documenting historical events for the upcoming generations. *Chronicles of A Golden Era* is a historical record which I recommend to students and lovers of history, journalists and others who are involved in the compilation of events for history and, indeed, all those with interest in Adamawa, its people and culture.

**Atiku Abubakar**  
**Turaki Adamawa**

## Preface

*In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.*

The idea to write this book was conceived in October 1992 for a newspaper article to commemorate the fortieth anniversary of Aliyu Musdafa as Lamido of Adamawa. Later, I found that the subject of the biography was too great for just an article. A few weeks later, the proposal for the project was accepted and approved by the Lamido himself. That was the first source of inspiration. In the course of collecting data, I came across a letter by a Sokoto mallam to the *Nigerian Citizen* reproduced by Kirk-Greene (1966). That letter, my second inspiration, reads:

Memories of events, as we know, easily lapse with the passing of time, and unless we commit them to writing there will come a time when these will be completely forgotten by later generations. When man first thought of recording history, a step forward in bringing history back to life had been reached. Before then, however, historical events used only to be memorized in a way we now call "remembered history" — popular legends handed from father to son. These legends were not of course, in themselves related, they might in the course of time have been changed or mixed up with incorrect pieces of information. Yet quite a lot of facts both historical and fiction could be acquired from such stories. It is high time, therefore, that Nigerians should immediately start collecting what stories they can avail themselves of from elders and old people and commit them to writing before it is too late. We can gain much knowledge about our ancestors and of incidents of the past if we make a close study of these legendary stories which we often hear people relate to us. It seems these days that the study of these handed-down stories is given comparatively less attention; so much that they are now on the verge of being in total eclipse! People consider this kind of study as fruitless and so tend to ignore and to interest themselves only in affairs of current nature. It is this tendency of course that gives rise to our lack of knowledge in even our local history. Many

people assume that as far as our local history is concerned all work has already been done for us by earlier European historians who have devoted their efforts in trying to give it a basis for study and that nothing more of historical value is considered left unrecorded. All we can do, they think, is simply to enjoy the fruit of those historians' work. No doubt this work of the earlier historians is a great endeavour and worthy of praise but should at the same time be regarded as a start (not an end) and as unfinished, (not unfinished work). Lots and lots of useful pieces of information could still be collected if only we are to make an attempt to search for them from old people or other sources as has been the practice of the earlier writers of our history. Therefore, let us not allow these legends to die away, something worthwhile can still be done since our living grandfathers and grandmothers are at our disposal to be asked many useful questions with regard to rebuilding our history as far as possible. To this end, it would be wise if a country-wide campaign to collect these legends here and there should be organised either under the auspices of the government or by history students of this country.

Nevertheless, the letter served as a compass in my three-year journey in research and writing. I discovered that my generation knew so little about the role of Aliyu Musdafa and the traditional institution in the governance of the then Adamawa Province. What about our children and grandchildren, should we not allow them to know the work of our early nation-builders? From the perspective of the journalist with a sense of history, I tried to put together the life and work of Aliyu Musdafa and, by implication, an era in the history of the Adamawa.

Chapter 1 of the book introduces the personality of the Lamido as a prelude to the subject-matter, which attempts to respond to the question who is Aliyu Musdafa? Chapter 2 is about the Fulbe, their origin, migration and emergence in the Adamawa region. The preponderance of the Fulbe in this territory results in the establishment of an Islamic empire in the early 19th century. A scholar, Modibbo Adama, set up the Adamawa Emirate as a component of the empire and left behind a hereditary monarchy. Modibbo Adama is the

great-great-grandfather of Lamido Aliyu Musdafa.

Chapter 3 gives a description of his early childhood and school life. The prince's public life began in the police force where he occupied the top rank and a seat in the Lamido's council. After nearly a decade in uniform, the prince was chosen to be the 11th Lamido of Adamawa.

Chapter 4 focuses on the first year of the monarch on the throne, a period when he embarked on reforms in the political and administrative set-up. These changes at that time were seen as revolutionary. In Chapter 5, the reforms continued in more detail until independence in 1960. Chapter 6 is about interaction of the Lamido with other political and traditional leaders. His role is identified in the political developments between independence and the present day.

Beginning from Chapter 7 the book deals with the duties and responsibilities of the Lamido in the cultural, political and religious spheres of Adamawa. The chapter focuses on the impact of the Lamido on the society, local and national. Chapter 8 describes the structure and functions of the political and administrative officers around the throne. The duties of the Lamido as a spiritual leader and his role in specific religious issues are traced in Chapter 9.

The work is woven around themes such as the personal life of the Lamido, political history of Adamawa Emirate, stewardship of the Lamido, his role as custodian of the people and duties as traditional ruler and spiritual leader. Up to Chapter 6, the themes are laid out chronologically, but they don't follow that rule strictly from Chapter 7, though there is an attempt for logical sequence.

A primary source of materials are interviews with contemporaries who know Lamido Aliyu Musdafa fairly enough and have, of course, made their own contributions in the socio-political development of Adamawa. However, due to limitation of time and other constraints, only a few selected personalities were contacted, though there are hundreds of other perspectives that are still valuable. May be next time. Also for reasons such as proximity, funding, access to materials and other factors, all the interviewees were sourced locally and more importantly because the subject is based in the community and

all his life and work is found in Yola.

Arewa House in Kaduna is a treasure. *The Nigerian Citizen* and *Gaskiya Tafi Kwabo* are the only newspapers in Northern Nigeria with records of events in Adamawa State of the 1950s and 1960s. Their rare materials are a veritable source of information. Some files in the Arewa House and National Archives in Kaduna have useful information that could not have been found elsewhere.

Some biographical works were a big help in sourcing materials for this biography. *Ahmadu Bello: Values and Leadership* by John Paden was a great inspiration and influence in totality. Other books on great leaders also contributed a lot in shaping this project.

Observational data were made available due to my proximity to Yola, the seat of the Lamido, as a journalist for over seven years. As an active observer of Adamawa affairs, I was able to rummage through my jotter and found notes that were a treasure. Moreso, as an indigene of Adamawa, I have a grasp of the cultural, religious and socio-political values to enable me appreciate the context I found myself in.

The available materials at hand were put together to capture events that told the life and times of Aliyu Musdafa against the background of all of Adamawa. Though the book is not a complete account of the stewardship of Lamido Aliyu Musdafa, it is hoped that it is enough to mark his contributions to the development of Adamawa Emirate, the state and the nation at large.

**Yakubu Abdullahi Yakubu**

## Acknowledgements

The encouragement and support of Lamido Aliyu Musdafa made this biography see the light of day. I am specially grateful to His Royal Highness and the Adamawa Emirate Council.

I extend my gratitude to Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, *Turaki Adamawa*, for his financial contribution to the project. I am highly indebted to Alhaji Abdullahi Yakubu, Alhaji Hamidu Alkali and Yerima Adamu Bawuro for providing me with information that formed the backbone of this book. My gratitude is extended to Alhaji Muhammadu Babba Lawal, *Waziri Adamawa* for moral support and persistent encouragement, and Alhaji Ahmadu Ribadu, *Dan Galadima Adamawa*; Alhaji Barkindo Aliyu Musdafa, *Chirona Adamawa*; and Alhaji Murtala Aminu, *Galadima Adamawa* for reviewing the draft. I am also grateful to numerous other persons who offered me interviews in the course of my work.

I would also like to thank the Managing Director of Spectrum Books Ltd., Chief Joop Berkhout and his staff for keeping faith and blowing life into the project. Similarly, I thank Christiana Zakka who typeset the work, for her patience and commitment.

I am indebted to my father, Alhaji Abdullahi Yakubu, for the fatherly advice and professional guidance throughout the course of the project and Mr. Boutros Pembé, Director of Press and Public Affairs, Government House, Yola for his immeasurable support and encouragement.

I wish to express my deep appreciation to both Professor Sa'ad Abubakar and Mallam Danjuma Gambo of the University of Maiduguri who went through the manuscript with a fine tooth-comb. Their review, observations and advice have contributed to the success of the final draft. However, any shortcomings or deficiencies that may be identified are entirely my responsibility.

Scores of friends, family members and colleagues helped me in carrying the burden of writing this book for three years. Too

numerous to mention, each has given fillip at one time or another to the completion of the assignment. I thank them for the abundant moral and financial support.

For the time and chance, I give special thanks and praises to Allah, the Most High, the source of all knowing — of knowledge we have none, save for what He has taught us. *Allahu Akbar.*

## Chapter One

### The Man

Aliyu Musdafa, the 11th Lamido of Adamawa, ascended the throne in 1953, 147 years after the founding of the emirate by Modibbo Adama in 1806. A direct descendant of Modibbo Adama, Aliyu Musdafa has now ruled for forty-three years just like Modibbo Adama whose tenure, until now, was the longest in the dynasty.

The royal family traces its roots to the emigration of the Fulbe from Damaturu in Bornu in the 14th century following their ejection by the Kanuri. Fulbe clans, including the Ba'en to which Modibbo Adama belonged, entered Adamawa region through the Yedzaram valley. About 500 years later when the Fulbe led the jihad in this part of the Upper Benue region, Modibbo Adama established the emirate as a constituent of the Sokoto Caliphate. Being the first ruler and flagbearer of the emirate, Modibbo Adama was called Lamido Fombina or *Amirul Yamani* both meaning "Lord of the South" in reference to the location of the emirate south of Sokoto, seat of Usman Dan Fodio's caliphate.

But Modibbo Adama chose to be called only *Modibbo*, learned one, instead of the political title, *Lamido*. Among Modibbo's successors over the decades, the bloodline of Aliyu Musdafa produced four emirs. His father, Muhammadu Musdafa, ruled for eighteen years; while his grand-father, Abba, spent fourteen years on the throne. Bobbo Ahmadu, his great-grandfather, ruled Adamawa for eight years at the beginning of British rule in 1901.

Born in Yola in 1922, Aliyu Musdafa was educated at Yola Elementary School and Yola Middle School (1936-1943). He started work at the Adamawa Native Authority in 1943 and was

appointed the Chief of Police in Adamawa Province in 1945 with the title of *Wali*. After eight years of supervising the force, Aliyu Musdafa was selected as *Lamido* following the deposition of Lamido Ahmadu Maigari. His appointment took effect from July 26, 1953.

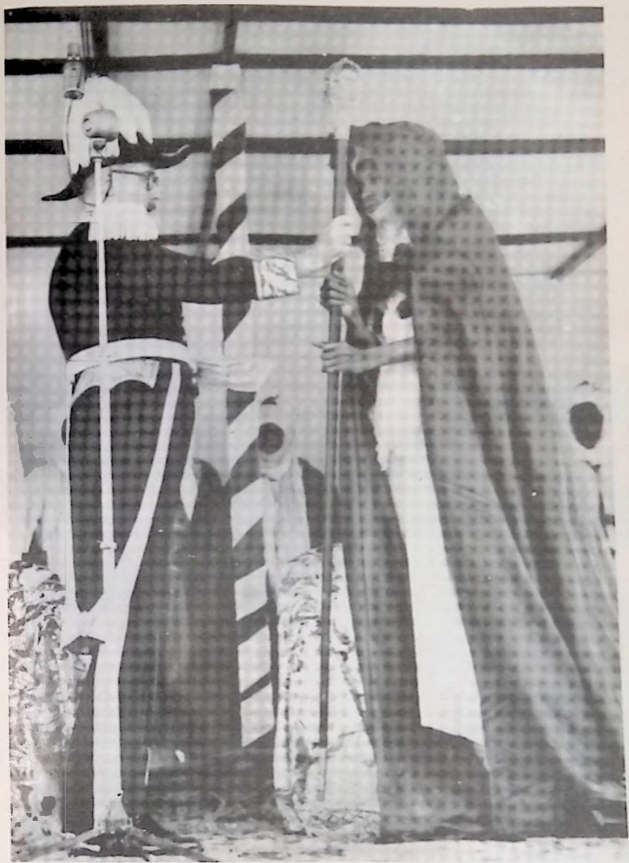
In the four decades of his leadership, Lamido Aliyu Musdafa charted a course that spanned from colonial rule, through five civilian administrations and thirteen military regimes at the regional or state levels. He has served under ten Heads of State since independence. Within his tenure, the Lamido has witnessed several constitutional changes and political reforms. Most of all, his tenure has witnessed an era of peace and stability in the emirate.

Lamido Aliyu Musdafa made tremendous contributions to the Northern House of Chiefs where he served as a member of the Public Accounts Committee. He was also a member of the Northern Nigeria Development Corporation. Aliyu Musdafa was also a member of the Council of Chiefs in North-Eastern State, 1967-1976. When Gongola State was created in 1976, he was made President of the Council of Chiefs. In 1979, in accordance with the provisions of the new constitution, he was appointed to the National Council of States by virtue of his position as President of the State Council of Chiefs.

A royal father, the Lamido holds in high esteem, and maintains the political, religious and ethnic values of his emirate. His sense of liberalism and social equity is highly noted and emulated by his subjects. Mindful of the significant role of traditional rulers in modern Nigeria as the custodians of culture, Aliyu Musdafa has consistently been non-partisan even in the heat of party politics.

As the longest reigning emir in Nigeria, he has maintained the most cordial relationship with past Heads of State and state chief executives. The Lamido is highly respected by fellow traditional rulers across the country for his leadership qualities.

In 1976, he visited Sokoto where Modibbo Adama received the flag for the jihad in the 19th century. Equally, he has played host to two Sultans of Sokoto, Abubakar III and Ibrahim Dasuki, in Yola. Apart from visiting other emirates on friendship tours the Lamido visited the Cameroon Republic in December 1965



*The Lamido Adamawa, Alhaji Aliyu Musdafa receiving the staff of office from the Governor, Sir Bryan Shartwood-Smith during his installation at Yola*



*The flag of Modibbo Adama given to him by Usman Dan Fodio in 1804*

together with the premier of Northern Nigeria, Sir Ahmadu Bello. He has gone to Saudi Arabia on Hajj thrice, first in the company of the premier in 1966, privately in 1982 and thirdly as *Amir ul Hajj* of Federal Republic of Nigeria in 1996.

A normal day in the life of His Royal Highness begins with *Subh* prayers at sunrise. The Lamido catches up on world events on the radio and follows with physical exercise until breakfast. After attending to family matters, he goes out to the palace chambers to meet personal staff and early visitors for routine greetings. His councillors, led by the Waziri, come to make courtesy calls.

At 11.00 a.m. the Lamido sets out for any of his farms at Bole, Yola, Mandarare, Ngurore or Girei. For him, this is the rule rather than the exception. Because of his love for farming he is regarded as *Sarkin noman kasa* (leading farmer in the land). For about three hours every day, the Lamido tends his crops which include maize, rice, cotton, guinea-corn, etc. In the dry season, he grows *maskuwari*, a type of sorghum predominant in the north-eastern part of the country.

Apart from making use of the food he grows for himself, the Lamido gives out a substantial amount to the poor and needy as *zakat*. His generosity extends to the less privileged, the aged and bereaved. A family that lost a bread-winner could enjoy the kind gesture continuously including gifts on *sallah* days.

The royal father gets back to the palace for the *Zuhr* prayers at about 2.00 p.m. He then concentrates on personal engagements which extend to the time he offers the *Asr* prayer at 4.00 p.m. Later, the Lamido holds court at the eastern gate, *Kofar Bayi*, where he also receives casual visitors and has chats until sunset, when he goes into the palace for the *Maghrib* prayer.

After *Ishai*, the final prayer of the day, the Lamido spends the rest of the evening with important guests who come to the palace for consultation or discussion. On lighter duties, he could spend the entire evening hours at the *Kofar Bayi* with his close family members and the children.

Every Friday, people from various communities come to pay their respects to the Lamido. The colourful day begins from around 9.30 a.m. First the palace staff and then council members

and title-holders greet the Lamido and sit with him in the chambers to receive visitors from far and near. At the end of the two-hour session, the Waziri calls on the Chief Imam for prayers to close the day.

Being Friday, the Lamido gets prepared for the *Jumma'a* prayers at 2.00 p.m. at the central mosque where he leads the congregation from various parts of the town. At the end of the prayer (at about 2.30 p.m.) the Lamido is escorted by courtiers and dignitaries to the palace. He meets with a group of learned mallams, *Modibbe*, from different parts of the emirate whose turn it is to pay their own respect. This is more like a spiritual session with recitations which last about one hour.

However, on Monday and Thursday mornings, the Lamido chairs a meeting of the emirate council to discuss day-to-day affairs which take hours depending on the agenda. On the other hand, the Lamido holds a full council meeting at the end of each month. This time, with the attendance of the six chairmen of the local government areas in his domain.

Official functions for the Lamido are usually part of the routine. At the palace, these functions include courtesy calls by dignitaries from within and outside the state, while other ceremonies are held at the western gate. Outside the palace, he graces state functions every now and then. The Lamido is constantly involved in activities of cultural and voluntary organisations and clubs such as Jama'atu Nasril Islam, the Red Cross, the Federal Road Safety Corps and Polo Club which he serves as patron.

At leisure, the Lamido spends a lot of time with the horses. A great lover of horses, he could attend to the stables near the eastern gate throughout the evening. Other stables in the home districts such as Mayo Ine, Njoboli, Malkohi and Girei house different breeds of horses from various parts of the world. As a hobby, he rides occasionally. Until two decades ago, the Lamido went out game-hunting.

Within the palace, the Lamido keeps a small zoo of different species of birds — peacocks, ostriches, etc., and small wild animals which he comes often to watch and admire.

One of the yearly routines the Lamido enjoys is the convocation ceremony of the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria

which he has been heading as Chancellor since 1979. On December 7 that year, the university awarded him the degree of Doctor of Laws. At the convocation, the Lamido was described as "a man who is an embodiment of royalty, dedication and selfless service to his people and humanity at large, a man who has distinguished himself in his transparent honesty and purposeful leadership, a man who has strived for all that is good for the pursuit of national unity, progress and stability." A man of honour and esteem, Aliyu Musdafa, *Lamido Adamawa*, was honoured as Commander of British Empire (CBE) in 1959 and Commander of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (CFR) in 1964.

## *Chapter Two*

### **The Legacy**

The Emirate of Adamawa,<sup>1</sup> first referred to as Fombina by the Fulbe jihadists in the 19th century, derived its name from Modibbo Adama, one of the original fourteen flagbearers of Usman Dan Fodio.<sup>2</sup> Adamawa Emirate at its peak once extended from Marua and Madagali in the north to Ngaundere and Tibati in the south, and from Lere and Rei Buba in the east to Mayo Lope in the west. It was the largest and most strategic emirate, south-east of the Sokoto Caliphate.

The history of Adamawa Emirate begins from 1806 when the jihad was launched by Modibbo Adama. Before that time, the Upper Benue region was inhabited by diverse ethnic groups and heterogeneous independent tribal groups. It was in this complex context that Modibbo Adama struggled to consolidate his conquests, establish an emirate and put in place an Islamic government as was done by other Fulbe leaders in the Sokoto Caliphate.

Though itself a component part of the caliphate, Adamawa was in structure formed by more than thirty separate decentralised units fused into a centralised large emirate as a result of the Fulbe jihad. In Hausaland at the same period, despite the numerous ethnic groups there existed, to a large extent, cultural homogeneity. The Fulbe did what ethnic groups such as Bata, Chamba and Jukun could not do to bring other diverse groups in the Benue region under their authority. The other ethnic groups were Kilba, Gude, Tikar, Higgi, Verre, Mbula, Margi, Gudu, Chekke, Fali and Mbum, to mention a few. Therefore, it can safely be said that the Fulbe who came from Borno area as the last immigrants in that period, arrested the anarchy and further breakdown of the region by the ethnic groups competing for control.

To appreciate properly the events and circumstances leading to the formation of Adamawa Emirate, an attempt would first be made to trace the origin of the Fulbe people (though there are many theories), their migration and emergence in the West African sub-region and their conquest which culminated in the building of the Sokoto Caliphate and its subsequent impact on the history of the present-day Nigeria.

In his book, *Infaq al Maisuri*, Muhammadu Bello, the second Sultan of Sokoto, believes that the Fulbe people were of Canaanite origin and descended from an Arab missionary called Uqba Bn Nafi. The tradition says Uqba bn Nafi who lived in the era of the Holy Prophet Mohammed came to the Western Sudan with the prediction that one day he would bear a non-Arab son. He met Bajju Manga, a black woman at Futa Toro and married her. Their four children, Deita, Waya, Roroba and Nasi were believed to be the ancestors of the Fulbe. They came to speak a language that had never been heard and which developed into Fulfulde. Later generations of the children of Uqba Bn Nafi multiplied and spread all over the region of Tekrur, Futa Jalon and Futa Toro. They formed into twenty clans and amongst them was the Torobe or Toronkawa clan to which Usman Dan Fodio belonged. However, the Mbororo'en were said to be the offspring of a son of Bajju Manga whose father was a water spirit, while some said the child was fathered by Uqba's slave.

Sir Richmond Palmer in his book, *The Carthaginian Voyage*, postulates that, "the Fulani originated from the union of Arabs and Berbers who came into the Maghrib between AD 650 during the Byzantine era and had been inhabitants of the valley of the Draa, which runs from the foothills of Marrakesh into the Atlantic."

Another theory that most substantiates the origin of the Fulbe is by L. Tauxier who suggests in "Maure Historic des Peuls" that the Fulbe were a branch of a red Hamitic race that inhabited regions in East Africa close to the Masai people. From East Africa, the Fulbe moved northwards up the whole length of Egypt travelling on the edges of the desert and westward until they reached southern Morocco.

According to Kirk-Greene, the Fulbe then moved within a millennium southward to Tekrur and the Senegal basin. There

they lived in peace with the Serer and Wolof which resulted in a mixed pastoral race of Tucolor. The Senegal region remained the home of the Fulbe up to the 14th century when they again started to migrate eastward to Massina. There they grazed their cattle and paid tribute to the Bambara kingdom for over two hundred years. During this period, the Fulbe integrated into the society and further migrated eastward across West Africa.

Pastoral nomadism is second nature to the Fulbe. It is their means of livelihood and their way of life. But in the course of migration, some of the Fulbe groups abandoned pastoralism for either a settled or semi-settled life. The Fulbe can be classified into three groups according to the degree of urbanisation.

The Mbororo'en are completely pastoral and are continuously on the move without regard to a permanent home. They still hold tight to their customs and shun Islam or any external influence such as inter-marriage with the communities they come in touch with. They are the parent stock of the Fulbe and see themselves as pure and distinct and till today stick to their nomadic life. To this end, the Mbororo'en look down on the other two Fulbe groups as "degenerates whose culture is debased by inter-marriage with non-Fulbe."

The second classification is the Fulbe Na'i or Cattle Fulani who may have been forced to settle down partially because they had lost their animals to depletion or disease, or may have discovered, along the way, good pasturage too attractive to them to want to leave. They became farmers, but still kept their cattle. The Fulbe Na'i may find themselves not able to engage in full-time husbandry and pastoralism any more due to circumstances mentioned earlier. If they regained their livestock, they went back to their normal life, otherwise they settled down in the town and became teachers, judges, advisers to local rulers or simply worshippers (*Torobe*) as time went on.

This class of Fulbe came to be known as Fulbe Sare or Town Fulbe since they have joined the elite in society. They therefore took it upon themselves to represent other Fulbe groups in dealings with local communities. This made the Fulbe Sare to look down on the pastoral nomads as uncivilised. However, the Mbororo'en did not envy the new Fulbe on the belief that the Fulbe Sare's life was no better as they have lost their cattle and

should be ashamed for they were no longer true Fulbe. However, the three groups came together as true brothers only when they were faced with common problems and threats.

By the 14th century, the search for new pasturage had taken the Fulbe from Futa Toro over a long period of time to Bornu. And in four hundred years, large numbers of the Fulbe had migrated to Adamawa by the Yedzaram valley in stages as dictated by the seasons. As they went along, the migrants paid grazing dues to their various host communities. Sometimes, they worked for these hosts as herdsmen and obeyed all the laws and traditions of the society they found themselves.

The first Fulbe came into Adamawa in the 17th century from Hausaland. The pioneers of these groups were the Mbororo'en who actually came through the south-east to Gongola valley, to avoid Borno. But the other Fulbe came through the southern part of Borno in stages over a long period of time. However, larger numbers migrated in the last quarter of the 18th century due to geographical and political reasons.

At first, the Fulbe could not get through as the Bagarmi blocked their migration from the east and as far as Mandara, they found the area swampy and inconvenient for travel especially in the dry season when the soil became hard and inaccessible, while in the rainy season the Logone river flooded the area and gave rise to cattle disease.

In contrast to the geographical situation, the land in Adamawa was like paradise to the Fulbe in view of the abundant pasture and rich fertile soil. The Fulbe therefore began mass exodus from Borno in the last quarter of the 18th century. Their migrations gained momentum which lasted well into the 19th century when they could not contain the new rulers of Borno empire after the collapse of the Seifawa dynasty and the severe famine which affected their cattle.

Meanwhile, the Fulbe migration into Adamawa broke into two main branches — the Wolarbe, the Ba'en and several smaller clans, and the other main branch which had a majority of the Yillaga'en clan. After settling in the Upper Yedzaram valley for some time, the first branch of the Wolarbe, Ba'en, with a few of the Yillaga'en, Mbewé'en and Ngara'en started migrating again and headed towards the east. Tens of thousands of these Fulbe

marched through the mountains, crossed the basin of the River Kebi and settled around Marua in present-day Cameroun.

The second branch of the migration made up of mainly the Yillaga'en also left the Yedzaram valley, but had to change their route as the Mandara people forced them to go round the northern tip of the mountains far away from the Mandara empire in the extreme south. To escape from the hostile Mandara people, this group headed for the Ba'a valley, the only opening in the 70-mile mountain barrier that separates the River Kebi on one side and the Yedzaram and Kilengi River on the other side. Unfortunately for the Yillaga'en, they were cut off from the Wolarbe and Ba'en who had settled down on the Kebi river basin. So the Yillaga'en continued their migration westward and crossed the Yedzaram and Killange water until they reached the basin of the River Benue.

The migrants rested at the land of the Kilba for sometime but continued further into the Benue valley. However, the migration was troubled by the Verre hills to the south and the hostile tribes of the Gongola valley and Mumuye plateau to the west. To the east, the Fulbe came to terms with the Bata people who occupied the Benue lowlands.

The Fulbe recognised the authority of their hosts and submitted themselves to the Bata until the jihad period. By the end of the 18th century, the plains of the Benue were dotted all over with Fulbe settlements that were attracted by the rich and fertile soil.

The Bata territory thus had become a meeting point for the eastern and western branches of the migration. The former came through Kebi and Ti'yel valleys to Demsa, while the latter settled in Bundang after going along the south bank of the Benue and crossing River Paro.

The Fulbe and the Bata people lived together with the former submitting to the pagan chiefs, while owing allegiance to the *ardo'en*, their own clan chiefs. In the long run, the co-habitation of the two groups precluded the influence of the Fulbe who still had the Bata chiefs lording over them.

Unfortunately, what was regarded then as a small demand by a Bata chief in 1803 led to conflict and later conquest by the Fulbe who took over supremacy in the region. The chief of

Bundang demanded for the daughter of Ardo Jobdi, chief of the Wolarbe clan in the Song area. The Ardo slew his daughter and killed the Bata chief in a show of courage and disdain which spoke the minds of the immigrants (who felt their submission was too overbearing).

The action of Ardo Jobdi resulted in the exodus of the Wolarbe in anticipation of a large scale revenge on them. Under the leadership of Ardo Hamman, the Fulbe fled into the Verre Hills to Guriga Hosere. But the Verre were cautious in case the conflict would spill over to their own area and refused to harbour the Fulbe when they learnt the Bata had started to send forces from Song to attack the Fulbe. Though the attacks were repelled, the Fulbe had to move again in 1804 down the plains where they camped on the west bank of River Faro, present site of Gurin.

It was at this time that the Sokoto jihad took off, but in the Upper Benue region, the hostilities between the Fulbe and non-Fulbe groups were more or less political and a local clash of interests until Modibbo Adama appeared on the scene. Modibbo Adama had been away on scholarship and came back to Gurin in 1805 to find that his father, Ardo Hassana, had been killed in one of the conflicts between the Fulbe and the Bata. He left Wuro Chekke to teach and preach Islam among the Fulbe of Mayo Faro valley. Though the son of an Ardo, Modibbo Adama did not want to be one and was not interested in political power, but Islamic scholarship.

Modibbo Adama was born in 1771 in Wuro Chekke to an Ardo. At an early age, he began his Islamic learning under the teaching of his father so that by the age of eleven he had completed the study of the Quran. Modibbo Adama's next phase in scholarship was extended to the far reaches of his home town. He was sent to Bagarmi to study under the Shehu Muhammadu Tahir. Later he studied under an Islamic teacher, Mallam Kyari at Birnin Ngazargamo in Borno. Modibbo Adama spent ten years there before returning to the Upper Benue region and became well known for his knowledge in Islamic studies.

It was on the basis of his learning that the Fulbe leaders, (Ardo'en), Gamawa of Rai, Njobdi of Bundang, Hamman Dandi

of Banyo and Hamman Sambo of Tibati sent him to Sokoto to brief Usman Dan Fodio on the situation in the region and get directives on what was to be done.

Modibbo Adama, today I have made you leader from among the Fulbe people with whom you are, not because you are superior to them, but because of the trust they have in you. You are to understand my injunction and hold fast to it... I warn you to avoid oppression, wanton damage, spilling of blood without sanction of law, and nepotism, because if you indulge in partiality and discrimination, your authority would be broken", Usman Dan Fodio cautioned.

The jihad in Adamawa started five years late in contrast with similar campaigns in other emirates which took off almost immediately. Modibbo Adama, unlike other flag bearers, had the added task of building a complete new system of government where there was none at all previously. Moreover, the Upper Benue region had a lot of states spread over a large and difficult geographical area widely dominated by a large number of heterogeneous peoples. In Hausaland, the jihadists did not face a difficult assignment as Modibbo Adama because when they overthrew the Habe governments, they inherited an established political and administrative machinery and homogeneous societies.

Modibbo Adama did not start the jihad immediately as he had to win first the support of the Ardo'en in various parts of Adamawa. However, he carried out that campaign against the Bata successfully especially the fall of the capital of Demsa, which convinced the Ardo'en to give him political and military backing.

The Bata towns that fell victim were Pema, Turwa and Tepe. Furthermore, Lala, Yungur and Hona areas captured by Buba Yero of Gombe were handed over to Modibbo because he (Buba Yero) had flouted the Shehu's order not to start the jihad in these territories until he said so.

A significant step in the building of the new emirate was the establishment of sub-emirates. At Gurin, Modibbo Adama appointed Modibbo Hamman Gurin, his in-law, as Khalifa and

Lamdo of Faro valley. The Khalifa's status however was not the same as a flag-bearer. North of the Benue, the sub-emirates of Song and Malabu were established in 1830 with the appointment of Modibbo Hamman Song and Ardo Dembo of Malabu in-charge, respectively.

In the early years of the emirate, Modibbo Adama strengthened his position as "emir" in the northern and eastern parts of the region, through the appointment of these Ardo'en in the northern vassals who were faithful friends and later in-laws. In the two regions of Chamba and Verre, Modibbo Adama appointed two of his sons, Hamidu and Bakari, who were more or less fief-holders. Other sub-emirates were established by Ardo'en who fought wars without the assistance of Modibbo and therefore formed their own governments and appointed themselves as Lambe.

This situation posed a threat to the centralisation of the emirate system by Modibbo Adama as the Ardo'en did not recognise his full authority because they had controlled and ruled over these areas before the jihad. Though they received flags from Modibbo Adama they still refused to be subservient, but instead referred to the Caliph of Sokoto as the overlord. On account of this, the Ardo'en of Zummo, Kilba Wolarbe and Bundang refused to submit to Modibbo Adama, while the northern vassals Yillaga'en Mubi asked for independent flags from Sokoto which was not obliged. But the Ardo of Ngara'en was able to secure an independent flag.

The Yillaga'en of Rai Buba, led by Buba Njidda gave Modibbo Adama a very tough time and the most serious challenge. Buba Njidda's challenge did not come out of nothing for he was the most powerful Ardo with a strong military force. He declared independence and withheld his position as leader of Rai Buba through a strong defence against the expeditions of Modibbo Adama which lasted through the reign of both leaders. In 1842 close to the end of Modibbo Adama's reign, he faced another serious challenge from Hamman Sambo of Tibati who was later subdued by the Yola forces.

Modibbo Adama's military exploits were victorious in Mandara, Mubi, Moda, Michika and Uba in the 1820s. His success in Marghi, Kilba, Song, Holma and Malabu areas further

expanded the emirate. In 1841, he drove out the Bata chief, Zaro Dungye from the rising ground, *Yolde*, and set up the capital of his emirate there and renamed it Yola. By that time the territories of Laro, Koncha, Banyo, Tibati and Ngaundere to the east had been subdued. However, since Modibbo Adama settled at Yola and made it his permanent headquarters to the end of his reign in 1848, there were no major conquests. Modibbo Adama's position was still not secured as he faced threats from the western Bata which resulted in occasional fightings. Hostilities between the Bata communities and the Fulbe jihadists continued into the reign of Lamido Lauwal, Modibbo Adama's successor, who was able to contain the attacks.

Modibbo Adama died in 1848 in his bed at the age of 77. He had accomplished a mission which took 42 years of his life fighting for Islam and culminated in the establishment of an emirate left behind as a legacy. His worldly possessions at the time of his death were only his books and the Holy Quran, simple clothes, a mule he used on preaching tours and four wives. He led a humble life and did not bequeath any slaves or concubines because he did not keep any. Modibbo had a reputation for great learning and his people respected him as a scholar rather than a warrior. He was said to have undertaken about eleven pilgrimages to Sokoto and is fondly remembered till today for his piety.

In a tribute a scholar, Mallam Adamu Gana laments:

The light of faith has disappeared,  
Fear has gripped the whole society  
And we foresee days of sorrow ahead.  
A generation has gone with the passing away  
Of the great learned Modibbo Adama,  
A renowned scholar of scholars.  
He lived an exemplary life and  
Held the banner of Islam high.  
Enumerating all these would serve no purpose.  
Further shed of tears and sadness  
In our minds will solve no problem.  
We must all accept what has befallen us  
As an act of God.  
We know through history that the death

Of prophets, caliphs, sheikhs and leaders  
Generally were not uncommon.  
There can be no remedy to it  
Since the world is not a lasting place.  
The best we can do is pray,  
May Allah grant our leader  
A peaceful rest in paradise.<sup>3</sup>

The eldest son of Modibbo Adama ascended the throne of Adamawa. Muhammadu Lauwal was selected as the most suitable leader to become the Lamido among the children of Modibbo.

Among the eleven sons of the Modibbo, Hamidu and Lauwal were the most likely to succeed him, but the latter had an edge over the former as he was the first born and had the support of the leading notables. Any likely tussle between the two brothers or between the sons of Modibbo Adama and the Ardo'en was averted with the use of the formula - La-U-Zu left by the Modibbo for Lauwal, Umaru Sanda and Zubairu to succeed him in that order.

Modibbo Adama had thought out this formula in the context that he was the first emir and the tradition of hereditary succession was yet to be laid. The appointment of Muhammadu Lauwal was finally accepted and approved by the Caliph Ali bn Bello in 1848.

Lamido Lauwal's reign (1848-72) saw the expansion and consolidation of the emirate, where already his father had subdued the numerous petty chieftancies and in their place carved out sub-emirates. Therefore, Lamido Lauwal's first task was to conquer those districts in the emirate especially around Yola that were still resisting the authority of the Lamido. The Lambe of the sub-emirates however continued their loyalty to the Lamido, though with occasional challenges from the powerful ones in the southern part of the emirate.

Internally, the emirate was expanded by Lamido Lauwal through conquest and also by peaceful means if it would only increase Fulbe influence. By extension, relations with neighbouring regions such as Borno and Hausaland improved while relations with Sokoto became more defined. This resulted

in the spread of Islam and the growth of an Islamic scholastic community. Also the population of the emirate swelled with large numbers of Kanuri and Hausa traders and nomadic Fulbe who migrated into Adamawa due to prospects of trade and better grazing land seized from the Bata.

The Lamido established *ribats* (military forts) in various parts of the emirate to protect the seized lands from the Bata communities north of the Benue plains. In the west and east, he appointed fief-holders in the bordering districts of the capital. With the conquest of Limadi, the Chamba stronghold in the south, more new districts were established. The Verre, north of the Alantica mountains, had already agreed to a treaty with the Fulbe jihadists.

Remarkable territorial expansion was made with the opening of the borders of the emirate by Lamido Lauwal to include the regions between the Chad basin and the northern limit of the equatorial forest. From west to east, the Lamido's territory extended from the Hawal to the Logone rivers (in the north) and from the Shebshi-Mambilla plateau to the country of the Laka (in the south).

Administratively, Lamido Lauwal's reign saw the creation of new offices held by civil and military officials which enhanced the political development of the emirate. Such titled offices included Ajiya, Shamaki and Baraya. The government machinery in the capital and the sub-emirates was more defined, while a judicial system was set up with appeal courts and the Lamido's court (for final appeal).

Lamido Lauwal died in 1872 bringing to an end a reign that brought tremendous glory to the political, territorial, administrative and socio-economic development of the emirate. Unfortunately, the reign of his successor, Umaru Sanda saw the decline of the fortunes of the emirate which collapsed in 1901 following the British invasion.

The first problem encountered by the government of the emirate was the succession dispute between Yerima Hamidu (the eldest of the sons of Modibbo Adama at that time) and Umaru Sanda, his younger brother who was spelt out by Modibbo to be the next Lamido. The choice fell on Umaru Sanda, though Hamidu was the most learned and gallant in the line of likely successors from the dynasty. However Sa'ad Abubakar says

that Modibbo Adama's order was used to justify the appointment of Sanda who was described to be a "weak character, neither very learned nor distinguished in the military field." Umaru Sanda was not likely to become a "very powerful Lamido for the officials were tired of wars and desired a peace-minded successor instead of Hamidu who was military-minded and had a strong personality".

Sanda embarked on a lot of administrative and judicial reforms which emphasised not on military expansion, but diplomatic and soft approach especially towards the vassals who had been in conflict. The Lamido, according to the dictates of the Islamic scholars, wanted conquests only in the interest of Islam.

In order to reduce militarism, Sanda cut down the military elements in his council and brought in more scholars, royal members and leaders of the immigrant community in Yola such as Lamdo Kebbi, Lamdo Kano and Lamdo Katsina. Significantly, Sanda created the office of Waziri and the Magaji among a large number of other offices which, by the end of his reign, almost equalled other emirates.

His policy however backfired as the emirate government began to lose control of the sub-emirates who saw his civility as a sign of weakness. The chieftains challenged the Lamido and resisted his authority thinking he would not wage any war again. Sanda was forced to change his policy when the situation worsened and started by personally invading Demsa and then later sending his armies to territories such as Gulak, Gereng, Gaje and Gangang with little success.

In eighteen years, Sanda's reign had weakened the structure of the whole emirate so that his capacity to rule and maintain control was put to question. The sub-emirates and non-Fulbe groups even rose up against his government, while further cracks were deepened by leadership tussles within the districts/sub-emirates which were getting out of hand. Another looming danger was from the north-east where the Hayat-led Mahdists were threatening to take over.

Following the death of Lamido Sanda in 1890, Zubairu, the most senior of the surviving sons of Modibbo Adama, was appointed Lamido. He was thus burdened with the numerous

problems of the failures of the past. He therefore embarked on military expeditions to win back the lost territories and the glories of the emirate.

One of Zubairu's tasks was to remove the threat of the Mahdists whose activities in the northern part of the region had not been comfortable to Sanda and remained a danger to the emirate government. The Lamido was warned by the leader of the Mahdi and a cousin of the Caliph that he would depose him. Thus, courage was summoned after the defeat of the forces of Marua and Mendif at Ginglei in 1889. Furthermore, Hayat had contacted Rabeḥ, a war monger, to help him in overcoming the emirate government.

Having been alarmed, Lamido Zubairu consulted the Caliph Abdurrahman and the Modibbe in Yola over the threat, because he did not want to wage war against a member of the Sokoto ruling family. Zubairu got the Caliph's support as the Mahdists believed that the Sokoto caliphate, the Caliph and the emirs were all misfits.

The two forces of Zubairu and Hayat clashed between Marua and Balda with a near victory for the smaller but tougher and stronger Mahdist army. During the battle, the sub-emirates in a conspiratorial move withdrew their forces in order to bring defeat against the Yola forces. But the only sub-emirate army led by Lamdo Sali saved Zubairu by attacking Balda, Hayat's stronghold and razing it to the ground.

According to Sa'ad Abubakar, the battle of Balda was a terrible blow to the two sides. The burning of Balda destroyed Hayat's stronghold and foundation of the Mahdist community. He had to emigrate. For Zubairu, it exposed the weakness of Fombina emirate's organisation and Yola's military weakness due to the unwillingness of some sub-emirates to participate in campaigns for the Lamido and Sanda's eighteen years of comparative peace.

Lamido Zubairu inherited another big problem which was the rebellion by the sub-emirates and non-Fulbe groups. He therefore fought those recalcitrant rulers or communities who challenged his authority or refused to fulfil their obligations to the government in Yola. Punitive military campaigns against Ga'anda, Mundang, Binder and the Margi of the Bazza area

were unsuccessfully carried out. These defeats weakened the Lamido's image and portrayed the army as useless. In desperation, Zubairu thought out a way to reinforce his military power and bought arms and ammunitions from the European traders.

Zubairu did not know that the emirate he was trying to secure was about to collapse, not from internal conflicts but as a result of rivalry between the French, Germans and the British for commercial interests. In the end it was the European force that overturned Zubairu and brought the emirate down to its knees.

In 1893, Lamido Zubairu signed an agreement with the Royal Niger Company and allowed some concessions for trade in the area. In June 1893, Zubairu signed a treaty with the French and allowed the Germans trade permission. Lamido Zubairu may have found the ambitions of the Europeans for trade in his area too overbearing that he relaxed the restrictions to avert them from tearing his emirate apart..

However, it is unlikely that Zubairu would cede his territory or surrender his judicial powers to foreigners in return for 1,000 bags of cowries. His predecessor, Sanda, refused to give his consent to the Royal Niger Company (then National African Company) to trade on the Benue making the company to suspend its efforts in 1886 to cajole the Lamido and instead opened trading posts in Ribago and Garua.

Trade relations between Zubairu and the French went a step further when the Lamido bought forty rifles, two brass cannons and ammunition and allowed a French military posting in Yola. This development infuriated the British company (Royal Niger) which had believed an earlier treaty had given it the right to be "protector" of the emirate. The Germans reacted to the French treaty that the emirate was under their "sphere of influence" according to the French-German convention of 1885.

If the three European powers assumed because they had signed a treaty and got concessions to trade they owned the emirate, Lamido Zubairu did not think so. On 7 September 1893, he summoned the representatives of the trading company in Yola to a meeting with his council and declared that he had not ceded his sovereignty or parts of the emirate to any European power because he allowed them to trade.

Still, the British and Germans were not happy with the progress made by the French in establishing trade in the Upper Benue basin and the Chad region. The duo reached an agreement with the Germans withdrawing and giving up their possessions in Yola to the British who in turn handed over all claims from the Benue river right up to the shores of Lake Chad. They partitioned Adamawa Emirate into eight with the Germans taking seven parts.

The Germans wanted the French yet to give recognition to their new gains in the Chad basin. For that the French got Bipare on the Mayo Kebbi and the sub-emirate of Binder which satisfied them as they had, too, occupied a reasonable part of the emirate especially the navigable parts of the River Benue. The Royal Niger Company, having dominated Yola, began to build stores and warehouses on the Benue. Having gone this far, the British Government asked Lamido Zubairu to accept the protection of their flag through the Royal Niger Company (RNC) as the recognised agent. In 1897, a treaty was signed to effect this new policy.

However Lamido Zubairu refused to bend down to the wishes of the RNC and this soured their relationship. The British Government was not happy that Lamido Zubairu was turning away from the RNC which also meant they could lose the control of their gains in the region.

The Royal Niger Company took measures to stamp their authority in the affairs of the emirate. In 1900, Lugard ordered the Lamido to stop slave-raiding and not to block trading. Zubairu disregarded the orders because he did not need the RNC any more for Rabih and Hayat of the Mahdi fame had both died. The Lamido told the Europeans he had nothing to do with them. What's more, he drove away the RNC and told the British that they had no right to tell him how he ruled the emirate.

In July 1901, High Commissioner Frederick Lugard said the "Emir of Yola was becoming more and more impossible" and a month later asked the Colonial Office to allow him to use force against the Lamido. A military expedition of over 300 soldiers led by Captain Moreland and Mr. Wallace of the RNC arrived Yola from Lokoja at the end of August 1901 aboard the steamers, *Liberty* and *Nkissi*.

In place of the clash, the British and the Lamido held talks, but the conditions were not acceptable to Zubairu. The Europeans would want the Lamido to stop slave trading and raids and release all the slaves in his possession; open all trade routes and allow free passage for traders and; recognise the British Resident to be appointed in Yola to monitor and advise him. Lamido Zubairu rejected the proposals of the meeting and would rather fight the British for a solution.

On 2 September 1901, war broke out. The Yola forces attacked the British boat tied at Bokki Hammapel and were repelled by the powerful Maxim guns. From that point, the British soldiers drove the Lamido's army, scattered them and entered Yola. In the capital, they shelled the palace and destroyed the Friday mosque.

At first, the *Yan bindiga* (riflemen) held together their defence and blocked the invaders from advancing. However, the British soldiers had better guns and more expertise, so the Yola forces were routed from the palace and their two cannons captured. Lamido Zubairu was able to escape through the western gate with his leading officials before the palace was occupied by the British troops. The mantle of leadership was handed over to Bobbo Ahmadu, younger brother of the Lamido after Yerima Iya, eldest son of Lamido Sanda declined in case Zubairu should come back and attack him. On 8 September 1901, the appointment of a new Lamido was made by the British to administer the Yola portion of the Upper Benue region.

The deposed Lamido did not give up easily. He formed a force through the help of his loyal commanders and tried to get back his territories. He was killed on February 27, 1903 at Ga'anda near the village of Sintari by Lala pagans who thought he and his men were slave raiders. Lamido Zubairu's body was identified and carried back to Yola. But oral tradition has it that it was Zubairu's close friend that was killed, while the Lamido was saved and by a miracle lifted to the skies.

Back in Yola, the new Lamido got a different set-up of the emirate. He was supposed to rule in accordance with the laws of the protectorate which should be "to obey the High Commissioner and be guided by the advice of the Resident...."<sup>4</sup> Moreover, Bobbo Ahmadu found it difficult to govern his

domain which was cut up and occupied by two different powers — British and German. Other emirates of the Sokoto Caliphate, such as Nupe, Ilorin, Kano, Zaria and Bauchi remained as single units under the British colonialists.

As it were, the Germans had taken seven-eighths of the emirate in 1901 without due regard to the existing boundaries of the sub-emirates. In some of the sub-emirates such as Uba, Michika, Holma and Zummo, the boundary lines drawn by the Europeans split them into two parts so that the Germans ruled half while the British controlled the other half. Worse still, some rulers in the sub-emirates found themselves controlling only the capitals of their territories. In some areas, villages were cut up so that the inhabitants found themselves separated from their farm lands and grazing grounds.

The Lamido made great efforts for the re-unification of his carved domain. But the Anglo-German boundary demarcation dealt a heavy blow to his campaign and further split the emirate. Even the districts east of Yola metropolis were taken away from the rule of the Lamido to the Lamdo Garua. In the south of the emirate, the Nassarawo plains were divided into two parts with one part under German rule headed by Maigari and the second part under the British headed by his father, Bobbowa. It is said that Lamido Bobbo Ahmadu cried out that "they have left me merely the latrines of my kingdom."

The Lamido's anguish was an open protest against the political arrangements by the Europeans. The German policy allowed the rulers in the sub-emirates a measure of independence if it would reduce the Lamido's influence in the Cameroon. The vassals on the other hand preferred to stay under colonial rule rather than continue to be controlled by the Lamido in Yola.

Apart from the reduction of territory, authority and prestige in his own domain, the Lamido was frustrated by the abolition of slavery by the British as the Fulbe rulers relied largely on slave labour for farming and suffered greatly from this deprivation. This period came to be described by the Fulbe as *jamanu bone* (era of great suffering) due to shortage of food and their having to produce their own food.

The British policies on territory control and slavery were resisted by the Lamido who attempted to resume slave activities. Bobbo Ahmadu found it impossible to adapt to this strange system which the British saw as misrule. The Lamido was deposed in 1909 and sent into exile to Lokoja. Lamido Iya, Sanda's son, ascended the throne but had the shortest reign of eighteen months (1909-10) for he abdicated voluntarily. According to an account, Lamido Iya was fed up with threats of deposition and exile by the colonial government (probably cooked up by his interpreter). The Lamido was said to have ridden his horse and reported to the Resident, Mr. Boyle, that he was abdicating. He retired to Rumde near Jimeta.<sup>5</sup>

Both Lamibe Bobbo Ahmadu and Iya could not adjust into the new British administrative system that gave them less power and authority than their forefathers. Bobbo Ahmadu and Iya saw themselves as titular emirs which to Iya was not preferable to retirement. Lamido Abba on ascending the throne in 1910 co-operated with the colonialists thus bringing to an end the struggle for a lost power. During his reign (1910-24), Adamawa got its first provincial school in 1920 and many other modern structures. In 1922, Lamido Abba got back the former territories of his emirates as a result of Germany's defeat in the first world war. He administered those areas as trust territories under the mandate of the League of Nations.<sup>6</sup> And the legacy continues.

## Notes

1. This chapter is acknowledged to A.H.M. Kirk-Greene and S.J. Hogben's *The Emirates of Northern Nigeria*, (1966) and Sa'ad Abubakar's *Lamibe of Fombina* (1977).
2. Usman Dan Fodio gave out fourteen of such flags to his commanders as a commission to found emirates. One of them, Gwari Mukhtar, though did not succeed in Bornu. Thirteen of the flag-bearers are named: Adamawa - Modibbo Adama, Bauchi - Yakubu, Daura - Isiyaku, Gombe - Buba Yero, Hadeija - Sambo, Ilorin - Alimi, Kano - Suleimanu, Katagum-Ibrahim Zaki, Katsina - Umaru

Dallaji, Kazaure - Dan Tunku, Misau - Mamman Mang dan Gwani Mukhtar, Nupe - Mallam Dendo (Danyo Zaria - Mallam Musa.

3. Modibbo, M.A. "The Role of Political Offices Around Lamibe in the Metropolis of Fombina to c. 1900", B.A. ABU, Zaria, 1976; p.82.
4. B.J. Dudley, *Parties and Politics in Northern Nigeria*, (1968) p.12.
5. Interview, Usman Pate Kaigama, January 1994, Yola.
6. Interview, Idris Tafida, December 1995, Yola. Tafida adds that Bobbo Ahmadu was still in exile in Lokoja when the King of England Edward VI paid a visit to Kano, all the top emirs and chiefs in Northern Nigeria were there to participate in the reception of the visiting monarch. According to Tafida Idris, the king asked the emirs in a meeting about any requests or wishes in the interest of their domains. The Lamido of Adamawa, Abba, requested that his father, Bobbo Ahmadu, be allowed to come back to Yola. To this end, the wish was granted and the exiled Lamido came back from Lokoja to his motherland. He was settled at his home at Yelwa quarters where he died in 1916.

### Chapter Three

## The Prince

For Lamido Abba, the year 1922 was significant in many ways. But more than anything else, the birth of a grand-child was a blessing to the royal family. The Lamido's first-born son, Muhammadu Musdafa, already the *Yerima Adamawa* (Crown Prince) at the age of twenty-two had begotten his own first-born son.

Yerima Musdafa's marriage to Asmau Nana<sup>1</sup> was a link of patrilineal descent lines of two of Modibbo Adama's sons — Bobbo Ahmadu and Bakari. Asmau was the great-granddaughter of Mallam Bakari and daughter of Abba, son of Hammawa Alikura.

On the seventh day of his birth, the child was named Aliyu after one of the four caliphs of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). But his mother did not call the prince by his name according to the norms of the Fulbe regarding first-born children. Apart from the Islamic ritual of slaughtering a ram and the offering of prayers for the new born, three bulls were slaughtered. The occasion was joyful and shared by the gathering of (close) family members and a few of the Lamido's councillors in the courtyard of Yerima Musdafa at Yelwa ward of Yola. No durbar or festivity was held by the father, in spite of his position as the chief scribe of the Treasury.

When Aliyu became six years old in 1928 his father, Yerima Muhammadu Musdafa, assumed the throne as the 9th Lamido of Adamawa. His cousin, Muhammadu Bello (Maigari) had died four years after succeeding Lamido Abba. News of the sad event was sent to all the districts of the emirate by messengers on foot or bicycle. Like an eclipse, mourning covered the whole of Adamawa Emirate. Hundreds of people, district heads and

village heads left for Yola on foot and horseback to condole the royal family. As the mourning continued, the kingmakers met and consulted with the Emirate Council on the candidates for the vacant throne. In ten days their choice fell on Yerima Musdafa.

It was another stage in the life of young Aliyu when his family left the Yelwa residence for the palace. His father being Lamido meant a new and different life now. According to custom, survivors of the late Lamido would resettle outside the palace after the 100-day mourning period. However, the younger ones who are nephews and cousins of the next occupant could remain in the care of the ruling family. The palace is a community by itself with scores of buildings spread into compounds for the women, children, domestic servants, slaves and stables. The palace is perhaps the busiest living place in Yola.

Aliyu grew up with the values of Fulbe culture and Islam. He, therefore, went through sets of norms and values, *eltego*, that is expected of a royal sibling. He was taken to Liman Tukur to learn the Holy Quran. Liman Tukur (later made Chief Imam of Yola) saw in Aliyu traits that he thought should be tapped and thus a special interest was developed for the pupil. Along with the other boys, the prince learnt the Holy Quran by heart from the Arabic script on the wooden slate, *alluha*, every day for the next seven years.

Western education in Adamawa in 1928 was still new-fangled as lots of children were not taken to school. The parents argued that their wards could go through life without the white man's education. After all, what was needed most was Islamic education. But a few adults still sent their children to school for they knew there was something in the white man's world. Majority of the pupils were sons of district heads, *alkalis* and administrators in the Native Authority. Lamido Musdafa who benefited from western education enrolled Aliyu, his son, into the Yola Elementary School in 1934.

To Aliyu Musdafa, learning assumed a new dimension as he started knowing about such things as Arithmetic, Arabic Studies and Religious Instructions, e.g., the prophets, the angels and the essence of Ramadan, salat, zakat, ablution and other articles of faith. The teachers employed by the Adamawa Native Authority taught in Fulfulde, including Captain Taylor, the supervisor of

the school. The first headmaster of the school, Alkali Hamidu and the other African teachers who were few, were among the early receivers of education in Bauchi, Katsina, Sokoto, Kano, etc. These places had about the only schools in Northern Nigeria. Graduates of Bauchi Middle School taught in the elementary school, while those from the Katsina Teachers' College taught in the middle school, opened in 1920. Lamido Abba encouraged his people to send their sons to school. When he died, truancy increased mostly due to jeering of the pupils who were made to feel they were being misled by the "infidel" white man.

For the next seven years, except during holidays, Aliyu and his brothers walked from the palace to school, not very far away. They were always in the sight of the escort who accompanied them everyday. This way, none of them fell into trouble as is usual with school children. After school, Aliyu and his little brothers would go out of the palace for Quranic lessons and then return home. Discipline at home was strict and Aliyu learnt to respect his elders from there. In later years, he was fondly called *Hamma* by thirty-nine of his younger brothers and sisters who looked up to him as the eldest.<sup>2</sup> As a child he was a leader, at play he acted the leader. This inspiration was drawn from the Lamido, their father, during those times he shared with the children.

In 1938 at the age of sixteen, Aliyu turned a new chapter in his life which would last for the next five years. He enrolled into the Yola Middle School in the Remove<sup>3</sup> Class, the entry point being No. 312. Initially, twelve boys were admitted in the class. They were Aliyu Musdafa, Abubakar Mahmud, Zubairu Lamdo Mubi, Aminu Dahiru, Dirsu Maunde, Atiku Dan Rini, Bappa Magaji, Usmanu Biri, Baba Toungo, Maigari Tafida, Jika Maji and Abba Mohammed. Aliyu started becoming aware of the realities of the outside world and knew the future began from there. The students growing up into adolescence would start to adopt certain standards of adult life and maturity but through the hard way. To have a boy in the school was a tug of war and a lot of the students were from privileged homes. Conversely, at that time no girl went to school throughout the province, until 1948 when education was first opened to females.

Lamido Musdafa, a strong advocate of western education, even gave free uniforms to reluctant parents as an incentive. An educated man himself, it was imperative for him to send his eldest son, Aliyu, to the middle school. Most of Aliyu's classmates were Fulbe and they all hailed from Yola probably due to the proximity of the school. And age did not matter. Contrary to the belief that sons of commoners were deprived of education, people were skeptical about western education, anyway. That was why leaders in the society sent their boys to school to prove that it was not a bad thing. If only the sons of slaves and commoners were sent to school, then there would be a great suspicion.

Lamido Muhammadu Musdafa is remembered in many ways by different people. Ahmed Joda remembers in 1941 when a fairly elderly fellow and a relation from the village in Mayo Ruwo area came to his father's house in Girei. He came to protest that he was being overtaxed and victimised. It was arranged for him to go and see the Lamido in his council in Yola. On his return to Yola he reported that he was well received by the Lamido and was politely told to go back home and wait for an answer.

After one week, a letter was brought to Joda's house and young Ahmed who was eleven years old was made to read the letter to the complainant. In the letter, the council thanked him for bringing his complaint before the Lamido. It was explained to him that the Lamido sent a person to investigate the matter thoroughly and it was confirmed that the tax assessment was fair. He was therefore advised to accept it in good faith. The man was told that in a very polite, mature and nice manner. What's more, the man came, saw the top authority as an angry man, but he was happy with the way he was treated and thanked everybody. He never complained after that.

Ahmed Joda remembers that as kids they used to go to the palace every Friday to watch people coming to the palace. What caught the children's attention most was one man who was aggrieved and came every Friday from his village to the front of the palace to express his feelings. He came on his horse fully dressed and shouted to draw the attention of everybody. He would talk for about two minutes and repeat his complaint of

the previous week. He would stress that the administration was inhuman, that he had been cheated and when he had finished, he would turn and go away. The Lamido (Musdafa) allowed him the freedom to come and complain, despite the strict exercise of law and order.

Ahmed Joda relates his personal experience of the Lamido's liberal disposition.

When I finished secondary school, I felt I wanted to go and do agriculture. The principal education officer in Yola in charge of Adamawa province, Mr. Rankins wanted me to go and train as a teacher. I said "No"! I wanted to train as an agriculturalist. He said "No"! I must go to teachers' training college. When I said no, he said he would take me to the Lamido. He took me there and told his story and the Lamido (Musdafa) asked me my story... and it was a full council. When I finished the Lamido asked me what I wanted to do myself. I said I wanted to go and study agriculture. He turned to the council and said "well this our boy wants to go and study agriculture and we don't have people in agriculture, we can't turn everybody into a teacher, God bless you, go and study agriculture.

Another perspective is given by Ambassador Ibrahim Jimeta, former deputy governor of Adamawa State. He was in school at the age of nine in 1944 which was the time for kids to go to school. He and the other children outside the sphere of royalty were however aware of the power of the Lamido over the society. Children significantly saw the power of the Lamido especially during the Islamic festivals of Id el Fitr and Id el Kabir. They saw delegations coming from all over the province to pay homage to Lamido Musdafa.

Before they made their final entry into Yola we saw the collection of large number of animals and human beings. They adorned themselves and their horses. To us this was an unimaginable thing, living on a bank (Jimeta) the most spectacular was the river-crossing from Bajabure. As horses and men crossed the river we were expecting danger and we sat down to watch and we sometimes spent the whole day there. These were the initial impressions of the power of the Lamido.

Ambassador Jimeta remembers that when Adamawa lost the Lamido in 1946 he was in Elementary III. The news came through Ahmadu Ribadu, their beloved headmaster.

So we got the message through somebody that we loved and respected so the loss was announced in a considerate way. This again is something else which signifies the power of the house of the Lamido. Then of course came the successor, Lamido Ahmadu who was rather flamboyant. We knew about that transition, it was a transition from a benevolent and humble authority to a magnificent and flamboyant one.

Being the son of the Lamido, Aliyu's position in the school did not matter very much. He was tall and accorded respect not because he was a prince, but more because of his perception as an elder brother to the boys in his class and the school. A prefect in class three in charge of Adamawa compound, Aliyu rose to become the headboy in class four. Hamidu Alkali,<sup>4</sup> his room mate in Wakilawa House for two years says Aliyu's position as a headboy gave him some privileges. He had his separate dish. Every boy had his separate dish, but a prefect had more meat than others, more so a headboy. He also remembers there was a time when food was being sent to Aliyu everyday from Yola. Seven days a week, the students of the school ran a tight schedule of classes, games, meal breaks, prayers and cleaning exercises. Friday provided a break from the routine when the boys went for outing. There was no rest on Sunday. At five o'clock every morning, the boys rose up with the sun. Aliyu Musdafa would join the rest of the boys at prayer. There was no building such as a mosque, but they would all gather in the courtyard and someone would lead the two *raka'a* prayers. Nevertheless, the attendance was strict and the boys were forced to pray five times daily.

After the morning prayer, each boy attended to his portion to sweep so that in the end, the whole school became neat. Soon at seven o'clock the boys did their physical exercise for about half an hour. Refreshed and feeling fit for the day, they all trooped to seven different classes until nine o'clock when the students came out for their breakfast which they fondly called

*tara*. An hour later, the students would return to class shifting along with their bags and books in each period. Each classroom was fixed for a teacher and a subject.

By two o'clock, classes were ended and the boys hurried back to their various compounds for meals and rest. However, those in the upper class returned for preparation in readiness for their final examinations. The senior boys took up the extra lessons by themselves either in their quiet rooms or under the shade of trees.

The school library was a meeting point for all grades: Remove Class and Middle One, Two, Three and Four. The radio was always the cynosure. Being the only set in the province it attracted a large listenership. The wireless, as it was called, fascinated the students and brought the activities of the on-going second World War to Adamawa. It was brought to the school because it was the highest citadel of learning and that made the students proud for the wireless spoke only in English. The language was more or less the medium of instruction for teaching Arithmetic, History, Geography, English, Physics, Algebra, Botany and Chemistry, though Fulfulde was the common language in the hostel and class, while Hausa was used sparingly.

Teachers in Yola Middle School were indigenes of Adamawa Province, except Abubakar Ilori from Ilorin. The longest surviving teacher and headmaster of Aliyu Musdafa was Idris Tafida who stopped teaching in 1939 as the headmaster. He died at the age of 89 on April 7, 1996. Other teachers were Hassan Turaki (later headmaster), Bello Malabu (later *Maduki Adamawa*), Ibrahim Demsa (later district head of Mubi), Bello Jimeta (Baba Keke) and Inuwa Mayo Belwa called Inuwa Dogo (on account of his height).

European staff were few and more or less supervisors. Mr. C. E. J. Whitting spoke Fulfulde and spent a lot of time learning the language. He was also good in Arabic and Islamic Literature. Mr. W. S. G. Rankins brought to the school some English course books which were rare in that part of the country and made an everlasting impression on the students. Other European teachers included Mr. J. B. Gott and Mr. P. G. S. Baylis, an education officer. They lived in a Government Reservation

Area while the native teachers resided close to the school compound.

Idris Tafida<sup>5</sup> recalls that Aliyu Mai Borno (late Central Bank Governor), Ahmadu Ribadu (*Dan Galadima Adamawa*) and Abba Mohammed (*I-Vali Adamawa*) were the clever boys but Suleiman Gurin was exceptionally brilliant. Aliyu Musdafa studied his lessons like everybody else. He was brilliant and hardworking, although he was not the leading student in his class. Mallam Idris further recalls that the school maintained strict discipline. In March 1938, there was an outbreak of cerebro-spinal meningitis. All the boys were assembled and told not to move an inch outside the school premises to avoid the disease in nearby Jimeta and Yola towns. Nobody flouted the order for three months until May when the rains came.

The boys had *dan ciki*, the sleeveless white drill shirts, as uniforms. The attire had no pockets, but many of the students made pockets by themselves. During classes, the *dan ciki* was worn with short knickers and a cap which were changed to brown khaki for games and extra-curricular activities. For Friday outings, the students put on kaftan, trousers and cap to match. A prefect wore a fez cap, but his uniform was of the same material as everyone else. Hamidu Alkali remembers that even though Aliyu Musdafa had to wear the uniform and slept on a mat like all of them, he did not like it. "He was not a spoilt child as such, because his father did not really give him the chance to be proud as the prince".

What Ahmed Joda remembers most about Aliyu Musdafa at that time was "his smartness". That perspective was from a junior boy in his first year while the prince was in his final year and the headboy of the school.

So as a small boy, and he as a very senior boy of course, I couldn't come close to him. We were not in the same compound. He was tall and slender. He didn't have much weight then and now. He was very smart I still remember. And when he was in the police after his school he was often in uniform and looked very smart in his uniform. He carried himself well, obviously he was a prince and heir-apparent to the throne.

The hostels were made up of compounds named Wazirawa, Wakilawa, Adamawa and Galadimawa and separated into thirty-seven huts. Each compound had a central hut. Aliyu Musdafa shared his round hut with Suleiman Gurin, Muhammadu Mai and Hamidu Alkali at different times. The huts were made for two students as indicated by two earthen beds which had holes underneath for fire during cold nights. Conversely, the boys slept in the open when the weather was unbearably hot. And they did not sleep later than 10 o'clock. Often the students were allowed to play games, beat tin drums and dance in moonlit nights. Some sneaked into town in twos and threes for NT (Night Travelling). In later years, the huts were replaced by four-corner buildings for four boys at a time, in the 15 x 20 feet rooms.

Most students of Yola Middle School would not forget easily the meals of Dudu Magajiya, the head cook, who was assisted by four other cooks. Four other labourers employed by the school, ground about three bags of guinea corn daily, removed the chaff and passed the clean grains to the women. The corn was ground into flour for the *tuwo* which was prepared and eaten for lunch with soup made from vegetable or baobab leaves. For breakfast, however, the students took gruel, while the *tuwo* and *miya* was repeated in the evening.

Having most of their basic needs provided by the school authority, students were more or less contented with the weekly or monthly two pence allowance which varied according to class. Some boys got two and half pence and some received three pence. Surprisingly, the two pence fetched them a lot for their money.

The boys always looked happily toward their holidays which came three times a year, the longest in March. At the beginning of the rainy season, the students went away for nineteen days called *tashen shatara*. This period gave parents the opportunity to have the boys on the farm and again during harvest time for about a month. During the *tashen shatara*, students who lived as far away as Jalingo, or Madagali or Mayo Belwa could not make the journey and back in nineteen days. It took a boy from Madagali seven days or more to get home on foot — the only available means of transport. But

fellow students were often obliged to harbour the "long distance boys" in Yola or in other home-villages to the expiration of the short break.

However, Fridays were spectacular because they were outing days. All the students put on their best clean white kaftan and trooped to the palace about six miles to greet Lamido Musdafa. It was a tradition for the students escorted by a teacher to join the people in the weekly homage. The boys enjoyed the spectacle as well-dressed district heads, title-holders, courtiers, Native Authority staff, councillors, palace staff and other subjects paid tribute. Royal bards and musicians played their *taushie*, *ganga*, *kotsau* and *algaita* throughout the afternoon while recognising the entrance of the visitors by name. Abdullahi Yakubu<sup>6</sup> notes that throughout his five years in school, Aliyu associated with his mates as fellow friends and brothers. The prince was very amiable and unassuming for he was groomed even at that time for leadership. As a prefect, "he started as a leader of a sort and his tenure as head boy was very good, firm and open to all". He further notes that Aliyu instilled discipline within the school and was even in the distribution of food. He never allowed indiscipline. He made sure there was peace and the students took their food in an orderly manner. Even during games he was on the average in athletics, football and fives.

In later years when Aliyu Musdafa became Lamido, some of his schoolmates were directly or indirectly appointed by him to positions of leadership based on merit, trust and loyalty. Some of them include Abba Mohammed (*Wali*); Muhammad Mai (*Dan Buram*), Adamu Bawuro (*Yerima* and district head); Ahmadu Ribadu, (*Dan Galadima*) and Babba Lawan (*Waziri*). Some of his teachers too were honoured, while old schoolmates achieved success in different endeavours in other parts of the country.

Fifty years later they still come to the Lamido to pay respect to a former schoolmate, friend, brother and captain. Most of all, they found wisdom in the school's motto:- **Tiddo Yo Daddo**- "He who strives hard, realises his ambition".

Following is the Middle IV Examination Pass List between 1938 and 1945.



*The Lamido on his way to the Id ground on a sallah day*



*Yola Middle School founded in 1920, now General Murtala Mohammed College, Yola*

**MIDDLE IV EXAMINATION PASS LIST<sup>7</sup>**

Sch. No.	Name	Where They Went
<b>1938</b>		
218	Carba Beti	Veterinary Department
314	Aliyu Yola	NA Teacher Middle School
<b>1939</b>		
277	Hammawa Yola	NA Central Office
286	Mapindi Mayo Belwa	NA Sanitary Inspector
301	Muhammadu Song	NA Central Office
306	Dahiru Mubi	NA Sanitary Inspector
317	Hamman Njidda Yola	District Scribe, Jimeta
<b>1940</b>		
	Nil	
<b>1941</b>		
260	Usmanu Kachalla	Elementary School Teacher
272	Adamu Bala Santuraki	Agriculture Department
324	Usman Garkuwa	NA Treasury
327	Bello Babba Lawan	NA Central Office
329	Buba Mallam Baba	NA Treasury
330	Yusufu Mallam Baba	Wakili Mayo Danga
333	Hamman Julde Abbo	NA Central Office
336	Barde Babba-da-Gashi	NA Dispensary Attendant
342	Adamu Mallam Garba	NA Works and Survey
344	Yahya Hamidu	NA Works
345	Ibrahim Chindo Sambo	Nigeria Police Force
346	Bello Hamman Jabbo	NA Works
373	Usumanu Hamidu	Veterinary Dept.
390	Nuhu Yini	NA Works
392	Usumanu Alkali Njidda	Prison Mallam, Jalingo
393	Mo'Allah Yidi Dan Buram	District Scribe
394	Muhammadu Mandara	NA Treasury
396	Hamman Njidda Halilu	NA Dispensary
<b>1942</b>		
284	Ahmadu Bayel Bobbo	NA Works
354	Idi Yerima	NA Central Office

372	Adamu Mammadi	NA Works
405	Sulaiman M. Hammawa	Kaduna College
435	Sani Alkali Atiku	Kaduna College

**1943**

312	Aliyu Yola son of Lamido	Adamawa NAPolice
384	Ahmadu Baka Misa	Agriculture Department
403	Musa Song Siddiki	Forestry Department
404	Atiku Yola Dan Rimi	NA Works
408	Zubairu Yola Babba	Trader
409	Adamu Song Iya Bano	Military Force
410	Muhammadu Bello	Military Force
416	Muhammadu Ba Toungo	Elementary School Teacher
425	Abubakar Yola Modibbo	Kano Law School
427	Aminu Yola Mallam Babba	NA Treasury
433	Abba Bobboyi Galadima	NA Works
441	Dirsa Yola Maunde	NA Works
444	Yahya Ahmadu Cashier	NA Dispensary Attendant

**1944**

447	Hamidu Alkalin Alkalai	Kano Law School
495	Sajo Girei Bobboiyi Girei	Medical Department
481	Abdullahi Dan Buram Jada	Agricultural Department

**1945**

	Adamu Bawuro Musdafa	NA Central Office
476	Ahmadu Mallum Mubi	Forestry Department
482	Auwal Usman Modire	Kano Survey School
483	Hammanjoda Misa	Bauchi E.T.C.
484	Abba Mahi Yola	Veterinary Department
485	Hayatu son of Waziri	NA Central Office
486	Salisu son of Ardo Sorau	Wakili Sorau
487	Hamma Tukur Umaru	NA Education Office (Clerk)
488	Ahmadu Lamido Abba	NA Central Office
489	Ahmadu son of Waziri	Kano School of Hygiene
491	Umaru Nasidi Na Bako	NA Works
492	Aliyu Modibbo Mahmudu	Forestry Dept.
496	Bamanga Alkali Muktar	Forestry Dept.
502	Abubakar Bappa Shelleng	Bauchi E.T.C.
505	Abbo Hamidu Jimeta	Bauchi E.T.C.

506	Abdullahi Mallam Yakubu	Kano Law School
507	Mamman Adda Salihu	NA Dispensary Attendant
509	Ibrahim Tanko Ali	Veterinary Dept.
512	Muhammadu Baba Zango	Forestry Dept.
513	Umaru Galadima Kunini	Bauchi E.T.C.
514	Muh. Galadima Kunini	District Scribe, Muri NA
516	Teru Tumbravawa	Agriculture Department

When Aliyu Musdafa completed his Middle IV education in 1943, he was set for leadership status like his counterparts who on graduation began their career in the Adamawa NA departments, Kano Law School, the military, teaching or trading. This crop of new leaders had a responsibility in society, to put to test their western education and the values learned from it. At the age of twenty-one, Aliyu Musdafa looked toward settling down with a family of his own. His mates were already fathers while at school. Soon, he married and was blessed with a son named Barkindo, who was raised by the Emir of Katsina, Usman Nagogo.

Aliyu Musdafa settled down at the royal house at Yelwa where Bobbo Ahmadu, his great-grand father too had resided. During the reign of Lamido Zubairu in the 1890s, Bobbo Ahmadu built the house in which he lived until he became Lamido. His son, Abba, moved into the Yelwa house and left the residence on his appointment as Lamido too. The house was however occupied by Lamido Abba's brother, Yerima Bobboyi, until he died. The next master, and son of Abba, Musdafa, lived in the Yelwa house for some years when he was *Yerima*, but with his new status as Lamido he moved into the palace in 1928. Lamido Musdafa's eldest son, Aliyu, made the historical house his new abode and like his predecessors, left for the palace in 1953. Aliyu himself became Lamido in 1953 when his eldest son, Barkindo, was still a boy. The Lamido refused to allow any of his brothers who demanded residence there until 1975 when Barkindo moved in as the new master. The historical background of the Yelwa royal house therefore shows a tradition of the direct siblings inheriting except in the case of Yerima Bobboyi.

Aliyu Musdafa joined the Adamawa NA as a clerk in the

Central Office in April 1943 and was later tipped to head the Police Department by his father, the Lamido. Thus, his career with the NA Police began to take shape in Northern Nigeria's centre of learning. In Zaria NA, Aliyu Musdafa was attached for training at the Treasury, Divisional Office, Translation Bureau, Judicial, Health, Police, Veterinary and Forestry Department between July and September 1943.

After some months in administration, Aliyu Musdafa started training in police work in the Nigeria Police College at Kaduna, and later at Enugu and Lagos from December 1944 to March 1945.

Armed with these credentials for a career in the police force, Aliyu Musdafa came back to Yola and was appointed Supervisor of the Adamawa NA Police, a position he held for the next eight years. As an honour and for merit, Lamido Musdafa gave him the title of *Wali*, the first in the history of Adamawa. Many years later as Lamido of Adamawa, Aliyu Musdafa was made president of the Police Public Relations Committee in Gongola State. The then Inspector-General of Police, Etim Inyang, on a visit in 1984 expressed confidence in Lamido Aliyu Musdafa in the cause of the Police and implored him further to use his good offices in "promoting a police force that every citizen will be proud of."

At the age of twenty-four, Aliyu Musdafa, the *Walin Adamawa*, with the equivalent rank of Assistant Superintendent was head of a force of 221 law-enforcement officers spread across the province. The brown-uniformed NA police were quite distinct from the *dogarai* in red robes who were a little more than personal attendants of district heads. The NA police was yet different from the Nigeria Police which was headed by a Senior Assistant Superintendent in Adamawa and answerable to the Assistant Commissioner of Police in Kaduna.

As Chief of Security, Aliyu Musdafa's clear assignment was first of all to redeem the image of the police which was waning due to the upsurge in crime after the second World War as against the small strength of the force. Yola district had sixteen *dogarai*, while the other districts shared the rest of the seventy-one officers. On the other hand, the *'yan doka* were posted to only principal districts. Jimeta township, due to its

cosmopolitan nature and size, had a force of ninety-two 'yan doka, Yola town twenty-four and the next important district of Mubi and Mambilla shared twenty-eight 'yan doka officers. For strategy, the force in Mubi served the northern part of Adamawa Province while Mambilla took care of the south. Apart from Jimeta, Yola, Mubi and Mambilla, yan doka officers were substituted with dogarai.<sup>8</sup>

More than ever, the challenge of crime control and prevention increased in the province at the end of the second World War in 1945 with the influx of ex-soldiers into urban areas. Aliyu Musdafa's task was to check the activities of the demobilised soldiers who saw war, but were thrown into the job-market. The tendency was that these ex-combatants would use their experience of force and firearms to make a living. The realisation of the dangerous situation informed the need for a very competent chief of police to fight crime, especially in Jimeta, which was hard hit by the upsurge in crime.

Owing to his tremendous achievements, the Superintendent of Police wrote on September 9, 1946 to the Resident about Aliyu Musdafa.

The Wali is a young man, intelligent and well educated. Now is the time to give him a good grounding in his responsibility so that at some future date, he will be able to stand on his two feet with the necessary confidence in himself and ability to be a competent police chief in all respects.<sup>9</sup>

Notorious criminals of those days met their waterloo in the hands of Aliyu Musdafa. The top cop had in his net such terrors as Buba Kangu, Buba Nderiminde, Musa Garwa, Mbiya Diri, Hamman Boyi, among others.

Aliyu Musdafa operated from his station situated adjacent to the Lamido's palace close to the Galadina's office. At one time the office of the Wali was considered for relocation to Jimeta which was under pressure. That meant a dislocation of the administrative machinery since Yola served as the capital of the province. To this effect, the Resident, Mr. Williams reasoned that it was imperative for the NA Chief of Police to have his office at Yola like other heads of departments. He further

reasoned, the *Wali* would be put out of touch not only with the NA departments, but also with the divisional office. Consequently the Resident in a letter dated September 25, 1946 instructed the Divisional Officer, Mr. Pott:

That the *Wali* should have his own kit car and should have no difficulty in visiting Jimeta as often as necessary. It is not a necessity that the bulk of *yan doka* force be concentrated in Jimeta, but only a minute force be posted there for beat and routine services until suitable buildings were provided.

Perhaps aside from crime combat, Aliyu Musdafa's major difficulty was the standard of education of the force. Majority of the *'yan doka* and *dogarai* were illiterate and enlistment had to be adjusted to accommodate only men literate in Hausa including writing in *ajami*. There was, however, some difficulty in enlisting products of the middle school, very few of whom were found suitable by the Nigeria Police even when they were willing to enlist.

Faced with this situation, the Assistant Commissioner of Police, G. H. Farrell wrote to the Senior Assistant Superintendent of Police in Adamawa Province advising that enlisting men should write an application in Hausa before him and be given any piece of dictation. He further advised that a candidate be accepted if fluent. And if he was a borderline case, his letter was to be sent to the ACP. Those that were obviously insufficiently literate to make notes or entries in notebooks were turned away, but some came back after they had improved. Mr. Farrell noted:

It may be of interest to know that one of the best recruits we have passed out recently was my second steward for six months during which he copied out daily *Gaskiya Tafi Kwabo* until from writing in block capitals, he was able to write well.

The standardisation of the NA police drew a lot of attention from the authorities in view of development efforts by Aliyu Musdafa as Chief of Police. In 1944, at the Residents' Conference, it was recommended that policemen in uniform would recognise their superiors by such form of hand salute as the NA may prescribe. The Resident, however, did not agree with "salutation

in form of bowing or kneeling behaviour unsuitable for persons in uniform." The Chief of Police would always give a hand salute to Lamido Musdafa, his father, whenever he visited the palace on official duty. It was also decided that shoulder stripes or coloured stars were to be used to distinguish between policemen literate in Hausa and English.

Hamidu Alkali who was close to Aliyu Musdafa even after the Middle School remembers:

When we finished school I went to Kano while the *Wali* was on training in Zaria for sometime, and we met often during the holidays. In 1948 when I came back, I found Aliyu Musdafa had become the Chief of Police. He was riding a motor-cycle, a privilege in those days, and he was fast on it. In 1950 and '51 we saw each other always at my house or his house or at meetings when I was seconded to organise Native Courts as registrar in the Chief Alkali's court. After my departure for Britain in 1954 we did not come that close because I did not stay in Yola until 1976 when I became the Secretary to Military Government when Gongola State was created. He was very smart in his uniform and tie. He was strong, tall and friendly, but people could also fear him because he would not take any nonsense. People were not as corrupt then and police officers would not just release a criminal because they were given money. The *Wali* was a strict disciplinarian and was always conscious of his position.

Aliyu Musdafa did not see his exalted position as *Wali* to create a gulf between himself and colleagues, schoolmates and friends. He fraternised with the old boys and mingled with them from time to time. He is remembered to be very strong in his job as a policeman and would have been a very powerful chief of police if he had not been Lamido.

In the early months of 1953, it was becoming visible that all was not well between the Lamido, Ahmadu Maigari and his council. The councillors were alleging that Ahmadu Maigari, Lamido since 1946, was inflexible and drifting away from the council. In other words, the Lamido was taking decisions unilaterally without consulting the council, contrary to tradition. Moves were then made to remove him.

Only the council had the power to remove the Lamido. And the resolve was strong among the *Waziri*, *Galadima*, *Ma'aji* and other councillors. Tafida Idris, then district head of Michika and a member of the finance committee recalls that he heard the news that Lamido Ahmadu Maigari had been removed during a meeting of the finance committee he was attending in the council chambers. The rift in the council was so wide that the new development did not come as a surprise.

To ordinary watchers of the council's affairs, there was no love lost between the Lamido and his advisers. It was believed that his approach to state matters was blunt and disrespectful to his subjects, some of whom were elderly. However, the allegations against him were put down on paper by the councillors and submitted to him to defend or clear himself of misconduct within six months. Still, a reply to that letter was not made by the Lamido and this was seen by the council as an affirmation of the charges.

Signals from Kaduna indicated that the deposition moves were acknowledged. The Lamido was then summoned to the region's capital in Kaduna over the petition by the councillors. There, he was told to abdicate the throne and proceed to Azare on exile. In his new home, Azare, Lamido Ahmadu was promised to be accorded full privileges of an emir including normal salary, police security and access to his family members.

Lamido Ahmadu, however, left Kaduna without notice and the government was alerted to stop his journey to Yola for security reasons. A team led by the district head of Mubi, (Ahmadu Waziri) left for the assignment to intercept the deposed emir. At Biu, Lamido Ahmadu asked to be allowed to go back to Yola, not for the throne but to his own personal house. That proposition was not accepted. He then requested to stay in Jada, that too was not agreed to. Then, he resigned to fate, and requested to reside in Biu where God had brought him. So Lamido Ahmadu stayed in Biu until his death in 1978.

In Yola, Waziri Muhammadu was overseeing the affairs of the council, while the kingmakers met to select a new Lamido. Some members of the royal family had an eye on the leadership and it was also clear that the Waziri himself wanted the top position, though he was not entitled to it by tradition. Other

kingmakers were the Galadima, Kaigama, Lamdo Katsina and the district heads of Balala, Malabu, Mayo Farang, Zumo, Song and Gurin.

Merit was the most important factor in the selection of a new Lamido. Many eligible princes would contest, but only one would be chosen. Yerima Adamu Bawuro points out that the kingmakers found out the qualities of each candidate and discussed thoroughly before deciding on the best. They had their own way of getting information on the candidates. If more than one of them emerged, a vote was taken and the name of the successful candidate presented to the Resident for final approval or selection. The Waziri, however, was very influential in the whole process, but he succumbed to the dictates of popular demand in choosing the best.

Hamidu Alkali recalls that he was with Aliyu Musdafa the night he was made Lamido. Both did not talk about the matter. But in their minds they kept on hoping and speculating. In the morning, they knew what would happen. At the same time people were excited to know their new leader. Then radio was not known much, so a loud speaker was used to relay the message from the Resident that Aliyu Musdafa, the Chief of Police, had become the next Lamido of Adamawa. That day in the evening, it rained.

According to Usman Pate, *Kaigama Adamawa*, who was living in Numan, there was anxiety all over the land. Everybody there was anxious so somebody was sent to Yola for information. The Divisional Officer went to Yola everyday. Whatever news he got he would tell the Alkali who would then tell him. When Kaigama came to Yola there was tension and then he heard Aliyu Musdafa had been appointed.

Abdullahi Yakubu notes that though he was in Kaduna he knew that there were many candidates for the throne, but there was none as popular and acceptable to the people as Aliyu. He was young, handsome, hardworking and educated. In fact, he stood conspicuously among the contestants like a star.

The Northern Region of Nigeria Gazette No. 18 of August 26 1953, reads: It is notified for general information that His Honour, the Lieutenant-Governor has been pleased to approve and recognise the appointment of Aliyu Musdafa as Lamido of

Adamawa with effect from Sunday, the 26th of July, 1953 and grade him as a first class emir.<sup>10</sup>

Lamido Aliyu Musdafa's appointment was celebrated throughout the province. The choice of the kingmakers did not receive any sign of protest or disagreement as people from all walks of life trooped to congratulate the new emir at his Yelwa residence. District and village heads, farmers, traders, politicians, mallams, school teachers, members of the royal family and students of the Middle School (who walked five miles) came to pay their respects to the new Lamido.

He, however, did not receive his staff of office until January 1955 when the Lieutenant-Governor came down to Yola. The euphoria was not lost despite the delay in the installation eighteen months after the appointment, overtly due to a communication problem. The occasion was witnessed by thousands of people from the province and the Northern Region in general and in attendance were the Emirs of Kano, Gombe, Bauchi and the representative of the Sultan of Sokoto, Waziri Junaid. But long before that day, the beginning of a new era had already been heralded.

## Notes

1. Asmau Nana, popularly known as Da, is about ninety years old and lives at the Yelwa royal house in Yola town.
2. Interview, Adamu Bawuro Musdafa, May, 1993, Yola. Alhaji Adamu Bawuro Musdafa is the immediate brother to Lamido Aliyu Musdafa. Born in 1926, he attended Yola Elementary School, now Musdafa Primary School. In 1940, Adamu Bawuro was admitted into the Yola Middle School which he completed in 1945. He worked at the Central Office, Yola and Adamawa Native Authority, heading the Police Department in 1955. He was appointed with the title of *Yerima* in 1960 and made district head of Yola. He left that office for a seat as councillor in the NA until 1972 when he became the district head of Yola again.

3. Yola Middle School was established in 1920 at the present grounds of the Government Girls' Secondary School, Yola. All the buildings of the middle school were demolished, to give way for the girls' school in 1958.
4. Interview, Hamidu Alkali, June 1993 Yola. Schoolmate and roommate of Lamido Aliyu Musdafa, he was born in Yola in July 1925 and attended both elementary and middle schools there. He later went to Kano Law School in 1944. In 1959, he was one of the four students in the Northern Region to be admitted to the Centre of Oriental and African Studies in Great Britain for a university degree to which he added a Master degree in 1969. He was principal of School of Arabic Studies, Sokoto and North East College of Arts and Science, Maiduguri, 1971-1976. He was appointed Secretary to the Military Government in the newly created Gongola State in 1976. With an honorary doctorate degree from the University of Maiduguri, Hamidu Alkali has held many academic positions including Director of Centre for Trans-Saharan Studies, University of Maiduguri.
5. Interview, Idris Tafida, May 1993, Yola. Mallam Idris Tafida taught at the Yola Middle School, 1930-1939. Born in 1907, he entered the Katsina Teachers' College in 1925 and was one class ahead of Ahmadu Bello, Saradauna of Sokoto and Premier of Northern region. Other students were Kashim Ibrahim (1925) and Abubakar Tafawa Balewa (1928). He taught English at the school. He left Yola Middle School on appointment as district head at Michika until 1954 when he became a councillor in the Adamawa Native Authority. He was the chairman of the Northern Peoples' Congress in Adamawa Province. He went to the Northern House of Assembly and House of Representatives in Lagos until 1966 when the military took over government. Mallam Idris was appointed district head of Yola 1966-1972 and retired in 1976.
6. Interview, Abdullahi Yakubu, April 1993, Yola. He was in Yola Middle School, 1940-1945. Born in 1930, he attended Jimeta Elementary School, 1935-1940. After middle school he went to the Kano Law School and trained as a jurist,

1945-1949. He worked as a mufti assistant at the Alkali's court before joining the Nigerian Railways in 1952. In 1960, he began a career in information at the Foreign Broadcasting Information Services at Kaduna. He transferred to the Federal Ministry of Information, Lagos in 1970 where he rose to the rank of Federal Director of Information. After retirement in 1987, Abdullahi Yakubu was appointed Director of MAMSER in Adamawa State, 1992-1993.

7. National Archives, Kaduna, 1341/4332 "Middle School Examination Results" 1944-1954
8. National Archives, Kaduna, 238/1266F "Yan Doka Force" 1945-1953
9. *Ibid.*
10. National Archives Kaduna, 329.

## Chapter Four

### The Monarch

The ascension of Aliyu Musdafa to the throne of Adamawa marked the beginning of a new era. The year 1954 was an anti-climax of recent political tension that resulted in the deposition of the previous Lamido. The atmosphere of peace and tranquility matched the sincere attempt of the new Lamido who recognised the need to go along with the modern times and serve the interests of the people. He held with utmost sanctity the oath of office he made at the time of appointment.

According to the 1954 annual report on Adamawa, "it would be idle to claim that there was no extortion, no corruption, no oppression and no discontent but nevertheless there are good grounds for believing that during this year there has been a real decrease in all these evils."<sup>1</sup>

The Native Authority Council, which met only once a month due to constraints, was reinvigorated. Deliberations were less rowdy and more orderly than ever before. The atmosphere was conducive enough for the new and less experienced members to learn and contribute. At the same time, the council recorded "less of the petty bickering and personal squabbling that previously robbed its meetings of dignity." Two new members entered the council from Mubi and Gurumpawo districts.

With open minded deliberations of NA members on local government issues such as rules of procedure for the Outer Council, the establishment of the post of local government secretary, the delegation of financial powers to district councils and the relationship between district heads and their district councils; the pattern of a local government was falling in place.

The NA members had in mind an administrative structure such that the Outer Council was seen as the equivalent of the

House of Assembly, but smaller in size and outlook; the NA Council as the executive council, and the Lamido as the equivalent of the governor, the Queen's representative. This arrangement, they realised, must be followed to give the people a say in their own affairs. The meeting of the Outer Council in June 1954 was described as the most successful ever. Albeit, the second meeting in December was rescheduled until the Lamido was installed by the governor in January 1955. What used to be the "NA Bench" was scrapped and the heads of departments were called upon to give answers personally at question time. Significantly, the Outer Council approved the new Five Year Development Plan, tax incidence and the appointment of two new members of the NA Council (earlier mentioned). The Outer Council had made changes in organisation and procedure, and was now seeing its effectiveness, especially for a smooth take-off of the local government system.

The new administration brought itself closer to the people at the grassroots by having a closer working relationship with the district councils. The councils therefore assumed new roles as the link between the masses and the central authority. With the introduction of elected membership in the Northern Region, the districts became the first step in the democratic process, at which level, electoral colleges were formed.

The wishes of the district councils were given priority attention by the NA before other matters. "More and more matters of new policy have been referred to the district councils for their opinions, and more and more have executive matters being sent down to them for action instead of direct to the district head as in the past, so much so that the Native Authority has recently had to give increasing thought to the problem of how to increase the district council's responsibilities without detracting from the authority of the district head, who must still remain the Authority's chief executive agent."

In cases where the councils showed the will to improve their areas, they were assisted with all the resources available, but with the prior consultation of the people. When Kilba, Yola and Mubi districts got the nod to increase their funds by a small extra levy on all tax payers, the people were consulted first resulting in the levy of 6 pence per tax payer in Yola and Kilba

districts and a gain of 182 pounds and 175 pounds respectively. In Mubi, however, the levy was not approved as the tax payers could not reach an agreement on the new levy.

In the spirit of the new orientation, the Kilba District Council set up a "Committee for Better Relations" to investigate and if possible settle matters that appeared to threaten the co-existence of the three rival Muslim, Christian and pagan groups in the community.

The new administration witnessed a "decrease in extortion, corruption, oppression and discontent." An intensive tour of the district councils by the Lamido greatly reduced embezzlement by the district heads and alkalis, and bribes were no longer openly given or taken. The axe fell on the district head of Mayo Belwa who was removed and his son appointed to replace him. Probity was the watchword and what followed were the cleansing of the judiciary, abolition of extra fees before a case was heard, awakening of the NA heads of departments to their financial responsibility, reducing family intrigues which had dominated the local political scene; and the ban on receiving gifts by NA employees.

Between January and February 1954, Lamido Aliyu Musdafa undertook an extensive tour of Adamawa Province covering nearly all the districts, some of which had never been visited by any Lamido before. He was embraced with glee and celebration by the common people throughout his tour, during which he formed many district and village councils and encouraged the farmers to take up mixed farming.

As part of the working visit in the northern districts, he merged Holma and Zumo with headquarters at Zumo. Namtari, in the central zone, was absorbed into Yola district to be administered by the Galadima who also doubled as the district head of Yola. In the southern districts, he amalgamated Yandang Waka and Mayo Farang into one and changed their names to Nassarawo Jereng with headquarters at Jereng.<sup>2</sup>

The objective of the reorganisation was economic rather than political which therefore did not attract disenchantment except in the case of Madagali which had political undertones. The ousted ruling Hamman Yaji family sought assistance from outside the province to restore the district headship of Madagali

to them but failed. Instead, Dangaladima Dahiru was appointed and he succeeded in resolving the problem relating to the tussles. In Chubunawa District, the headship became vacant with the appointment of Mallam Idris Tafida to a central post and was replaced by *Marafan Verre*, while Ibrahim Demsa *Wakilin Gona*, moved to Verre District as the new district head.

Where there was a multiplicity of small villages, the Lamido merged them into larger units for administrative convenience. The people were largely involved in the decisions and the district heads worked extra hard to disabuse the minds of those who thought otherwise. In this context, for instance, small hamlets in Mambilla which were bitter rivals realised there was no way the units could progress except under the same village council. In Mubi, fifty-seven small village areas were joined into twenty-four larger units to make them stronger.

The familiarisation tour of the Lamido took him to the Garkida Leprosarium where he was shown round by the superintendent. He inspected all the departments and wards, operating theatre and carpenter's shop. He also discussed the review of the Leprosy Control Programme and saw several cases of the disease. The Lamido also inspected the Church of the Brethren Mission General Hospital, accompanied by the Superintendent, Dr. Petcher.<sup>3</sup>

Agriculture, the main stay of the province's economy, took the centre stage under the new administration of the Lamido. In northern Adamawa, the agricultural show was reviewed with a successful launching at Uba in May 1954 where the Lamido, represented by the *Wakilin Gona*, emphasised the importance of agricultural shows as a forum for development of the sector. Prizes were presented to the best mixed farmers in handling working beasts. Other events at the show were display of leather work and demonstration on the use of fertilizer and best methods of picking cotton. A novel event featured the display and sale of *Yaki da Jahilci* Primers and Readers with 500 books sold on the spot. To add colour to the agricultural show, horse and donkey races were organised, while school children and adult literacy students thrilled spectators in sports and games.<sup>4</sup> The local Fulbe, Marghi and Higgi peoples featured dances and traditional displays.

Overall, the year 1954 was promising for agriculture following sufficient rainfall and a bumper harvest. Guinea corn at harvest time sold at 2 pence a bowl in the Chamba District, while in the central and northern areas, it fell from 8 pence to 4 pence. Groundnut business exceeded the previous year's earnings; while cotton was already showing signs of prosperity. Rice, too, was a bumper harvest despite the flooding of River Faro in Gurin District. And the dry-season guinea corn, *muskuwari*, had shown a lot of prospects. The rainfall was good for the shipping firms which got a "good river" and transported their produce in time before the river fell.

Equally, finances of the Adamawa NA improved with a boost of extra 24,000 pounds as revenue derived from cautious increase of general tax from 17s 2d to 17s 11d and *Jangali* tax from 3s 6d to 4s. One of the conditions for the tax collection that year was that any district head that did not perform well would not be opportune to attend the installation ceremony of the Lanido in January, the following year.

The development of Mambilla District in southern Adamawa gained acceleration as the people, through communal labour, worked hard to construct an all-season road to the south of Bamenda from Gembu, the district headquarters. A healthy competition heated up between the Mambilla and the Nkambe peoples in the Bamenda side, both old friends and rivals. The aim was to see who would be the first to link up the 26-mile outlet through the mountain ranges, 5,000 feet above sea level. Despite the challenging landscape, concerted efforts were made by the Mambilla people who provided the labour, the Mbororo'en who sent in food rations and a committee of the district council who stood by in case of any difficulties.<sup>5</sup>

Elections into the new House of Representatives in 1954 in Adamawa Province was a landslide victory for the Northern Peoples' Congress (NPC), winning three of the four electoral seats, while the fourth went to an independent Chamba representative. The Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) faced a huge defeat in an election that was generally peaceful. Most of the administrative staff who were to supervise the elections were away for the harvest and the remaining staff were fully used to conduct the elections. The electorate largely

voted because they were told to do so. Furthermore, their ball went to those candidates they knew and trusted and not on a party basis (a trend observed throughout the primary and intermediate elections).

In the final elections, the NPC won in the Northern Region. A prominent Adamawa politician, Mahmud Ribadu was appointed the Federal Minister of Land, Mines and Power and two other Northerners, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Minister of Transport and Works, and Inuwa Wada, Minister without portfolio.

Prior to the federal elections, the first pan-Adamawa Congress of Peace met at Numan in April and was attended by all the political parties and tribal organisations with discussion on issues that touched on education and social development in Adamawa Province, the future of the cattle-Fulani and non-Muslim elements, and the elections.<sup>6</sup>

Talks for a radio telephone trunk service between Yola and Kaduna were held in the House of Representatives in Lagos. The Central Minister of Communication, Chief Arthur Pres revealed that equipment for the project had arrived in the country and hinted that the new service would enhance the wireless telegraph channels between Yola, Kaduna, Kano, Enugu, Lagos and Garua.

Bello Malabu, representing Adamawa, followed up the issue in the legislature and sought for a new telephone switchboard to expand the capacity of Yola Telephone Exchange. He therefore proposed the construction of two new lines to link Yola with Numan and Jalingo when the programme for the development of telecommunications for 1955/56 was being framed.<sup>7</sup>

In May, direct telephone communication was made possible in Adamawa to link Yola with Lagos and an extension to Maiduguri. Using high frequency radio public telephone service, Yola line was opened only between 12 noon and 2.00 p.m. daily except on Sundays, while the Lagos and Maiduguri service opened between 10.00 a.m. and 12.00 noon. The service hours had to be limited because the quality of communications was affected by interference in the atmosphere.

For the first time in Adamawa history, conversation was made through telephone in June 1954. Launching the telephone service, the Lieutenant-Governor of the Northern Region, Sir

Bryan Sharwood-Smith, spoke with the Resident in Yola. When the Governor finished he said, "Communication is good" and asked the Resident to greet the Lamido and his council on his behalf and to tell them that he (Sir Bryan) was very pleased that Adamawa had at last been brought in closer touch with the government in Kaduna. The following day, the Lieutenant-Governor spoke to the Resident for Bornu in Maiduguri and sent a similar message to the Shehu and his council.<sup>8</sup>

Three months later, the governor, Sir John Macpherson visited Yola on a tour of the Northern Region and also went to Numan, Jalingo, Lau, etc, for ten days. Sir John had last visited the region when he officially opened the Institute of Administration in Zaria.

A new post office in Adamawa province was opened by Lamido Aliyu Musdafa to serve Yola, Jimeta and surrounding areas. The Assistant Surveyor from Jos who represented the Director of Posts and Telecommunications read a telegram in the presence of the acting Resident hoping that the new post office would be of great benefit to the people. The NA Council had decided too to establish an internal mail service in the province to ensure the speedy distribution of official mail and literature. Muri and Numan NAs, fascinated by the new development which at first operated fortnightly and then weekly, expressed their willingness to join Adamawa NA to make the internal mail service a provincial one. With a step ahead, the Adamawa Native Authority ordered for thirty dry battery wireless sets for distribution in the districts.<sup>9</sup>

Conversely, the pipe-borne water supply project for Yola town did not take off as planned in 1953. The previous year, work had commenced and progressed fast following contributions of one pound deposit per person. But when the work stalled most of the people who deposited their money started to withdraw from the project.

Lamido Aliyu Musdafa and his counterparts in the region attended a ten-day course organised for emirs and chiefs at the Lugard Hall in Kaduna. The course aimed at improving the concept of Local Government and Government Policy dwelt on agriculture, adult education, co-operatives, education, forestry, information services, local industries, medical services, police,

public works and veterinary with lectures from ministers and senior officers of government. The emirs and chiefs also visited the trade centre, regional medical stores, public works department, West African Institute for Trypanosomiasis and watched a magistrate's court in session.<sup>10</sup>

The Adamawa NA made big plans for the educational sector, but the short supply of teachers was a stumbling block to building and opening of new schools. Nevertheless, the Yola Middle School was slated for upgrading to a junior secondary school and the staff figure strengthened with the appointment of Inuwa Yola from Katsina Higher Teachers' Training College and two craft teachers from Kaduna Teachers' College. Furthermore, building for a provincial girls' school was almost finished with water and electricity already on the way. This project was billed for completion in February 1955. Meanwhile, the Native Authority opened several new primary schools, while building for a senior primary school to be in double stream was planned to start the following year too.

Senior primary schools were sought for like hot cake as the districts competed for siting in their areas. Tafida Idris narrates how a senior primary school was built in Michika. At a meeting of district heads, the school was proposed for Mubi. Tafida Idris argued it out with the district head of Mubi, Lamdo Ahmadu Waziri, that Mubi had more than enough with a training centre and elementary school, while Michika had none. After a long debate, Tafida Idris was able to persuade the meeting to recommend the location of the school in Michika.

In his report, the Senior District Officer in Adamawa Division described the events of 1954: "Good rains, good crops, a good year for trade, no great rise in the cost of living, no famine or disasters, less disturbance of the peace than usual, and above all, a distinct feeling throughout the land that the old evils of bribery, corruption, and oppression are on the wane. When in the new year the 11th Lamido would have been conferred by the governor, the formal recognition of Her Majesty the Queen, he would re-affirm the vows he had made on his appointment, to wage war on these evils; and if he and his councillors stood fast and suited their actions to their words there was no reason why victory should not be won."

January 24, 1955 was set for the D-Day, the day every man, woman and child in Adamawa Emirate was waiting to see. Since the installation of the last Lamido nine years before, the expectation for the coronation of Aliyu Musdafa would be no less splendid. The high-level preparations was a strong indication of the grandeur. Already the organising committee of energetic young men was busy putting the finishing touches. Mallam Idris, *Tafidan Adamawa* and a councillor; Mallam Muhammadu Song, Secretary of the NA; Mallam Abubakar Mahmud, *Sardauna Adamawa*; the Magaji of Yola town; and Mallam Bobboyi Galadima were depended upon for the herculean task.<sup>11</sup>

It was said that since the establishment of the emirate some 149 years ago, there had never been such a magnificent line-up of expected guests. Before then, Adamawa did not have the opportunity of hosting kings, princes, Europeans, senior civil servants and commonfolk of this magnitude. However, it was a disappointment that the Premier of Northern Region, Ahmadu Bello, *Sardauna Sokoto* could not be there. With regrets, the star of the North sent a telegram to the Adamawa NA informing them of his inability to come as he had to stay back in Kaduna for the visit of Secretary for the Colonies.

That notwithstanding, the first set of dignitaries started coming into Yola on the 19th, five days ahead of the ceremony. The entry of the district heads into the capital was colourful, enchanting and performed in the usual captivating manner as is done in Yola tradition. According to the etiquette, a district head would not enter Yola directly, but would wait at the outskirts of the capital with his entourage while a message was sent to the Lamido to announce his arrival.

A palace staff transmitted the message to the Lamido for he has been assigned to do that and in addition usher in the entourage to the palace. Each district head would have a guide attached to him. The palace staff announced to the Lamido the arrival of the district head and asked for permission for him to be received. With the permission granted, the district head and the entourage began to troop into town amidst drumbeats, trumpet blare, and dancing and singing in the direction of the Eastern gate of the palace.

Another palace staff got on horseback ahead of an advance party which would welcome the district head amidst drumming too. At a distance, the district head paused and watched as the party galloped up to him, turned round and headed back for the palace. This feat was repeated a few times before the horsemen of the district head took over and displayed their own skills and from the palace gate.

At a point, the two teams of horsemen paired up and with the district head in the centre galloped in unison to the palace gate and back. Then in majesty, all the horsemen and the drummers rode to the gate where the Lamido had come out to welcome them. The district head in the lead dismounted and paid his compliments to the Lamido. Prayers were then offered for their safe arrival. After that, the guide took the district head to a lodge for rest. This could be his own personal quarters in Yola. Other members of the entourage also took off for their own resting places along with the royal guide.

As it were, this protocol was followed to receive the district heads of Uba, Mayo Belwa, Mayo Farang, Zummo, Ga'anda, Toungo, Balala, Verre, Mubi, Maiha, Chubunawa, Madagali and Girei. The first to come in was Majidadin Uba on the 19th. Dan Rimi, assigned to act as his royal guide heralded the entry of the district head who arrived with trumpets, drums, praise-singers and all. Other members of the entourage included heavily decorated horse-riders; three *Zaggage* riderless white beauties in front and at the rear followed the *haunawa* cavalry in their long flowing embroidered capes. After paying allegiance to the Lamido, the district head retired to his lodge. When the drums and trumpets quieted down, the city became silent for another day.

At 11.30 a.m. on January 20, the representative of the Sultan of Sokoto, Wazirin Sokoto, Mallam Junaid's plane touched ground. In anticipation of the flight, the Lamido and the Council turned up at Mile 6 for a befitting welcome to the first delegation from outside the emirate. The Waziri was joined on the flight by the Resident, Mr. C.K. Wreford who just came back from his annual leave in England. Other passengers were Lamdo Malabu, back from a course at Zaria, and Mallam Hassan, headmaster of the Yola Middle School, returning from a

session of the House of Representatives in Lagos.

The motorcade from the airport snaked through the streets of Yola to the former residence of Shantalin Yola where the district head of Yola, Galadima Aminu, would play host to Wazirin Sokoto. The Lamido and his councillors left the distinguished guests to rest and all went back to the chambers.

What must have brought the Wazirin Sokoto to Yola is traced to the tradition where the installation of a new emir in the Sokoto Caliphate required the endorsement or, rather in modern days, the acknowledgement of the Sultan of Sokoto. Modibbo Adama was turbanned by Sheikh Usman Dan Fodio and set a precedent. Lauwal, Sanda and Zubairu too had to go to Sokoto for investiture whereas, the Sultan delegated the Waziri to other emirates to install emirs there on his behalf. With the change of times, the Sultan now sent the Waziri to represent him.

Shortly at 12.30 p.m., Dan Rimi received the district head of Mayo Belwa who was backed by entertainment from Banguba and Nyawala cultural groups. Likewise, the district head of Mayo Farang, who was received by Sarkin Dogarai, too was escorted by Nyawala music and royal trumpets to the eastern gate before finally going to his lodge. By 2.00 p.m., the district head of Zummo entered, escorted by Barade Ahidjo and Saidawa music.

Moments before the district head of Zummo arrived his quarters, the entourage of Danlawan (district head of) Ga'anda arrived. But hardly did he reach the banks of the Benue, seven miles away, when he got a note from the Lamido to go back and receive the Emir of Fika and accompany him to Yola the next day. His delegation went ahead with the district head's representatives being ushered into the capital by Umaru Lamdo Katsina.

Dan Rimi again led two other district heads of Toungo and Balala to the eastern gate, while Danlya Verre was received by Barade Ahidjo. Magajin Garin Yola welcomed Wakilin Gurin. However, the delegation from Mayo Ine was led by a representative of the district head who could not come personally due to old age. Mumbara music, popular among the Chamba people, announced the arrival of the district head of Gurumpawo who was received by Hamman Misa Yola.

The largest contingent came from Mubi, led by Lamdo Mubi, Mallam Almadu and was received by Magajin Gari and Barade. The party was formed by separate groups in a display of a distinct rich culture, music and elaborate horse regalia. In contrast, Chiroma (district head of) Maiha entered in a ring of warriors brandishing spears, swords and shields. Splendid was the rich culture of the Njeyi, fantastic was the horde of dancers and drummers as they worked hard on their instruments. All this while, a glimpse of the district head proved to be tasking due to the human shield of warriors and dancers which circled him. At last, the district head on a beautiful stallion broke free at the eastern gate where he displayed great horsemanship. The Chiroma, popular for his skills on horseback, did not disappoint his admirers and in return received a wide applause from the thrilled crowd.

Up in the sky the sun appeared to be tired after a long and interesting day. It therefore decided to set and so introduced twilight to tell the world it was time for Maghrib prayers. But one more delegation was coming. The Marafa (district head of) Chubunawa's spectacle thrilled the dispersing crowd with a grand performance from the contingent, obviously the most organised.

At 3.30 p.m. on Friday, January 21, Dan Galadima, (district head of) Madagali blazed the trail for new arrivals of the day. He was followed by the Sarkin Yaki (district head of) Gashaka. At 4.00 p.m., the Ardo (district head of) Song and the Lawan (district head of) Girei arrived. In all, nineteen district heads were received at the eastern gate, though more contingents could not come through due to limited time. They included Mukaddas Mambilla, Santuraki Kilba, Ardo Sugu, Ardo Yebbi, Wakili Yungur and Wakili Binyeri.

On Saturday, January 22, the first traditional ruler to arrive Yola was the Emir of Fika. He was received by the Lamido and his council and escorted to the residence of Sarkin Dogarai. In the evening, the radio broadcasting team had started setting their gadgets in the van and had begun recording cultural events in preparation for the D-Day. The cine van crew later joined them.

On the eve of the installation ceremony, teams of horse riders in their regalia were selected and attached to each of the visiting emirs' lodges where they stood at alert. At 11.30 a.m.,

the Lamido went to the airport to welcome the Governor of the Northern Region. On arrival, His Excellency, Sir Bryan Sharwood-Smith was accompanied to the quarters of the resident. At 4.20 p.m., the guest took his turn to accompany the Lamido to the palace for a courtesy visit.

Next to arrive from Numan were the Chiefs of Bata, Bachama, Shelleng, Mbula, Guyuk and the Chief Alkali of Numan. At 2.40 p.m., the Emir of Biu came in and was escorted by the Lamido to the residence of Magajin Gari where a past Emir of Biu was lodged during a visit in 1941. At 3.00 p.m., the Wakilin Chamba received the Emir of Gombe, Abubakar, as the Lamido had gone to the airport to welcome the Emir of Kano. Nevertheless, the Wakilin Chamba was the traditional host of the Emir of Gombe. By the time the representatives of the Emir of Bauchi, Magajin Garin Bauchi and Sarkin Tafarkin Bauchi arrived, the Lamido was yet to come back from the airport. Hence the royal guests were escorted to the residence of Mallam Sidi Gurin.

At 4.18 p.m., all attention turned towards the arrival of the Emir of Kano, Alhaji Muhammadu Sanusi; Madakin Kano and Makaman Kano. For a while, the emir was the man of the moment. His entry captivated Yola which stood still to catch a glimpse of him. From the airport to his lodge, the crowd lined up a distance of one mile to watch the emir's arrival.

The plane that brought the governor had flown to Potiskum for Emir Sanusi who drove from Kano. By the time the plane touched Yola, the emir's entourage had arrived town and dashed to the airport in time to join in the reception of the emir by the Lamido and the council members. From the airport, the long motorcade was pulled along in a slow motion by the Lamido's big car to Yola. On his part, the Emir of Kano's turn-out was impressive as his own palace officials, guards, courtiers and musicians trailed behind in their vehicles.

At the emir's lodge, thousands of people looked like ants, a milling multitude in a festive mood waiting for Emir Sanusi. The house which was located at Yelwa was only then recently vacated by Aliyu Musdafa when he became Lamido. The road to the house was cleared to give enough room for the coming motor cars. Luckily, the crowd behaved well and respectfully

gave passage. Horsemen took their positions, while dancers danced away in unison with the trumpeter's tune at another portion. At the end of the road just at the entrance to the emir's lodge was a line of buglers.

The Emirs of Gumel, Dikwa and Katagum were later separately welcomed by the Lamido and his councillors. The Emir of Gumel lodged at Mallam Bello Malabu's residence, while the Emirs of Dikwa and Katagum were hosted by Barade Adamawa Ahidjo and Lando Malabu respectively. The royal guests were later in the evening entertained to a feast by the Lamido at the palace.

The long awaited day came on January 24, 1955. What everyone had eagerly waited for was at hand. It was the day Aliyu Musdafa would be formally installed as Lamido Adamawa. As early as 5.00 a.m., the people of Yola and environs beckoned to the wake-up beats of the drums and the call of the town-crier to be at the grounds as early as they could. By 7.30 a.m. the venue was jam-packed; there was hardly any space for the spectators. The grounds itself was a beehive of not only human beings from far and near but all sorts of vehicles and breeds of horses, numbering over 1,300.

The first of the dignitaries was the Emir of Dikwa followed by the Chief of Zinna (now Zing) representing the Emir of Muri who was himself to be installed by the governor two days later on January 26. Next were the Magajin Garin Bauchi and the Emirs of Kano, Gombe, Gumel, Fika, Biu and Katagum and Wazirin Sokoto. The Resident, Mr. C.K. Wreford, accompanied both the daughter and the personal secretary of the governor to the rostrum. Already the number of Europeans was increasing. The Chief Judge showed the governor's daughter to her seat among the emirs and continued along with the Resident to greet the members of the Lamido's Council.

Cheers from the crowd hinted that the governor had arrived the scene in his motor-car which seemed to be drawn by a team of mounted N.A. Police. After he inspected a parade by the N.A. Police, the governor went to the centre of the rostrum and sat on the right side of the Lamido. Seated right behind them were the Resident and the Chief Judge, and further behind, members of the N.A. Council.

The Alkalin Alkalai appeared holding the Holy Quran and walked slowly up the rostrum. All the seated guests stood up to hear the oath-taking by the Lamido who was on the left of the officiating judge and facing the rostrum.

In a congratulatory address in Fulfulde, Hausa and English, the governor extended his happiness to the Lamido, his council and the people of Adamawa. He emphasised the need for the fear of God, justice, equity and fairness as essential values to run any public office:

Your Royal Highness, Lamido of Adamawa once you uphold fairness and truth in your administration and abide by the tenets of your oath of office and work together with your council, you shall get my full backing and the support of Her Majesty the Queen and also the Parliament of Northern Nigeria. I therefore appeal to the people of Adamawa Province to eschew bitterness and co-operate with the new Lamido and his council. Finally, I pray to Almighty God to grant the Lamido the ability to carry out his duties diligently and give him long life and prosperity. Amen.

On this note, the governor handed over the three instruments of office to the Lamido — staff of office, Lugard's sword, and the letter of confirmation — with side remarks in Fulfulde. The Waziri, Alhaji Muhammadu, gently climbed the platform. He handed the Lamido the traditional instruments of office — a royal sword, a quiver of arrows, a bow and a spear — all bequeathed from Modibbo Adama, the first Lamido.

Aliyu Musdafa stood up and read his acceptance speech:

Your Excellency, Governor of Northern Region, on behalf of the Adamawa N.A. and the people of Adamawa I welcome you most warmly. We wish to extend our felicitations on the recent upgrading of the Northern Region which has its own governor now. We congratulate you on being the person to have the privilege of being the first governor of the region. I am most honoured to be the first Emir to be installed by you as the new governor.

Your Excellency, I have with appreciation listened to your words of advice and compliments. Those words shall not be in vain for I have resolved to serve my people with all

my heart. As you are aware it is now impossible to rule without counsel and public guidance. Therefore it is imperative that I am guided by my council on the principles of truth and justice. Your Excellency, may I use this opportunity to give my gratitude to my council and the general public over my appointment.

I hereby wish to reiterate my co-operation with the council and hope to abide by the pledge I took on the day of my appointment to serve my people by all means for the progress of the province in particular and the country in general. I know that it is quite difficult in view of the diversity of ethnic groups in the province. However, it is a challenge I am ready to face and overcome.

By the grace of Allah, we shall implement the decisions of the House of Assembly and the House of Representatives for the peace and unity of our country. I submit myself to Allah and I pray for His guidance on the basis of Islam. Amen.

In answer to the prayer, the bugles sounded and were followed by a standing ovation from the audience. The Wazirin Adamawa went up to the Lamido and saluted him. One by one, the Lamido's Council members too climbed the platform to salute him. After they had settled in their seats, the Barade came up for obeisance, the show of loyalty was not questionable. Sarkin Tuta Bello Yola led his command with the flag of Modibbo Adama held high and flapping in the wind. Behind them were the Yan Sulke, clad in full armour and mail, while the footmen waved a spear in one hand and clutched a shield with the other. They all got into a warrior dance and, backed by muskets, pushed forward and pledged loyalty to the Lamido.

At the rear of the procession, the district heads took their turns to salute the Lamido. Finally, distinguished visitors and dignitaries shared in the felicitation and greeted the Lamido. The Emir of Kano clasped the hands of the Lamido, shook them and congratulated him. He was followed by the other emirs who expressed their joy and exchanged handshakes with the Lamido.

The Lamido waved to the crowd, mounted his decorated stallion and rode back to the palace. He was led by the Waziri

who commanded unmounted special white horses in rich regalia adorned with silver ornaments such as *tumbas* and *talia* which glittered in the sun as the liveried foot soldier held the reins closely behind. The trumpeters followed, surrounded by drummers and singers. Next were the armour bearers. The royal guards circled the Lamido who sat on the white stallion with two huge umbrellas held above his head. Following this batch, the members of the Lamido's Council strutted on their horses with their rich flowing robes. Then came the attired horses, *liffidai*, the horses of palace staff and title-holders. From the rear, all the district heads followed on their horses.

Hundreds of men and horses alike trailed into the heart of Yola amidst celebration right up to the southern gate of the palace. Above them had formed heavy clouds of dust. The air was made thick with the fine dust thrown up by the hooves of the gathering of horses leaving behind gritty brown marks on the white turbans and robes of the footmen and riders. Those who wore other colours found themselves coated in white powdery dust. Several other horses, not from the entourage, emerged from other parts of the city to converge at the gate. The Lamido dismounted and was escorted by his councillors into the lobby. From there, the councillors paid their respects to the Lamido and left. Groups of well-wishers trooped into the hall to also pay their respects to the Lamido.

In the evening, the installation grounds began to swarm again with people intending to watch a durbar show in continuation of the coronation ceremony. Emirs, district heads, title-holders, councillors, courtiers, visiting Europeans, etc, had taken their seats accordingly. At 4.45 p.m., the gathering clouds of dust hinted the arrival of the Lamido in the same retinue as in the afternoon. The Sarkin Bambadawa blew the trumpet as he had never done before, singing praises of the Lamido and piloting the entourage into the grounds. The Lamido welcomed the traditional rulers and joined them as they waited for the governor.

The buglers announced the arrival of the governor accompanied by the Resident and the Chief Judge. The Lamido received the governor on the first step of the rostrum, while the Emir of Kano on the second step took his turn to welcome the

guest. The governor, however, went round and shook hands with each traditional ruler before he sat down between the Lamido and the Emir of Kano.

At 5.30 p.m., the durbar show started throwing thousands of spectators in a trance with a grand performance by man and horse. In a perfect rank and file, the riders trotted in dancing steps. The thrills and skills went on for a couple of hours before the Lamido stood up for his address.

*Bismillahi*, I begin in the name of God who has permitted us to see this great day in our history. I express my profound gratitude to God for this rare opportunity given to Adamawa. I express further gratitude to the Almighty for offering me what greater men could not get. It is only necessary that I say this for all to hear.

My fellow people of Adamawa, we have a lot to thank God for the honour of hosting the Sultan of Sokoto, represented by Waziri, and the Emirs of Kano, Dikwa, Gombe, Katagum, Gumel, Biu, Fika and Bauchi, represented by Magajin Garin Bauchi and the chiefs from Numan and the Chief of Zinna who represented the Emir of Muri. We express our appreciation for sharing with me this day of great history in Adamawa.

My council and I and the people of Adamawa thank you deeply. I have no doubt in my mind that nothing short of brotherly love would have brought us here together. The Emir of Kano for example left home yesterday a few hours after his return from duty elsewhere and turned up in Yola to join us. May God bless you all and reward your kindness and give you each a peaceful and long reign. We have exhibited unity among the leaders of Northern Nigeria and we must continue to forge ahead together because united we shall achieve progress for our country.

The people of Adamawa are blessed by the impressive turn-out of our distinguished guests especially the emirs and chiefs, may God give us all the strength to lead our people rightly.

The Lamido's address drew the curtains for the evening show. Bidding good day, the emirs and chiefs went for their cars all lined up waiting, while those spectators who came on

foot scattered in numerous directions to their homes. Lastly the Lamido and other dignitaries rode on their horses out of the grounds.

The recording crews of radio and cinema outfits were left behind to dismantle their equipment. It had been a long day for them. They had untiringly recorded every event of the ceremony from morning to dusk. Horse races, riding displays, the installation, the procession and the dancing and music. Their job did not end with the evening durbar. In fact, the night was as colourful with entertainment by traditional dancing and music running through the night at different locations such as lodges of guests and other spots in the town.

That night at 8.00 p.m., the Resident invited the Lamido, his councillors and all the emirs and chiefs to a tea party at his residence where the governor had lodged.

On the next day after the installation, the Wazirin Sokoto, accompanied by the Emir of Gombe and Magajin Garin Bauchi, left for Jalingo to witness the investiture of the Emir of Muri by the governor.<sup>12</sup> The Lamido delegated the Wazirin Adamawa and Lamdo Mubi to represent him at the ceremony.

On the 27th, the Wazirin Sokoto left for Yola airport en route to Sokoto. But the governor stayed the night in Yola before leaving the next day, while the Emir of Gombe and Magajin Garin Bauchi left for home right from Jalingo by road.

The other guests did not bid farewell to the Lamido until they had visited areas of interests in Yola such as the palace and on-going projects. The Emir of Kano was later escorted by the Lamido to the airport on his way home. All the other emirs and chiefs bade farewell to the Lamido and went home. In exception, the Emir of Katagum had to stay back to watch a horse-race organised by the Yola Polo Club before leaving the next morning.

The horse-race took place on Tuesday and Wednesday, January 25 and 26 respectively to crown the ceremony which itself would not be forgotten easily. At the police barracks, five miles away from Yola, the race-course was a beehive. Its one-mile course was well prepared for the occasion and the grounds well demarcated to allow free passage for horses into the tracks. The spectators and officials went through the gate of

the north and got under the giant canopies after paying a fee of one shilling for the ticket.

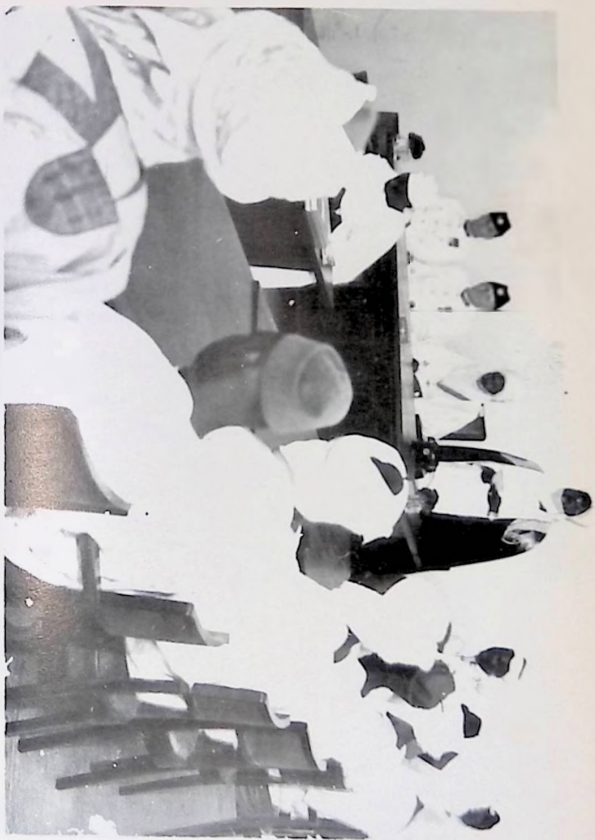
Aside from the centre of attraction, groups of people watched excitedly as gamblers arranged games such as ludo, cards and *walwala*. Officials under the canopy were busy selling tickets for a bigger game of chance which is the horse stakes. Each ticket had a tally number for the horses getting set for the race. Spectators also tried their luck in the draw game. For one shilling, a player bought a ticket and a horse number. After the horse race, the winning tickets were rolled and placed in a bag and rolled over and over again. One of the players dipped his hand and took out a ticket, another player took his pick and if it tallied with the first draw, he got 3 pounds and the runner-up won 30 shillings. The next shed was where thirsty spectators bought orange drinks, tea, milk and biscuits. This was highly patronised by Europeans.

The horse race took place in four events of the two days. The winner in each was rewarded five pounds for first prize, three pounds for second prize and two pounds for third prize. The final race of the winning horse fetched the first winner ten pounds and the second got five pounds. Those who carried the day were none other than stake winners who collected as much as ten pounds, eight pounds and six pounds.

On the 28th, the final day of the celebrations, Barade organised a durbar at the eastern gate of the palace. Between 4.30 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. thousands of townfolk came out to watch the horse display and race. The Lamido this time sat at the lobby of the palace gate and enjoyed the show. For the people of Yola, the durbar was not the end of it all. For seven days, the town was sleepless with sounds of drums, trumpets and singing filling the nights until the sun rose.

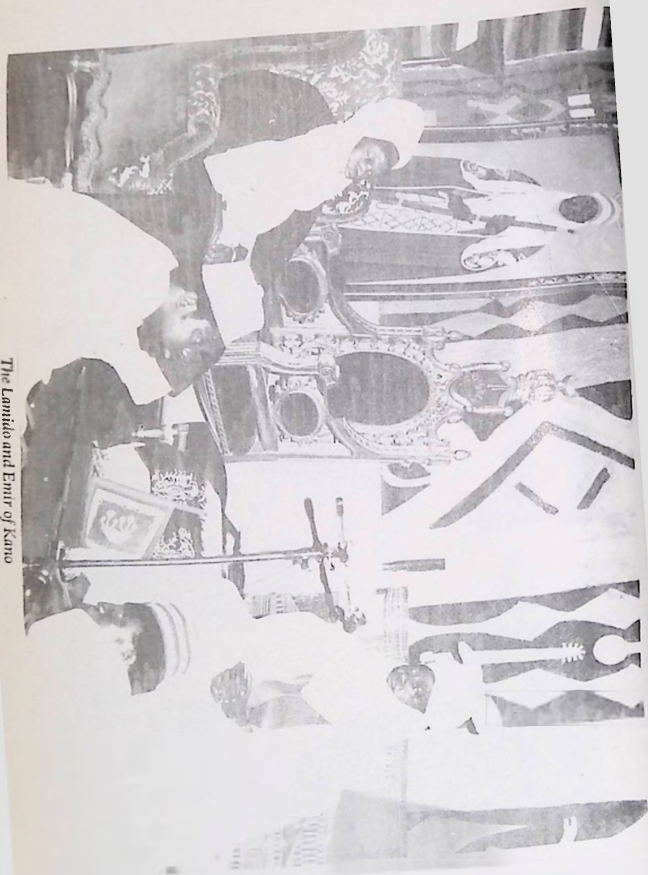
## Notes

1. National Archives, Kaduna, 301/5695, Adamawa Annual Reports, 1954 - 1956.
2. *Nigerian Citizen*, March p.11, 1954, "Lamido Tours Adamawa".



*Courtesy call by the Sardauna of Sokoto and Premier of Northern Nigeria, Alluaji  
Ahmadu Bello on Lamido in Yola in the Council chambers*

The Lamido and Emir of Kano



3. *Nigerian Citizen*, February 11, 1954, p.15 "Lamido Visits Leprosarium".
4. *Nigerian Citizen*, May 6, 1954, p.6 "Agricultural Show In Northern Region".
5. *Nigerian Citizen*, June 17, 1954, p.3 "Mambilla District Sets Example".
6. *Nigerian Citizen*, April 15, 1954, p.11 "1st Pan - Adamawa Congress".
7. *Nigerian Citizen*, March 25, 1954, p.1 "Yola - Lagos Telephone Link Plan".
8. *Nigerian Citizen*, July 1, 1954, p.3 "Adamawa Has Telephone".
9. *Nigerian Citizen*, December 23, 1954, p.7 "New Post Office for Yola".
10. *Nigerian Citizen*, December 9, 1954, p.1 "LG Course for Emirs and Chiefs"
11. Ahmadu Marafa, *Ranar Tabbatad Da Lamido*, 1955, Zaria. A Hausa publication on the installation of Lamido Aliyu Musdafa is translated for this portion.
12. On January 26, 1955, a similar ceremony took place at Jalingo when Muhammadu Tukur was installed 12th Emir of Muri. On February 25, the Emir of Dikwa was formally inaugurated. In May, the Emir of Bauchi, Adamu Jumba was installed, while the Emir of Gombe, Abubakar, was elevated from second class to first class. The Tor Tiv was for the first time installed as a first class chief on August 2. The Emir of Yauri, Abdullahi, died in July. Also, the Chief of Bata, Jalo and the Chief of Shelleng, Jamborata (both third class) died during the year. Jalo was succeeded by Swade, but that of Shelleng was not replaced by the end of the year. Ngbale, third class chief of Bachama filled the vacancy in the House of Chiefs. During the previous year (1954), the Emir of Kano, Muhammadu Sanusi, was installed on January 1, replacing his father, Abdullahi Bayero, who died in December. The Emir of Gwandu, Haruna, succeeded Yahaya who died in January. Shehu of Dikwa, Mustapha III was deposed after two years in office. The Atta of Igbirra, Ibrahim, resigned in July after thirty-seven years

of service. The Emir of Bauchi, Yakubu III, also resigned in October after thirteen years of service. The Emirs of Lapai and Borgu were appointed in the year. In 1956, the Emir of Yauri, Muhammadu Tukur was installed in December. The premier, Ahmadu Bello, attended the occasion in company of the Emirs of Gwandu, Fika and Katsina, Lamido of Adamawa, Ohinoyi of Igbirra and representatives of the Sultan.

## *Chapter Five*

### **The Reformer**

Lamido Aliyu Musdafa's first big task was to find ways and means of holding the emirate together in view of its vast geographical and ethnic complexities. He felt his domain of 31,786 sq. miles should be able to accommodate its 1,181,024 people so that everybody would have a sense of belonging to achieve peace and progress.

Recognising that his council was the best place for agenda-setting, the broadening process, begun in 1952, was continued. For the first time, a non-Pullo, Santuraki Kilba and member of the NA Council was put in charge of two important services, police and prisons. Also two other non-Fulbe, district heads of Yungur and Sugu, were made heads of department. The Lamido's Council was designed to involve respected people of other tribes and Muslims, Christians and animists in the affairs of the emirate.

The new 21-member council had the Lamido at the top with the Waziri (his prime minister) in charge of the NA Office, administration of districts and villages, income tax, cattle tax and husbandry. Next to him were two other Fulbe members and kingmakers, Galadima (also district head of Yola) and the district head of Malabu. Inclusive were the three non-Fulbe members aforementioned.

In addition, four persons from the Adamawa NA were appointed councillors: Madaki Bello Malabu, for Council Affairs; Turaki Hassan, for Education and Adult Literacy; Tafida Idris, for Development, Agriculture, Forestry and Cattle; and Wali Muhammadu Dahiru, for Justice.

The Outer Council, itself, elected six other councillors into the Lamido's Council by nominating two persons each from the

northern, central and southern divisions of the province. From the north, Risku, a member of the dissolved council and Usma Tarfa Garkida were selected. In the central division, Ibrahim Yola and Maigari Koksufa Verre were nominated. From the south, Sentri Gurumpawo, another member of the dissolved council, was picked and Bobboyi Toungo was elected by his people to represent them at the NA Council. Nevertheless, the NA selected Mahmud Ribadu, Minister of Mines and Power as a member and Buba Vokna as treasurer.

Mahmud Ribadu remarked at the opening of the Lamido's Council that the dissolution of the old council "was not a design to cast aspersion on any person but an action which was in tune with new demands of modern government with the aim of ascribing equality to all members and to balance the ethnic factors in the province."<sup>1</sup> The idea of popular election was gaining currency after the elections into the House of Representatives in 1954. For the first time, similar methods were used to elect village councils which elected district councils leading to the new Outer Council. The Outer Council itself was opened a few months before by the Lamido at a colourful ceremony that included an inspection of a guard of honour from the NA Police. It sat for a week.

Adamawa continued to catch up with the less remote provinces, especially in road construction, which was the most important factor for economic development. Early in 1955, work was to start to complete the Yola - Maiduguri road to open up the heavily populated area in the north. At the same time, the southern areas were being opened up to provide road communications within the province. The two major federal road projects (Yola-Wukari and Gombe-Numan) had advanced, while the NA worked with the Northern Region Production Development to link up with the French Cameroons from the north and south of the province.

To complement the road network, Netherlands Development Corporation (NEDECO) started work on the Benue river on behalf of the Nigerian government to improve navigation. 1955 proved to be a good river season for shipping all cargoes as the maximum rise reached 18ft 6in, the highest since 1948 when it shot to 21ft 6in. Furthermore, the Northern Region

Communications Flight carried out successful flights to airstrips constructed at Mubi and Jalingo.

Under the Colonial Development and Welfare Scheme for rural water supplies, 118 cement-lined wells were completed, while pipe-borne water supply schemes were laid out for Yola, Mubi, Numan and Jalingo. In Jimeta, an extension of the water scheme was prepared following the installation of electrical pumps.

The war against corruption, as one of the cardinal principles of the new leadership, was pursued with vigour. Despite the personal relationship between the district head of Mayo Belwa and the Lamido, the former was dismissed after being found guilty of corruption. The axe next fell on the district head of Mubi in March 1956 when he was relieved of the post he held for ten years.<sup>2</sup> A report by the *Wali Adamawa*, Muhammadu Dahiru, indicted the district head on the loss of 1,347 pounds 10 shillings from the coffers. The allegation that the district head connived with a contractor and an official to defraud the Adamawa NA in the supplies of food to prisons was fully investigated and found true. Therefore, the district head, a member of the Outer Council was asked to refund 547 pounds 10 shillings. The contractor, on the other hand, was sentenced to a jail term in addition to the refund of 300 pounds, while the official was made to pay back 500 pounds.

A vibrant administrator and trusted member of the Lamido's cabinet, Ibrahim Demsa was appointed to take over the affairs of Mubi District from Verre District.<sup>3</sup> Apart from being a respected member of the Northern House of Assembly, Ibrahim Demsa earned the confidence of the Lamido after he successfully brought down the Verre people from their abode on the hills to take up farming and trading with the larger society which was never heard of before nor even expected.

Wali Muhammadu Dahiru who headed the investigations into the Mubi affairs was again sent on another anti-corruption crusade by the Lamido in 1957. To show that the NA meant business, the Lamido set up a board of inquiry to investigate all aspects of the Adamawa NA affairs in all the districts.<sup>4</sup> As chairman, Wali Muhammadu Dahiru worked with six other members out of whom three were portfolio members and the

other three elected. Sometimes, the board absolved suspected persons, but still where negligence of duty was found to have cost the NA financial loss, the affected staff were punished accordingly.

For example, an inquiry during the 1959-60 financial year discovered that the Supervisor of Works and the Adult Education Manager had allowed the over-expenditure of 980 pounds and 2,270 pounds respectively. Though the case of embezzlement was not confirmed against the two departmental heads, disciplinary action was taken against them. The supervisor was surcharged thirty pounds and his increment withheld for one year while the adult education manager was surcharged fifty pounds and his rank reduced to Teacher Grade III.

In 1959, the Adamawa Province took bold steps to lift the standards of living in all facets. In a Five Year Development Plan announced by the Councillor of Development, Tafida Idris, 320,000 pounds was earmarked in a "Budget of Re-direction and Consolidation."<sup>5</sup> Out of this budget, education was allocated the lion's share of 68,350 pounds for the building of thirty-five new schools. Other projects were the completion of Gembu Senior Primary School and a number of pilot schools and construction of latrines and staff quarters. However, the sector was to receive additional government grants.

The health sector got a boost of 29,850 pounds to build seven new dispensaries, staff quarters, out-patient huts and the purchase of Land Rovers and medical equipment. For better communications, the sum of 39,500 pounds was billed to be spent in building the Yola-Karlahi road and the improvement of all season and dry season roads.

Being a large producer of cattle, 10,400 pounds was voted for the improvement of conditions of livestock in Mambilla, eradication of tse-tse fly disease, and the up-grading of existing clinics and the building of new veterinary clinics at Toungo. Public projects such as completion of district offices under construction and extensions to the Central Office were to gulp 100 pounds. In addition, improvement was to be taken of NA works yard, construction of lunatic asylum, reading-rooms, remand and reformatory houses and Chief Alkali's Court.

Forest development received 11,650 pounds for the establishment of the eucalyptus plantations on the Mambilla plateau and nursery plantations in Jimeta and Mubi. Also, mechanical equipment were to be bought for experiment and demonstration purposes. For urban development, the sum of 10,500 pounds was earmarked for Yola, Jimeta, Mubi and Jada towns, while rural development was to get 21,000 pounds for market, settlement and village planning. Other projects included digging of wells, erection of windmills and slaughter slabs.

The agricultural sector under the threat of soil erosion got 12,800 pounds for the improvement of nurseries on Mambilla plateau; improvement of local poultry, orchards, date-palm, kolanuts, palm oil and the purchase of equipment and mechanical ploughs. For public utilities, the sum of 9,500 pounds was earmarked for the extension of Yola-Jimeta Water Supply system and electrical facilities for Yola and Jimeta. The sum of 6,550 pounds was set aside for the purchase of printing equipment, safe, cash tanks, adding machines and police band set among others.

A journalist described the development in Yola as "remarkable" over the past few years: "The streets are lined with neem trees, though some are unfortunately dwarfed by old baobab trees. And pipe-borne water is available at reasonable rate. Remote houses are brought closer with the old city looking nearly as modern as any of its contemporaries in the north. Whoever visits Yola will agree that it is almost the best in cleanliness. People are no more farming in the town, not even the quick-growing maize within the spacious compounds are seen."<sup>6</sup>

Concern for the provision of electricity in Adamawa province heightened in the late 50s in anticipation of national independence in 1960. Moreover, the Minister of Mines and Power, Mahmud Ribadu, an indigene of the province, had mentioned on the floor of the House of Representatives, that the Electricity Corporation was considering supply to certain towns in future.<sup>7</sup> Residents of Yola were anxious because their town was not specifically mentioned. However, the lights were turned on by December 1958. On the other hand the Electricity Corporation of Nigeria opened a new alternating current (AC)

power station at Jimeta on May 31, 1955 to complement the direct current (DC) plant opened in 1938.

The NA bought a cinematograph and an official was sent to Kaduna on the auspices of Adamawa, Muri and Numan NAs for training on its operation. The other two NAs also made contributions for the purchase of the equipment. On the return of the trainee, a film was tested in front of the Lamido's palace featuring the turbaning of the new Emir of Kano, Muhammadu Sanusi and the coronation of the Queen of England. A huge crowd gathered to watch the marvel and one of the spectators was the Lamido Adamawa, Aliyu Musdafa.

For the disadvantaged areas, the Adamawa NA embarked on a resettlement scheme for the hill tribes of Mubi and Chubanawa districts. By the plan, the cave-dwellers were to be persuaded to come down to the new settlement provided for them. The NA provided between three to six wells in each of the new villages, while the district councils in the areas provided a permanent chamber, a junior primary school and a dressing station where necessary.

By the end of 1957, the project proved to be successful as the hill people came down to settle in the two new villages of Gella and Bazza in Mubi and Chubunawa districts respectively. Gella village had about 300 compounds and Bazza about 100. These settlements also had a modern village lay-out complete with proper drainage facilities. Subsequently, Khourvi and Vintim villages were included in the resettlement scheme with the full co-operation of the district heads of Mubi and Chubunawa, their district councils and the Land Settlement Officer.

In 1958, the people of Mambilla plateau faced a catastrophe as their lives and animals came under the threat of lions roaming the ranges and ravaging the herds of cattle put at over 160,000. In view of the looming disaster, the Adamawa NA launched a big war to fight the lions. The Minister of Animal Husbandry and Forestry, Abdullahi Dan Buram Jada sought assistance from I Recce (Field Battery) Queen's Own Nigeria Regiment which hunted down the lions. In addition, the NA offered a reward of twenty pounds for each lion killed.

Back in Yola, blind people received the attention of the Adamawa NA as the Lamido opened a blind centre to provide

vocational skills for the invalid persons. The event was significant for the society and was witnessed by many distinguished personalities including the Resident, Mr. J. S. Purding.

In recognition of the importance of education in the overall development of the province, the Adamawa NA in 1957 introduced compulsory education for all children of school age.<sup>8</sup> The Councillor for Education, Hassan Turaki, at a meeting of the Outer Council, revealed that the NA would erect new schools in Malabu, Mayo Ine and Jereng districts. Lamido Aliyu Musdafa pointed out that the NA needed funds to provide necessary modern amenities such as the laudable education programmes which the people were agitating for. But he said the general tax rate would have to be increased by 4s 6d to match the increase in the capitation tax. Though the rise would affect everybody irrespective of rank and financial standing, the people were still undertaxed which meant that only a few amenities would get back to them. Thus, the Lamido appealed for tolerance and patience over what he described as "bitter things of life" in the interest of peace. Apathy on the part of the people and lack of teachers was still a threat to the progress of education, though the number of elementary schools had increased from 2,227 in 1950 to 3,422 in 1955.

Priority attention was accorded education for girls. A new girls' school, opened in November 1958, began the pursuit of the new policy and acted as a springboard for the training of female teachers and nurses in the province. The school was established at the cost of 40,000 pounds and was the seventh of its type in the Northern Region. Its opening marked a milestone in Adamawa history. Though the Regional Minister of Education was not there for the opening (at the former grounds of the Lamido's alma mater, Yola Middle School), the Deputy Director of Education, also in charge of girls' education, Dr. C.L.H. Geary and other top dignitaries graced the occasion.

The lofty ideals of western education was further achieved through the Ashby Commission on Higher Education set up by the national government. Recommendations by the Commission had merits for Northern Nigeria which was seeking for self-reliance in view of the forthcoming national independence from Britain. The view of the northernisation policy toward

higher education was strong in the quest for adequate manpower to run the affairs of the region.

Hamidu Alkali<sup>9</sup> recalls that in 1954:

Most of us had a school certificate type of education so the Northern government started sending us abroad for scholarship. Those of us who had a little higher education went further for a diploma with the belief that it was another step to go to university. After the diploma, we came back and we were encouraged with loans to buy books for home study. I did my GCE through private study and passed six subjects in 1958. The following year, I went on scholarship to the United Kingdom. Many of my mates, however, went on middle-level courses like nursing, x-ray, technical and health work in England. If you send a northerner to Ibadan they will chase him away with the question, "where were you able to get your qualification?" When our people started returning from England with qualifications the southerners were surprised and swore that England was giving northerners free certificates.

The northernisation policy was, in the light of the above seen as the only opportunity for the advancement of the region. Being part of government machinery, the emirs were alerted to "northernise" positions in the NAs, especially the Works Department which was dominated by people of southern origin. Overall, the policy of northernisation was a deliberate and conscious effort to accelerate the education and position of the northern people.

According to Hamidu Alkali most of the messengers and watchmen were non-indigenes, and of course a few of the Native Authority police and prison warders:

This had to be stopped justifiably because you would not be ashamed of doing it (Northernisation) because you are protecting yourself. By the early 1950s people started agitating for self-government, but we were not prepared at that time considering our level of education and the number of our people who had access to any form of education. Consequently, the Northern government started opening schools, teachers' colleges, schools of nursing whose aim, to a certain extent, was political.

The northernisation policy also ensured a slow but sure transition of power from the colonial government to northerners "as soon as practicable" who, unlike their counterparts in southern Nigeria, wanted self-government to be pushed to 1953 put up a strong campaign throughout the country for "self-government now" especially in their newspapers and political meetings. The argument of the northerners for the delay was not a preference for colonial rule, but the North was skeptical about rushed transition and would want a steady and gradual takeover from the colonial administrators.

In Adamawa Province, the Lamido's task was more than ever essential in preparing the area towards the self-government set for 1959. He attended private talks held by emirs and chiefs in 1957 in Kaduna with the white paper on regional self-government top on the agenda. At the meeting presided by the governor, the premier and the prime minister at last raised the motion praying Her Majesty's government to grant self-government to the North in 1959. The premier, Sir Ahmadu Bello, urged the NAs to be up to the new task because the self-government meant more and heavier responsibilities for them.

Lamido Aliyu Musdafa left Yola for the United Kingdom to represent the Northern Region at the Summer Conference on African Administration in Cambridge in July 1957 which lasted six weeks. That year he was appointed a member of the Northern Region Development Corporation along with the Emir of Lapai, Mallam Muhammadu Kobo. In addition, the Lamido had been a member of the Public Accounts Committee where he made positive contributions that earned him a lot of respect and admiration from his colleagues.

The 1957 Constitutional Conference recommended for the region a Council of Chiefs which included the Lamido as a member. It also recommended that the council should include the premier (with not less than two and not more than four chiefs from the Executive Council) and eleven other chiefs selected from among members of the House of Chiefs under the headship of the governor. Its major assignment was to determine all matters pertaining to the appointment, grading and deposition of chiefs and their removal from their domain.

The Council of Chiefs, before then, was created along with the Ministry of Local Government in 1953 "to take over supervision and co-ordination of the Local Government and financial control of the Native Authorities, with the Ministry providing liaison between the regional and the local governments, the Native Authorities retained most of their administrative and development duties."<sup>10</sup>

Emirs and chiefs were the only representatives of the people in national affairs, a role which later became legislative. When the House of Chiefs was created in Kaduna, the Lamido of Adamawa was the only emir representing Adamawa Province. Later, when the House of Assembly was composed to present a legislature for the region, Ahmadu Ribadu and Mahmud Ribadu were selected from the province.

With the expansion of the House of Chiefs in 1959 leading to a membership of 78 from 63 in line with the new constitution, two more chiefs from the province — Biyapo, Chief of Mbu and Yoila, Chief of Longuda — were selected from Adamawa Province. Status and salary between first class, second class and third class chiefs were, however, made clearly distinct.

Throughout the period leading to independence in 1960, the emirs and chiefs held the positions of leadership in northern Nigeria, a role they performed in the Indirect Rule system of the colonial government. When the House of Representatives was formed at the centre, it had a majority of traditional elements with persons like Mahmud Ribadu, Madaki Bello, Tafida Idris Turaki Hassan, Abdullahi Dan Buram Jada and Ahmadu Ribadu, representing Adamawa Province.

Furthermore, the traditional rulers as members of the House of Chiefs discussed affairs affecting their domains and the region in general. In theory, the traditional rulers were not supposed to take sides in political matters, but in practice that was difficult to uphold due to their previous role in decolonisation and the establishment of the Northern Peoples' Congress as a political party. With the benefit of hindsight, traditional rulers were found to be significant in midwifing democratic rule for the country.

Against this background, the powers of traditional rulers was put to question. (1) Should their political leadership be

abolished? (2) Should their roles be adjusted? Or (3) Should they continue to exercise their powers? Alhaji Aminu Kano of the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) and Ibrahim Imam of the Borno Youth Movement (BYM) supported abolition; while Ahmadu Bello, the premier and some members of the NPC wanted reforms. Expectedly, the traditional rulers advocated for the status quo to be maintained.<sup>11</sup>

In the light of the above, the position of the emirs and chiefs was seen to be too powerful by the politicians who knew as a matter of fact that the traditional rulers' role was crucial because they controlled land and the people needed and respected their views even on political matters.

The Hudson Report resolved the conflict between the progressive elements and the traditional rulers by recommending the establishment of Emir-and-Council for second class chiefs and Emir-in-Council for first class chiefs which in contrast, hitherto, gave the emirs arbitrary powers outside their councils. In 1957, prior to the London Conference on the constitution, the report was adopted and "a provincial administration was set up to provide a link between the regional government and the local government, giving more autonomy to each province."

It is discernible that the political climate of Northern Nigeria in that period was not quite calm especially in the early 1950s when the new politics was just introduced and gaining momentum. Comparatively, Adamawa was much more a democratic place than other parts of the region. People were fairly free to express themselves politically despite differences in party membership and the burgeoning of young radical elements who were making noise about the relevance of the traditional institution in the new democracy. Yet people were not harassed.<sup>12</sup>

Ahmed Joda asserts that he happened to know other parts of Northern Nigeria quite well. However:

It was quite possible it was in the character of the people here and the rulers that politics was not turbulent. At that time the Lamido of Adamawa had as much power over people as the governor now has. He had executive powers, he had his courts where he tried people for any crime

including death, he had his police and every trappings of power around him. But I know that people were fairly free to do what they chose.

In the years ahead when many emirs were going beyond their limit of decency in their support of the political party power in Northern Nigeria then, this was absent in Adamawa. There were virtually no reports of harassment and intimidation of NEPU people and the other opposition party members who were anti-government. Though the government was forced to send its own political representatives by appointing politicians as provincial commissioners, they acted as replacement to the Residents who were known as civil servants that were still neutral in their conduct and didn't favour any political party. But the provincial commissioners were posted in the first place to do party work, thus inventing the patronage system and so on.

Lamido Aliyu Musdafa, despite the odds, kept his neutrality fairly well as much as it was possible to get on with the government in power. That nevertheless did not mean that he didn't co-operate with the ruling party. An insider of the government then, Ahmed Joda, asserts:

I happen to know that he was quite well respected by the Sardauna of Sokoto, the late Sir Ahmadu Bello. Sardauna used to regard him highly. I was fairly close to Sardauna, but he regarded me as one of the rebels. But when he was talking about leaders of that day, the emirs and chiefs, etc. the way he mentioned Aliyu Musdafa was slightly different.

In 1958, a year away from self-government which the Northern Region achieved on March 15, 1959, the governor, Sir Gawain Bell pleaded with the emirs and chiefs not to fail in the new political process. Presiding at the Northern House of Chiefs for the first time, Sir Gawain remarked that the NAs had a vital role to play in the administration and development of the region especially when the whole political structure was being overhauled in all aspects of local government to repair its weaknesses and adapt to the needs of the day. He told the emirs that, "this is a duty which you and all those who have inherited positions of authority owe to the people over whom you rule, to

the government of the region, and the federation and above all to God." On the day of attainment of self-government in March 1959, the Northern Region was described as first among equals. About 3,000 horses drawn from the provinces participated in a durbar in Kaduna as part of the celebrations with thousands of people in attendance.

The celebration was a symbol of the northern hospitality, rich culture and respect for authority which was earlier exhibited in a durbar during the Queen of England's visit to Nigeria in 1956. The Lamido of Adamawa's entourage was the most colourful and presented dancing troupes from different tribes of the emirate for the reception of Her Majesty. That was an occasion that remains memorable to Tafida Idris who, as a councillor in 1956, was in charge of arrangements and supervised the transportation of the Lamido's horses to Kaduna. At the spectacular show, the Lamido and his entourage were the first in line according to alphabetical order of the provinces and it was a very interesting and remarkable event that cost the Northern Region 200,000 pounds.

Soon after Self-Government day, the people of Adamawa had cause to celebrate again. The Lamido was awarded Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE)<sup>13</sup> to mark the Queen's birthday along with many other prominent Nigerians such as the Adviser on Agriculture, Mr. P. C. Chambers who got a similar award. Other recipients were Ahnadu Coomasie, Chief Education Officer, Emir of Zaria, Muhammadu Aminu and Emir of Kano, Muhammmadu Sanusi who were awarded Order of the British Empire (O.B.E.). To mark the conferment at home, the Adamawa Football Association arranged a match between Giwa XI and Ali XI in which the former won by 1-0. The match was ecstatic with over 500 spectators to whom the Lanido expressed deep appreciation.<sup>14</sup>

Prior to independence in 1960, as the local authorities were undergoing change, the Northern Region introduced reforms in the judiciary which led to the abolition of the Emir's Courts (of final appeal) and the transfer of their powers to the provincial and regional levels. The move was not initially welcomed by the emirs as the administration of justice was then the exclusive

function of the NAs and signified the powers of the emirs.

Native courts began to exist from Lord Lugard's early proclamations in 1900. In Yola Province by 1904, these courts were established at Yola, Song, Girei, Namtari, Malabu and Gurin. In Muri Province, the courts were set up at Gassol, Mubi, Jalingo and Lau. The Adamawa Northern Appeal Court came into existence in 1936 with the regional pagan courts being founded in Mubi area two years later.

The judicial procedure began at the district and village levels where the headmen settled minor disputes by arbitration. The Lamido's court was the only court with Grade A status and full judicial powers in all criminal and civil cases, though capital offences were confirmed by the governor of the region. In Adamawa Division, the Lamido's court was followed in importance by the Chief Alkali's court, three appeal courts, twenty alkali courts and twenty tribal courts which had less jurisdiction.

While the reforms were going on, debates in the judicial and government circles were that the Egyptian model the region was trying to copy may not be suitable for Northern Nigeria. The school of thought also argued that since the alkali system handled 75 per cent of all cases, there would be no northern courts to fill the gap if the courts were abolished. On the other hand, some pointed out that reforms should not be a revolution in the judiciary, while Alhaji Aminu Kano assured that Islamic courts would not be abolished by NEPU, "but the deadwood in the system would be removed." The regional government was determined to go through with the reforms, which in practice would give educated young alkalis the opportunity to move up in the system without bringing friction between the Alkali system and the local government.

In July 1957, the reforms assumed a new dimension with the setting up of the Muslim Court of Appeal to hear appeals from the Emirs' courts. In November, Abubakar Mahmud was appointed as the Chief Alkali for Adamawa. The following year a panel of jurists set up by the premier recommended a penal code of criminal procedure for the region and advised that the powers of discipline, appointment and removal of alkalis be taken from the NAs to the regional government. The new

formed Sharia Court of Appeal began to try capital offences from the NA courts at the regional level. In July 1958, the regional government passed a bill for the codification of all existing laws which the House of Chiefs passed into law as the new penal code in September.<sup>15</sup>

Close to independence, the Northern Region comprising hundreds of language and ethnic groups with religious and ancestral heterogeneity emerged as the largest political unit in Africa in terms of population, after only Egypt. Paden (1966) postulates that the premier of the region, Sir Ahmadu Bello, Sardauna of Sokoto, set his mind on making the area a force to be reckoned with principally through political engineering based on the values of the Sokoto Caliphate.

Ahmadu Bello merged the eight emirates (provinces) of the former Sokoto Caliphate to produce the core of the new "Northern community" namely, Adamawa, Bauchi, Ilorin, Kano, Katsina, Niger, Sokoto and Zaria. The premier saw the unity of the region depending on the strength of the emirates and relied very much on the efforts of the emirs. In Adamawa Province, the Lamido was the eyes and ears of the regional government. His tasks were herculean due to the complexity of the area which had over one hundred ethnic groups coupled with the assignment of administering the Northern Cameroon territory (except Dikwa). Apart from the Lamido, the Sardauna also had to rely on the political input of Mahmud Ribadu, Abdullahi Danburam Jada and others in the civil service such as Abdullahi Abubakar (Baban Larai), Buba Ardo, Ahmed Joda and Musa Bello and later Inuwa Jidda and Mahmud Tukur.<sup>16</sup>

The Northern Peoples' Congress, as the political umbrella of the North, helped to provide a "united front" party which involved traditional rulers, educated elite, local traders and businessmen. The party formed by intellectuals such as teachers and journalists in 1951, elected Ahmadu Bello as president of the party. Traditional rulers were used later to bring together the Far North and the Middle Belt areas as one entity. However, the politicians defined roles for the emirs and chiefs to avoid conflict with their non-partisan status. The NPC as a political party had about sixty-five branches and 6,000 members with a "progressive manifesto" that proposed local government

reforms within a progressive emirate system. Therefore, the emirs were retained as members of the electoral committees for wider representation.

Each province was delineated as an electoral district which was further split into electoral areas with primary and intermediate units. In Adamawa, as in other provinces, most of the representatives to the House of Assembly in Kaduna and the House of Representatives in Lagos were employees of the Government. These staff, elected on the basis of their experience, maturity and merit had their salary deducted according to the number of days they spent in the legislature.

Candidates from Adamawa initially elected indirectly into the House of Assembly in 1951 were Mahmud Ribadu, a former member of the House of Assembly; Ahmadu Waziri, district head of Mubi; Bello Malabu, Schools Manager; Ibrahim Demsa, head of Adamawa NA Agriculture Department and Muhammadu Dan Buram, a district head in Muri Division. When the House of Assembly and the House of Chiefs jointly elected a council of forty members each for the election of sixty-eight members to the House of Representatives, Ahmadu Waziri, Bello Malabu and Mahmud Ribadu from Adamawa were sent to Lagos.

After the attainment of self-government in March 1959, the Northern Region turned its attention to the Northern Cameroons plebiscite in which the people in the trust territory were to decide whether they wanted to join the Northern Region of Nigeria or whether their future should be decided at a later date. The plebiscite was of high priority to Adamawa Province and the regional government in view of national independence set for the following year.

The trusteeship territory was a German colony since the partition of Africa in 1884, and with the defeat of Germany in the first World War (1914-18), the territory along with other colonies were captured by the Principal Allied and Associate Powers and turned over to the League of Nations. This world body set up the mandate system through which the seized colonies were to be administered by a developed state until such a time that the territories were deemed fit to stand by themselves up to independence.

In 1920, Britain assumed the mandate of the Northern Cameroon territory. But when the League of Nations got dissolved after the second World War in 1945, a charter by the new United Nations Organisation re-named the mandated territories as trust territories with the same objectives spelt out by the League of Nations. Consequently, the trust territories of Northern Cameroon were added to Adamawa and Borno Provinces for administration on behalf of Britain and the United Nations.

In the light of the above, the proposed plebiscite in Adamawa was to be a fight to bring the trust territory into its political fold and at the same time make it the 13th province of the Northern Region. Lamido Aliyu Musdafa embarked on a two-week tour of Mambilla District and visited Gembu, Serti and Toungo. The same week, top political aides of the premier visited the trust territory to garner support for Nigeria. The Northern Cameroon Affairs Minister, Abdullahi Dan Buram visited Mambilla for the same purpose. In May, the Lamido of Adamawa and the Shehu of Dikwa, Umar Ibrahim El-Kanemi visited Jada for a meeting of the Northern Cameroon Consultative Committee.<sup>17</sup>

As the preparations for the plebiscite heated up, the political parties intensified their campaigns for or against the association of Northern Cameroon within Nigeria. Apart from the NPC, other political parties worked against the unification. The AG-UMBC alliance naturally had an anti-North stance, while the NCNC-NEPU alliance ran down Northern Nigeria on the basis that the NA system was not democratic. On the other hand, the Borno Youth Movement (BYM) advocated for the trusteeship to continue. But the Northern Kamerun Democratic Party and the One Cameroon Party wanted "Northern Cameroon for the Cameroonians".

In November 1959, about 116,000 people out of the 129,000 eligible voters decided the fate of the Northern Cameroon issue. The outcome revealed that 70,401 wanted the trusteeship to continue and the matter be postponed to a later date. But, 42,797 voters said the trusteeship should be finished once and for all and the territory be merged with Nigeria at independence in 1960. Tafida Idris recalls that:

The Chamba did not give Nigeria good votes, Mubi gave about 40 per cent and Madagali, Maiha and Michika tried very well. But the Chamba voted for Cameroon because they thought if they were in Cameroon they would be in a better position. President Ahidjo sent his people to campaign to the district heads that they would be made emirs if they supported Cameroon!

Following the decision of the plebiscite in favour of the Northern Cameroon to remain a trust territory (until another plebiscite in 1961), the premier of the Northern Region, Ahmadu Bello, announced in April 1960 that two new divisions and three Native Authorities were to be created in the trust territory.

The first division, the Northern Trust Division had six districts; Belel, Zumo, Mubi, Mayo Bani, Chubunawa and Madagali with headquarters at Mubi. Zumo and Mayo Bani were carved out of Adamawa Province to make up for this division. The other division, Southern Trust Division, had its permanent headquarters at Ganye, but initially operated from Jada. Its districts were Nassarawo, Yelwa, Sugu, Toungo, Gashaka and Mambilla including Verre Trust Territory also carved from Adamawa Province.

According to the new set-up, Adamawa Province ceased to administer the two divisions which came under the new authority of the Northern regional government. The premier directly supervised the trust divisions through officials of the regional government posted there. In addition, the United Hills Subordinate Native Authority assumed an independent status without being affiliated to any division. On May 1, 1960, the two divisions were elevated to the status of a province and named Northern Trust Territory Province with Mubi as headquarters.

On the national scene, the euphoria of the Northern Cameroon plebiscite had hardly died down when Nigeria went to the polls on December 12, 1959 for its first direct election in the federal legislature. The NPC won a landslide victory followed by the NCNC forcing "a marriage of convenience" between the two parties to form a government at the centre.

Subsequent events showed that Nigeria was incli

towards independence. In his New Year message in 1960, the new prime minister, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa told a nation waiting for freedom that:

Nigeria has not only a right, but also a tremendous duty to become independent so that she may play her proper part in the affairs of nations ... As the country of the African continent having the largest population, we shall inevitably occupy an important position from the moment we become independent ... our slightest act, our every word will have repercussions on our neighbours, and I am confident that Nigeria will prove to be a stabilising force in Africa, and that our example will induce conditions favourable to orderly progress and development.

Ten months later Nigeria became independent. On October 1, 1960 at midnight, the Union Jack came down the mast and up went the new Nigerian flag flying high as thousands of celebrants at the Race Course in Lagos watched. The Governor-General, Sir James Robertson, handed over the government of the new Nigeria to the prime minister, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa with Princess Alexandra representing the Queen of England. In Yola, Independence Day was celebrated with equal pomp and pageantry. The people of Adamawa Province joined millions of Nigerians in the euphoria. Lamido Aliyu Musdafa witnessed the raising of the green-white-green flag to mark the occasion in his own domain. A dinner party was organised by the Adamawa NA where leaders from all walks of life attended. As part of the activities, polo games, traditional dances, drumming and music, horse displays, etc, were arranged. At night, Yola skyline was illuminated with fireworks in dazzling, resplendent colours.

## Notes

1. *Gaskiya Tafi Kwabo*, October 12, 1956, p.5 "Ba A Fushi A Aikin Majalisa - Ribadu".
2. *Gaskiya Tafi Kwabo*, March 27, 1956, p.1 "An Sallami Lamdo Mubi".
3. Born in 1911, Ibrahim Demsa was the son of Sali Ardo Belel. As a teacher, Ibrahim Demsa taught at the

Provincial School in 1926 and elementary schools at Guri and Song. He also taught at Middle School in 1934. The following year, he went to the Agriculture Department of the NA and was appointed the Wakilin Gona in 1944. In 1954, he was appointed district head of Verre with the title of *Dan Iya Adamawa* and was later redeployed to Mubi in 1956. He abdicated and later joined the Northern Nigeria Development Corporation where he remained until his death in 1970.

4. The board of inquiry had as members — Madaki Bell Malabu, Tafida Idris, Ibrahim Yola and Mallam Riski. The secretary and accountant was Mallam Ahmad Tijjani Uba.
5. *Nigerian Citizen*, September 16, 1959, p.1 "Adamawa Approves 5-Year Budget".
6. *Nigerian Citizen*, September 19, 1959, p.10 "Remarkable Progress in Yola Town".
7. Mahmud Waziri of an address in Yaba, Lagos wrote in the *Nigerian Citizen*, October 1, 1959, on the need for Yola to be on the priority list of towns to get electricity. The councillor responsible for water supply and power, Yola Town Council, Dahiru A. Waziri replied the writer and assured of electricity explaining that the equipment was already installed.
8. *Nigerian Citizen*, July 31, 1957, p.11 "Adamawa NA Start Compulsory Education".
9. Interview, June, 1993, Yola.
10. John Paden, *Ahmadu Bello* (1986) p.183.
11. *Ibid.* p.180.
12. Ahmed Joda. Interview, December 1995, Yola. Ahmed Joda was born in 1930. He went to Yola Elementary School in 1939 and Yola Middle School in 1942. Further studies were outside Yola in 1945 at Kaduna College, Kaduna and College of Agriculture, Ibadan in 1949. He started his working career in Yola as an Agricultural Research Assistant for a year. He resigned and joined Gaskiya Corporation as a sub-editor and reporter. He was later offered a job at the University of Ibadan as the Organising Secretary of the Extra-mural Department in Northern

Nigeria. He was awarded a scholarship to study journalism in London in August 1954. He returned to Nigeria in October 1956 and joined the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation as an editor and rose to become the Northern regional editor. Later he was sent to Lagos as a senior editor. His services were transferred to the Northern Nigeria Regional Government as a Senior Assistant Secretary in October 1960. Ahmed Joda was appointed the Chief Information Officer for Northern Nigeria in 1961 and made Permanent Secretary, Northern Nigeria Ministry of Information in 1962. He transferred to the Federal Public Service in Lagos in July 1967 as a Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Information. In 1971 he was sent to the Federal Ministry of Education and later in 1975 he was at the Federal Ministry of Industries both as Permanent Secretary. Ahmed Joda retired from Public Service on April 1, 1978 and has been in private life since then.

13. *Nigerian Citizen*, June 17, 1959, p.1 "CBE for Lamido".
14. *Nigerian Citizen*, June 17, 1959, p.10 "To Mark Award of CBE".
15. Paden, J., *Almadu Bello* p.209.
16. *Ibid.* p.324. Ahmed Joda counters the claim (Interview, December 1995, Yola) and argues that the premier kept in constant touch with the local communities in Northern Nigeria through telephone, mail, personal visits and other sources of information. It was an effective method so much so that the collapse of a culvert in Gurin or Ngurore would be immediately known to him. In the political sphere, he further argues, the premier hardly depended on his aides or government officials to know or decide what to do on issues.
17. *Nigerian Citizen*, May 9, 1959, p.10 "Shehu And Lamido Entertained". The two traditional rulers met a rousing welcome in Jada. About 100 cyclists went two miles outside the town to receive the Lamido and the Shehu. A long procession including the Lamido escorted the Shehu to his lodge and the procession then turned and accompanied the Lamido to his own lodge.

## Chapter Six

### The Statesman

At independence, Lamido Aliyu Musdafa had served his people for seven years under the British colonial administration which regarded him as a reformer. The country got an independence constitution, but the Queen of England was still the head of state. A coalition government was formed at the centre by the NPC and NCNC, the strongest parties in the North and East respectively. The dominant party in the West, the AG was in the opposition. Being a federal structure, the country had regional governors with Sir Gawain Bell heading the North. In June 1963, the region had its first Nigerian governor, Sir Kashim Ibrahim who was sworn-in again as governor under the Republican Constitution of 1963.

That constitution on October 1 gave Nigeria her own head of state, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe as the president and commander-in-chief of the armed forces of the federation. The premier of Northern Region, Sir Ahmadu Bello stated in parliament that:

In adopting a Republican Constitution we are being true to ourselves and to the Queen of England. Any constitutional proposals for this country in which a foreign sovereign plays a part as head of state can only be temporarily expedient. It cannot be the true expression of the will of this nation .....

In an overview of past administrations since independence, Ahmadu Ribadu, *Dan Galadima Adamawa*<sup>1</sup> observes that political leaders and the Lamido of Adamawa had cordial personal relationships which helped in the development of the emirate. He notes that:

Sardauna often visited Adamawa and regarded Yola as his second home, being a grandson of Usman Dan Fodio and Modibbo, a commander of the Shehu. The Lamido accompanied the premier on pilgrimage in 1966 and attended his funeral after the coup in Kaduna. Mahmud Ribadu, Minister of Mines and Power and (later Defence), was by nature not a pompous person and he did not like elaborate homecomings to Yola. He was close to the Lamido and they had meaningful discussions on the affairs of the province whenever the minister visited home. I know this very well as I was a member of parliament. Ribadu was in Lagos and we in the House of Representatives went to Lagos occasionally for meetings.

Ribadu was a strong character and did a lot for his people. He died in Lagos at age 55 and his body was flown to Kaduna for funeral rites and buried in Yola in May 1965. Ribadu was "No. 1 defender" of Prime Minister Tafawa Balewa who was, in contrast, easy-going. The prime minister had friendly contacts with the Lamido especially during his visit to Yola twice; first on political campaign and later on a working tour.

According to Ahmadu Ribadu, General Yakubu Gowon was in Yola twice too. A durbar was organised for him. Though General Murtala Mohammed did not come to Yola because his tenure was very short, he surely had other contacts with the Lamido. General Olusegun Obasanjo came in a period of transition to civil rule. He was accepted by the northern states for his role in national peace which was threatened by the assassination of Murtala. The Lamido and other northern leaders had sympathy for Obasanjo and his regime. Most of all, what endeared Obasanjo was his resolve to hand over the reins of government to civilians.

General Obasanjo, prior to the presidential elections in August 1979, came to Yola to bid farewell to the Lamido. And before then, the head of state was in the emirate on a state visit with then President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania. Alhaji Shehu Shugari was on a presidential visit in 1980, and in 1983 for re-election campaign.

General Muhammadu Buhari had occasion to visit the emirate in February 1984 when he was accompanied by the Lamido on a sympathy visit to victims of the Maitatsine

uprising in Jimeta. General Ibrahim Babangida, too, visited Lamido in his palace twice in 1987 and 1990. Traditional rulers in general enjoyed a lot of hospitality from the president. Lamido was often flown in presidential jets to Lagos and Abuja for consultation on state matters.

Chief Ernest Shonekan, head of the Interim National Government (between August and November 1993) had a brief tenure during which he continuously wooed traditional rulers in the country to support his administration.

When General Sani Abacha took over the mantle of national leadership in November 1993, his government met several times with emirs and chiefs. The Lamido, in company of his court members, went to Aso Rock presidential villa to pledge their loyalty. In March 1995, the Lamido who was on the Sultan Sokoto's entourage visited Aso Rock to register support for the Federal Military Government after a coup attempt.

Apart from being the chairman of the Council of Chiefs, Lamido Aliyu Musdafa had a close working relationship with political and military leaders at the state level. Since the January 1966 coup d'état, the administration of the country has been largely in the hands of the military. Lt. Col. Hassan Usman Katsina became the first military governor of Northern Nigeria in 1966. After the creation of states in 1967, Major Musa Usman of the Nigeria Air Force, administered the North Eastern State which comprised Bauchi, Adamawa, Saradauna and Bornu provinces with headquarters at Maiduguri.

For eight years, the head of state, General Gowon did not reshuffle or change the state governors until General Murtala Mohammed took over power in 1975 and appointed Colonel Muhammadu Buhari as governor of North Eastern State.

When General Mohammed created Gongola State out of the North Eastern State, Yola assumed a new status as state capital with Col. Muhammadu Jega as the first governor. In preparation for the transition to civil rule, Jega was replaced by a military administrator, Brig. A.R.A. Mahnud in 1978, who handed over to the first executive governor of the state, Abubakar Barde on October 1, 1979. Barde did not complete his four-year term and was succeeded by his deputy, Wilberforce Juta, in May 1983. Bamanga Tukur won the gubernatorial

election in October that year, but served for only three months before the military struck again on December 31.

Maj-Gen. Muhammadu Jega came back as governor of the state until August 1985 when a new federal military government replaced him with Col. Yohanna Madaki. Group Capt. David Jang was redeployed in 1986 as the governor for two years and was succeeded by Wing Comm. Isa Mohammed in July 1988. Group Capt. Abubakar Salihu took over from Mohammed in January 1990 and witnessed the split of the state into Taraba and Adamawa States on August 27, 1991.

The first civilian governor of Adamawa, Abubakar Saleh Michika was on the mantle from January 1992 to November 1993 when the military took over control of state administration again. Group Capt. Gregory Agboneni was deployed to the state in December as the administrator and was succeeded nine months later by Commissioner of Police, Mustapha Ismail in September 1994. However, two years later in yet another administrative reshuffle, Navy Captain Joe Kalu-Igboamagh was appointed the state chief executive in August 1996.

Generally speaking, Lamido Aliyu Musdafa worked in conjunction with all the state military and civilian governors for the development of the community. According to Ahmadu Ribadu, there was deep mutual understanding between the Lamido and these personalities which contributed immensely to the achievement of the goals of the various administrations.

The governors had untethered personal contact with the Lamido through phone calls or personal meetings. The administrators knew the Lamido was closer to the people and consulted him especially on touchy issues from time to time. There is a general belief and faith in the Lamido that he is intelligent and committed to peace and progress in his domain and the country in general. So, he was contacted to intervene in matters that were critical. The governors could pay him personal visits for consultation. Sometimes, these occasions were after *Jumma'at* prayers when the Lamido is escorted into the palace. Most of all, the Lamido as chairman of Council of Chiefs has proven to be a versatile channel of communication between other chiefs and governors in the state.

Some events are selected in the period under study (from

independence to date) which illustrate the general patterns of political and community development and the Lamido's contributions.

The issue of plebiscite in the UN trust territories in Northern Cameroon came up again in February 1961. The people were invited to vote to delay the decision whether to join Nigeria or Cameroon at independence until two years later. In the referendum on 11 February, 146,299 people voted against 97,659 in the northern division for Nigeria, while the southern division had a majority vote for Cameroon. On the eve of the election, the premier of the Northern Region, Sir Ahmadu Bello, assured the people of Northern Cameroon of getting a separate province equal in all respects to all the other twelve provinces if they voted in favour of Nigeria. In April, the United Nations ratified the results of the plebiscite and in July, the territories were handed over to the prime minister, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa in Muhi Zulum headquarters of the new province, which later was named Sardauna in honour of the premier, Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto.

Unfortunately for Nigeria, the political system built on the British model was not suitable as the complexities of the country led to several conflicts that culminated in the first military coup d'état in January 1966 and inevitably the Biafran civil war the following year. The First Republic was bedevilled with the controversial census exercise, creation of Midwest Region, treason trial of Chief Obafemi Awolowo, the general strike, political party rivalries, electoral malpractices and breakdown of law and order.

When the first military coup d'état in January 1966 sacked the politicians from the national arena, traditional leaders were invited by the new government to calm down frayed nerves in the North which ticked like a time-bomb. Tension was high after the assassination of the premier of Northern Region, Sir Ahmadu Bello, the prime minister, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa and key northern military officers such as Maimalari, Largema Kur Mohammed and James Pam.

In Adamawa Province, Lamido Aliyu Musdafa was supported and depended upon by the military junta of Maj.-Gen. Aguiyi-Ironsi for stability in the area and to forestall an outbreak of violence and retaliation against the January 15 coup which was seen to be

a plot to wipe out northern leaders by Igbo soldiers. The Lamido became an adviser to the military governor of Northern Nigeria, Major Hassan Usman Katsina, on the affairs in Adamawa Province. In a larger context, the governor formed a cabinet for the Northern Region with himself as chairman and all permanent secretaries, secretary to the military government and head of civil service and the commissioner of police as members.

At this trying period, traditional rulers were about the only beacon in the quest for peace and stability by the military which informed the need to bring the traditional institutions closer to government compared with recent times when they were put at a distance by the politicians. By February, the governor, Lt. Col. Hassan Katsina, had replaced the Northern Council of Chiefs with a committee. The governor headed the body as chairman, while members included Sir Kashim Ibrahim as adviser to the military governor; Ali Akilu, Secretary to the Government and some traditional rulers.

A decree enacted by the head of state, Maj.-Gen. Ironsi on May 24 abolished the regions of North, West, East and Mid-West and put in place four clusters of thirty-five provinces. It was the beginning of the end of the Ironsi government. A former northern minister recounts that, "Ironsi's advisers were all from the East. He appointed prefects as district heads and they were all Igbos. Everything was unified in their hands."<sup>2</sup> The overhauling of the polity changed the status of Nigeria as a federal republic to a unitary state. Accordingly, the new national military government was to make laws for the country as a whole and at the same time, public services would fall under a unified National Public Service Commission. As was expected from a military dictatorship, the government banned all the eighty-one political associations and twenty-six tribal and cultural unions.

Later developments in the country convinced people in the North that a grand design actually took place to exterminate all the leaders from the region. Therefore, a large-scale revenge was contemplated as a solution to the unfolding political situation. In view of the impending crisis, the traditional institutions were again resorted to for stability. In effect, emirs, district heads

and village heads fought hard to keep the peace in their domains with the assistance of senior civil servants, who unlike younger civil servants, had sympathy for the traditional rulers and would want them in the scheme of things.

On June 1, the northern governor met with emirs from all the provinces in the region to identify measures to maintain law and order in view of the civil unrest which occurred in Kano, the previous month. The next day, Sultan Siddiq Abubakar III on behalf of the emirs and chiefs, issued a confidential memorandum to Hassan Katsina on their resolve to foster peace and security. Subsequently, the military government saw the role of the emirs as indispensable and continued to confer with them on a regular basis throughout June and July.

But one of such conferences became a turning point in the political history of the country leading to the overthrow and assassination of the head of state in a counter-coup by northern military officers. This particular conference to be held in Ibadan at the end of July was revealed to some prominent northerners to be a plot to kill all the emirs that would participate in the meeting. It was said that Maj.-Gen. Ironsi planned the assassinations and had prior information that northern leaders were the target of the first coup.

Twenty-four emirs and chiefs in the country were to attend the two-day conference in Ibadan to determine a new political structure for Nigeria. Participants from the northern provinces were Lamido of Adamawa, Aliyu Musdafa; Emir of Kano, Ado Bayero; Etsu of Nupe, Usman Sarki; Emir of Argungu, Muhammadu Mera; Atta of Igala, Ali Obaje; Emir of Badde, Umaru Sulaiman; Aku Uka of Wukari, Adi Byewi and Emir of Ilorin, Sulu Gambari.

On the first day of the conference, Friday, July 23, Ironsi spoke on the importance of the national anthem which the *Daily Times* captioned "Chiefs Sing at Ibadan Talks". However, the real intent of the meeting was suspected to be evil. According to Paden (1986), a former northern minister confirmed "there was a plot which leaked to kill the Northern chiefs while they were at Ibadan. The Eastern and Western chiefs were to walk out midway through the conference and then a bomb would be ignited which would kill the Northern chiefs."<sup>3</sup> This event and

the violent riots in Kano that left thousands of people dead signalled an ominous end to the Ironsi regime that finally collapsed on July 29, 1966 in a bloody counter-coup that shot the thirty-two year old Lieutenant-Colonel Yakubu Gowon into the seat of the head of state.

The earlier coup was thought to be a revolution which would change the entire system and the way of life, most especially in Northern Nigeria. And if the Ironsi government had not been changed, some dramatic changes for bad or good would have taken place. By July, the military government had started to panic and lose control as threats from the civil population increased.

The riots in the North were more than an expression of bitterness against the killing of prominent leaders in the Nzeogwu coup. More lives were lost in the riots which were repeating themselves over and over. Ironsi decided to tour some places in the North. He went to Kaduna and Kano where the reception was bad. Public opinion of him and his government there was uniformly hostile.

According to Ahmed Joda, that was why Ironsi decided to call the meeting with the emirs and chiefs of the country in Ibadan. And that included everybody. "I was in Belgium then. So any role that the Lamido would have played there will be a collective role of all the emirs and chiefs. In any case, the meeting didn't end nicely because there was a coup in which Ironsi was killed and everybody that was in Ibadan to attend this meeting had to find his way home."

At this point, the emirs and chiefs played a great role in trying to maintain law and order. People were really not listening to Hassan's government in Kaduna and the government in Lagos by Gowon. They had to rely heavily on the natural rulers.

The Lamido of Adamawa along with other traditional rulers led by the Sultan of Sokoto held an emergency meeting in August with the Northern Region governor, Hassan Katsina, in Kaduna to discuss the new agenda for the country. Their main grouse was the abolition of the regions which they said did not please the people. The governor agreed with the emirs and chiefs that the unitary system of government was not in

consonance with the wishes of the generality of Nigerians. The governor told them that they were entitled to be kept fully informed and consulted about events which affected the peace and daily lives of their people. He spoke on the assassination of the most prominent politicians and high ranking army officers from the North, the general uprising in parts of the country and his tour to all parts of the North to appeal for peace.

The way you and your people reacted to my appeal and assurances was most gratifying. You all worked honestly in good faith at all levels to achieve the best possible reforms at the local and national level... As you must have heard by now, Lt. Col. Yakubu Gowon has had to take over responsibility of the nation... The Head of the National Military Government spoke on the difficulties that beset the unitary government... We must therefore get ourselves together to examine what other system of government would be suitable. Your counsel on this matter will be of utmost importance... This in fact is the main reason for your coming here today... I appeal to you to do all in your power to maintain peace amongst all the people in your areas of jurisdiction and to ensure the safety of every one to live wherever they wish.<sup>4</sup>

The civil unrest and political insecurity did not abate and Gowon had to declare a state of emergency on May 27, 1967. He carved up the three regions and created twelve states. The Northern Region was split into six states with Adamawa, Borno, Bauchi and Sardauna Provinces forming the North-Eastern State.

Despite Gowon's efforts to reunite the country and move it forward again after the sordid events of the two coups d'état, Colonel Emeka Ojukwu, military governor of the Eastern Region called for secession and declared the Republic of Biafra. Following Ojukwu's action, a civil war broke out and dragged on for thirty months. After the defeat of Biafra in 1970, Nigeria became once again a federation based on the declaration of "no victor, no vanquished" and the policy of reconciliation, rehabilitation and reconstruction was adopted to put together the war-torn nation.

Lamido Aliyu Musdafa played a significant role to stem the



*The Lamido welcoming former President Ibrahim Babangida during an official visit to the old Gongola State in 1990*



*The first lady, Mrs Mariam Abacha paying a courtesy call on the Lamido during an official visit to Adamawa State in 1994*



Sitting in the centre is the Lamiido at the Id praying ground while on the left is the Galadima Adamawa, Allhaji Murtala Aminu, and district head of Yola, Yerima Adamu Bawuro and on the right is the Waziri Adamawa, Allhaji Babbar Lawan

hostilities in his domain. After the assassination of Ironsi there was an uprising in the North against some Igbo elements. Ahmadu Ribadu reveals that in Adamawa:

There was a plan by some individuals who wanted the Igbos to be packed and sent to the East in a steamer which usually passed from Garua to Lokoja. But it was not a sincere plan, it was a plot to kill them. So the plan was brought nicely to take them in a steamer to Makurdi. From there, the authorities would take care of the safe passage of the East-bound passengers. Luckily, the evil plan was disclosed to the Lamido. So the Lamido quickly summoned his officials and community leaders to use all in their power to stop the plan. He said he could never allow wanton destruction of human lives, no matter who. The Lamido immediately arranged for the intending steamer passengers to be accommodated at the Yola prison yard under tight security until such a time it was safe to take them home. The African District Officer, Mr. Ahome, a Tiv man, told me personally that he was surprised the country at that time had such sincere leaders. He said if the Lamido had allowed those people to be exterminated, he would have resigned. He then said the country needed peace and this would come if only there were enough leaders such as the Lamido to achieve it.

Though the Lamido showed the human face of war, it was a point of duty at the same time for him to lead the province to help the Federal Government in its war efforts by contributing both human and material resources. Almost three decades ago the emirate contributed its resources to another war, the second World War, through the Nigerian War Relief Fund (NWRF). The then Lamido Musdafa helped in collecting an average of two measures of corn from each citizen through the district heads, though the common people did not know why. All the same the food supplies were transported to Yola and to the army barracks. As district head of Michika, Tafida Idris went to a village, Mungule, to collect the food supplies there. The villagers were angry that their food was being taken to other people (soldiers) they did not know. Tafida decided to make an example, he ordered one man to be arrested and when the villagers saw the handcuffs they gave their full co-operation.

General Yakubu Gowon served for exactly nine years as head of state until his removal in a bloodless coup led by Brigadier Murtala Muhammed on July 29, 1975. Consequently all the military governors were sacked. In the North-Eastern State, Col. Muhammadu Buhari was appointed the new governor in August 1975. As part of his duty, Buhari undertook a tour of the state which saw him in Adamawa Province in December. In Yola, the Lamido, his council and representative of the various communities held a forum with the governor. It was a rare opportunity to have a governor in the province. Apart from intimating the governor with the problems in the area such as water, electricity and roads, the Lamido appealed for better water transportation on the River Benue to encourage development; completion of Jimeta and Numan bridges and upgrading of Yola airport and road network.<sup>5</sup>

Governor Buhari disclosed that the problems highlighted had already engaged the attention of the state government. He raised the hope that the issue of ferries in Yola and Numan were being looked into by the appropriate authorities and that the Yola airport was among those in the federation scheduled for expansion. Though the problem of roads and air transportation was the duty of the federal government, he said the state should also proffer solutions. Similarly, the governor implored the local authorities to generate more revenue since their finances could not cope with the demands for development projects.

On February 3, 1976, General Murtala Muhammed created seven additional states making a total of nineteen states in the federation. Gongola State, one of the new states, was carved out of the North-East and part of Benue-Plateau States, i.e., former Wukari Division. With headquarters in Yola, Gongola State was made up of seventeen local government councils namely – Yola, Gombi, Song, Mayo Belwa, Fufore, Bali, Jalingo, Karim Lamido, Zing, Guyuk, Numan, Michika, Mubi, Ganye, Sardauna, Takum and Wukari. These units were carved out of the former seven administrative divisions of Ganye, Jalingo, Adamawa, Numan, Mubi, Wukari and Sardauna covering an area of 102,067 sq. kilometres making Gongola the second largest state in the federation.

The creation of Gongola State and the siting of Yola as its

capital was a welcome development which meant government was getting closer to the people at the grassroots. Hitherto, the people in this part of the country looked up to Kaduna when it was the capital of the Northern Region and later to Maiduguri, headquarters of North-Eastern State. Now the governor and government lived just next door, but in effect, the authority of the Lamido as the overall supervisor of government affairs in the area was reduced to a great extent.

Since it was the age-long ambition of the people and the Lamido to see that they got their own state, the diverse elements in the society came together to help in building Gongola State from the scratch. Leaders and the people poured all their time and energy to the common goal of lifting the state from the drawing board to move forward. To a large extent, the administration of Col. Muhammadu Jega relied on the support of chiefs and the Lamido of Adamawa. According to Hamidu Alkali, then Secretary to the Military Government in the first seventeen months of the life of Gongola State,

We wanted to understand our aim as a new state and we sought the goodwill and support of every individual, especially the Lamido.

To this end Lamido Aliyu Musdafa, chairman of the Council of Chiefs marshalled efforts of the traditional rulers and his subjects to take the new state "off the ground".

The Lamido felt more obliged to contribute selflessly as Yola's new status was invaluable to his domain. The state government had cause to deeply appreciate and thank the Lamido for, among other things, the full-time use of the Executive Council chambers of the Adamawa Emirate to government officials for their meetings. The Lamido's leadership qualities were also extolled by the government in the handling of the selection of a successor to the late Aku Uka of Wukari. Usually, the selection of a new Jukun ruler from among the ruling houses created tension and dispute. But the Lamido and the government exploited all peaceful means to find the best candidate and appointed a new Aku Uka according to Jukun tradition.<sup>6</sup>

Adamawa Emirate experienced drastic changes during the

administration of Gen. Murtala Muhammed especially with the local government reforms and the state creation. Ahmed Joda, then a permanent secretary in the federal government, saw the reforms at that time as what could have been potentially dangerous but for the support of the traditional rulers whose powers were nonetheless being cut down.

I remembered I came to Yola to explain the government's position in introducing the reforms. I delivered messages and went round Northern Nigeria to explain to others. I can say that the understanding that was shown by the Lamido here was very mature which helped a lot in the implementation of the changes. He himself asked me to come and asked me just simple questions.

Ahmed Joda further cast his mind back to the late 1960s when the Gowon regime started the reforms at the local government level by transforming three important institutions — NA Police, Prisons and Courts — from the emirs to the Federal Government and the Judiciary.

I was at the meetings at which these policies were being fashioned out. And the last meeting that was held at night at what is now General Hassan Katsina House, lately called State House, Kawo in Kaduna. The meetings were held there, the emirs were invited and the reforms were presented to them. Most of the speakers were very bitter about these proposed changes. The Lamido did not show any emotion; I was watching him because...of course I came from Yola and had interest in his feelings. He didn't speak at the debates, but he also did not show any sign on his face of having been disturbed that these changes were taking place. I assumed that he realised that the changes have come and it was the late Sultan of Sokoto who cast the real shots and said "look these changes are inevitable, they are the only way the society can grow up and prosper. So we accept these changes".

According to the guideline of the local government reforms, the Lamido of Adamawa became the president of the Council of Chiefs in his domain. His own council was made up of the usual traditional office-holders and all the chairmen of the local government councils in the emirate. The new Council of Chiefs

headed by the Lamido as chairman included the Emir of Muri, Aku Uka of Wukari and Emir of Mubi who are senior traditional rulers. Other council members were Chiefs of Bachama, Ganye, Shelleng, Donga, Longuda, Bata, Gashaka, Mbula, Takum and Mambilla. They are all second class chiefs and headed the traditional councils in their respective domains.

In the new set-up designed by the local government reforms, the people participated in public affairs through representation of their local government chairmen. Nevertheless, the Adamawa Emirate Council provided a wider forum for the Lamido to hold discussions and harmonise the activities of the local government councils. Apart from giving advice on policy issues, the Lamido co-ordinated and assisted in the implementation of development plans and other functions such as maintenance of law and order, customary law and practice, land matters and issues relating to traditional titles. Gidado Abubakar, a one-time chairman of Yola Local Government notes that:

We were lucky we had the Lamido as the chairman of the Council. Our meetings were open-minded and we were allowed to contribute our views without hindrance. In a similar vein, the local government council invited a member of the Adamawa Emirate Council to attend crucial meetings affecting the area as a way of justifying the confidence reposed in them by the Lamido, the government and the people.<sup>7</sup>

The usual link between the Yola Local Government and the Emirate Council was the district head of Yola who was in constant touch administratively. But whenever vital issues cropped up, the Lamido's gates were always open to the local government officials. Initiation and implementation of projects such as markets, motor parks, rural health centres, etc, were never interfered with, but their take-off would always get the blessing and support of the Lamido. During times of disaster, the Lamido's prompt action and consultations as in the 1990 Jimeta Market fire disaster helped in getting contributions and relief materials from government, and the subsequent rehabilitation of the market.

One of our greatest achievements is that we were able, through the efforts of the Lamido, to unite the people of the local government irrespective of ethnic and religious differences. We would not have achieved that much without the co-operation of the Lamido.

Out of respect for the Lamido, the local government chairmen in Yola and other areas decided to pay homage to him in his palace every Friday as occasion demands. Alhaji Abubakar explains that:

The African society demands that you pay homage to your leaders at any particular time. We went to greet the Lamido on Fridays with some members of my council and staff of the local government. The interaction built stronger relations and a forum for discussing the affairs of the area for positive development. By virtue of that, my own staff and people gave me that kind of respect as their leader and chairman. The local government should as a matter of fact continue to meet and work together with the Lamido because the traditional institution is the custodian of the people. It stands to reason that since the local government works for the development of the people, the Lamido should be involved. Also, though the annual Njuwa fishing festival is an emirate affair, the local governments in the emirate contribute some funds.

The local government reforms are one of the major achievements of the Murtala regime for providing a platform for development at the local level. After the assassination of Gen. Murtala Muhammed, the military government under his former Chief of Staff, Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo resolved to continue the political programme of transition to civil rule and usher in the second republic. Accordingly, state military governors were replaced by military administrators. In Gongola State, Col. Jega gave way to Brig. A.R.A. Mahmud who oversaw the affairs of the state from July 1978 to September 1979 when he handed over to Abubakar Barde.

In line with the new dispensation, traditional rulers were not to be seen playing party politics. The non-partisanship of Lamido Aliyu Musdafa has been remarkable and clear-cut right

from the formation of the five political parties in 1978. The respectful distance by the emirate council from the political parties earned the Lamido even greater respect. This position was further demonstrated by the Lamido during General Obasanjo's farewell visit to Yola two days to the presidential elections in August 1979. The royal father pledged the commitment of traditional rulers to their duty as fathers of the people and to play a non-partisan role during and after the hand-over. This attitude, he stated, was in appreciation of the Murtala/Obasanjo regime's efforts in the "building of a strong foundation for a modern Nigeria especially with the creation of more states and local government reforms which formed the bedrock of unity and socio-economic development such as "Operation Feed the Nation".

In *Not My Will*, the former head of state recalls the co-operation of traditional rulers with his administration, especially in the implementation of the Land Use decree which generated a lot of tension. He recalls in the memoirs, that he had to seek the support of traditional rulers especially the Sultan "to use his office as the *Sarkin Musulmi* to pour oil on troubled waters."<sup>8</sup> The Land Use decree, according to General Obasanjo, was formulated by his government to make land readily available to those who need it to preserve their tenure and also to discourage land hoarding and speculation. However, when the military left, the decree was used as "an instrument of oppression and vindictiveness against political opponents thereby contributing to the demise of the Second Republic."<sup>9</sup>

The lifting of the ban on politics by the Obasanjo government in September 1978, sounded the bell for politicians to once again pick-up the gauntlet and fight for power. Thirteen years of military rule had not doused the fire in the political arena. New entrants had by January the following year already started to learn the game of politics. The nomination for the gubernatorial post had begun in earnest and those seeking to be governors were campaigning for their party's ticket.

One of the means of getting support was for the politicians to contact outstanding personalities and make their ambition known. It was for this reason that the Lamido's palace played host to so many politicians from Gongola State as never before.

Politicians made it a point of duty to visit the Lamido for more support as a royal father. For Wilberforce Juta, a budding politician who in later years became governor of Gongola State, it was a remarkable experience as the meeting with the Lamido for the first time left an everlasting impression.

Wilberforce Juta accepted to be the running mate of Abubakar Barde for the governorship of Gongola State under the Great Nigerian People's Party (GNPP) after a narrow defeat for the party's ticket. When the duo started serious campaign in February 1979, the first move they made was to contact the Lamido and present themselves as candidates seeking political offices and his blessings. The Lamido played the host, but reiterated the position of traditional rulers in politics as neutral and gave his blessings on the bid.<sup>10</sup>

According to Wilberforce Juta, the Lamido's reception though non-partisan and non-committal, was in the end campaign success for them.

It was not a surprise that when the votes were cast Barde and I won. I think the (Lamido) is a man of God because I don't know why, he was so close to us ... and the way he received us. In the end, we grabbed the choice for Gongola. So in a way, he was like a *waliyyi* or a saint to us.

In April, while the GNPP was bracing for a hot fight with the other political parties, its most feared contender for the governorship was facing a crisis. The conservative National Party of Nigeria (NPN) was having a tough time with the progressive elements in its ranks. And when they could not agree to stay together the progressives (staunch members of the Gongola Unity Movement before the party registration) were expelled from the NPN.

The leaders of GUM, including Barkindo Aliyu Musdafa Mahmud Waziri, Umaru Santuraki, Mesa Abana, etc, had to look for another party to stay in politics and so found a new love in the GNPP. After some negotiations, the GUM faction was admitted into the GNPP. After the elections, the GUM members occupied prominent positions in the government and in the party. Mahmud Waziri won the senatorial seat which was conceded to him at the party level; Umaru Santuraki became the

secretary of the party; Mesa Abana became the secretary to Michika Local Government, while Barkindo Musdafa was appointed a commissioner in Abubakar Barde's cabinet.

Barkindo Musdafa's joining the GNPP was in some political circles seen as a result of consultation with his father, the Lamido. But Wilberforce Juta argues that Barkindo could have settled for the NPN as the establishment in Yola and the people had sympathy for it. He could have joined People's Redemption Party (PRP), or Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN), or Nigerian People's Party (NPP) but he decided to join the GNPP:

Having the son of Lamido then added glamour to our bid. He (the Lamido) did not play any part in it because I am quite sure he didn't tell his son "go there" as Barkindo was a man of himself. However, the Lord used both the Lamido and his son and I became the elected deputy governor of Gongola State. The GNPP's victory was "a landslide" in the polls for the 63 House of Assembly seats: GNPP won 25 seats, UPN, 18; NPN, 15; NPP, 4 and PRP, 1 seat.

The cross-over of the Gongola Unity Movement to the GNPP enhanced the party's victory at the polls. According to Barkindo Musdafa,<sup>11</sup> before the merger, the GNPP was not all that strong. Later when GUM joined it, people flocked to the party and as a result facilitated the governorship victory. But he described the GNPP as not really an opposition party though it was not anything new for people from this part of the country to be in the opposition. The founder of GNPP, Waziri Ibrahim, was initially in the NPP. The GUM did not join the southern based so-called opposition parties but GNPP, because there was not much difference between the NPN and GNPP.

The Lamido's influence did not have much bearing on Barkindo's political activities. Barkindo recalled:

In fact he didn't want me to join politics, but I joined and there was nothing he could do because I am a man of myself. At that time I could decide what was good for me and what was bad for me. I know many people approached the Lamido to ask him, he refused. My membership of the GNPP did not have any link with the Lamido though it worked as a campaign strategy for them anyway. They (GNPP) used that and it really helped them. However, the

party didn't win any seat in Yola, whether House of Assembly or House of Representatives. All the same, Governor Abubakar Barde appointed me into the State Executive Council and as Commissioner of Works for that matter.

Apart from the challenges of a new presidential system of government being practised for the first time, the Barde administration took the task of effecting changes in the traditional institution. During the election campaigns, many people expressed the desire for new chieftaincy areas in places like Kilba, Ga'anda, Yungur, Ibi, Mutum-Biyu, Michika, etc. The requests were hinged on the argument that these areas had district heads whom they now wanted to be graded chiefs as it was during the early years of colonial rule.

These feelings were strong in the seven traditional emirate councils — Adamawa, Muri, Numan, Ganye, Wukari, Saradauna and Mubi — which led to the setting up of the Manassa Daniel Panel on Chieftaincy Areas in 1980. The government met with the Lamido and other traditional leaders on the thorny issue which was also considered as sensitive by traditional elements. The government on one hand did not want to make hasty decisions in creating new chieftaincy areas without fully addressing the issue.

The chairman, Senator Manassa Daniel, took the panel round the entire Gongola State with two objectives: (1) to study the historical background of the areas agitating for chieftaincies and (2) to collect the people's views on the issues and also on other things like cattle tax, *jangali*, which was abolished in Kano and Kaduna by the new civilian governments there.

The panel was treading on soft ground for it was expected to unravel the allegation by people who accused the emirate and traditional councils of usurping their chieftaincy status in order to keep them under their supervision. The agitators wanted self-determination and did not mind whatever status — first, second or third class — would be conferred on their chiefs. But to the councils it was only a claim in order to break away. As a result, the Manassa Daniel Panel came out with a report which reflected the predicament of the government on the issue.

Being a people-oriented ruling party, the government felt

that genuine demands for chieftaincies should be looked into. At the same time, the government's dilemma was how not to antagonise the emirate and traditional councils as nobody wanted his domain to be balkanised or his powers reduced. The white paper thus weighed the people's wishes on whether there existed a chieftaincy in those areas where it was demanded or whether it was deserved.

Be that as it may, the Barde administration in October 1982 promoted the three second class chiefs of Mubi, Muri and Wukari to first class status. Eleven other third class chiefs were elevated to second class namely: Bachama, Bata, Ganye, Mambilla, Lunguda, Gashaka, Takum, Donga, Zing, Mbula and Shelleng. However, the newly promoted rulers did not have the opportunity to receive their staffs of office until the deputy governor, Wilberforce Juta took over in 1983. Juta had to go round these areas for the presentation of the instruments of office. In addition, the onus of carving out new chieftaincy areas and the elevation of district heads to third class eventually fell on the new Juta administration.

On several occasions, the government met with the state council of chiefs on the chieftaincy issue. The traditional institution was clearly not happy with government's handling of chieftaincy affairs. In the absence of a House of Chiefs as existed in the aborted first republic, there were some procedures that were not followed by the House of Assembly and the executive arm of government. As there was no provision for the House of Chiefs in the new constitution, the government consulted the Council of Chiefs made up of the four first class chiefs, the Lamido of Adamawa being chairman and the Emir of Muri, Emir of Mubi and the Aku Uka of Wukari as members.

The 1979 Constitution in Section 179 provides for the establishment in each state of a Council of Chiefs which shall comprise a chairman and such number of persons as may be prescribed by law of the House of Assembly of the state. By virtue of this law, the Council of Chiefs, presided over by the Lamido of Adamawa, shall have power to advise the governor on any matter relating to customary law or cultural affairs, inter-communal relations and chieftaincy matters.

In addition, the council had powers in the appointment, grading, deposition, or removal of any chief from any part of the state; and the exclusion of any chief or any person who was formerly a chief from any part of the state. All the chiefs were guaranteed to hold office as long as they remain chiefs. However, it was during President Shagari's tenure that the traditional institution "suffered its greatest setback" as the chiefs sat in the National Council of State together with the governors which limited their advisory role especially if the governor's own party in a particular state constituted a major threat to law and order.<sup>12</sup> The Federal Government therefore found it difficult to reconcile the functions of the chiefs in a state where the government was hostile to the traditional institution.

At a meeting, the traditional leaders were briefed on the Manassa Daniel report and the desire of the government to carve out new chieftaincy areas in a peaceful manner. The governor asked the chiefs for advice. The five meetings contemplated the situation. The Emir of Muri, Abba Tukur, was the first to speak and showed disagreement with the new chieftaincy creation. He warned that some things were better left to history as the colonialists and military had left the chieftaincy issues alone.

The Aku-Uka pointed out that as far as he was concerned, the government should create new chieftaincies if it felt it was justified. But he cautioned against a hasty decision on the matter as those areas that were elevated had nothing to show for it. He advised government to wait first. The Emir of Mubi, the late Ahmadu Isa, reminded that the former Governor Barde had given his word not to carry out the changes. The Lamido of Adamawa told Governor Juta that the other chiefs had spoken well and therefore nothing needed to be added.

It was the governor's turn to speak and he pointed out that even the chief executive could not change some decisions. He stressed that as a matter of government policy, the new chieftaincy areas had to be created and that the chiefs' advice was needed to achieve the exercise in a peaceful atmosphere. He felt that the government would come nearer the people through smaller units of administration. Furthermore, the society was becoming more developed and those areas that deserved it:

should be given for more development. Moreover, that was not to, and would not, change the composition of the Council of Chiefs.

In Adamawa Emirate, Kilba, Ga'anda, Yungur and Zummo became new chieftaincy areas with the former district heads promoted to third class ranks and thus became graded chiefs.

Another new change introduced by the Barde-Juta administration was the creation of forty local government areas in the state. The politics in this exercise often surpasses the usual position of the government of the day that it is to bring the people closer to government. The traditional rulers at the same time often saw the creation of more local governments as a threat to their power and control in those areas.

Juta recalls that the government felt that the creation of more local governments was based on demand by the people. Apart from criteria such as population, economic viability and historical background, the government wanted to bring about more understanding and development, and so created forty local government areas.

We did it based on consultation. The government, the House of Assembly, the communities and the traditional set-up were all fully involved. We didn't want objections from any quarters or create any ugly scenes. We never considered areas that didn't demand for local government. For instance, Jimeta did not propose for local government and we did not consider it. We had the full co-operation of Adamawa Emirate Council. We never had problems with the emirate and the local government creation was a smooth exercise.

The Council of Chiefs made great contributions to the government of the state especially on security matters. The contributions of the Lamido in dealing with security threats such as the Maitatsine riots is recalled by Wilberforce Juta who as a deputy governor was chairman of the state security council for three and half years. Interestingly, the activities of Maitatsine sect at Vinikilang near Jimeta was first alerted by the Lamido. The influx of aliens is always of interest to the Emirate Council which monitors their movements, identifies suspicious characters and reports to the government. It was discovered that

the religious fanatics were making weapons and stacking them in readiness for an attack on innocent citizens. With the advice of the Lamido, the government quickly rounded them up and the danger was only averted for another time.

I don't know what happened after we left. During the military regime in February 1984, the Maitatsine sect rose up and killed many people. May be they didn't pay much attention. If you use the traditional set-up very well, they will help you a lot in security... in advising the government... because they are with the grassroots. When we found out the existence of the Maitatsine sect we monitored the situation to ensure security. But then the whole thing was treated like just any religious issue, everybody in Nigeria had the freedom of worship and at that time we didn't really know there was some deep fanaticism about it.

Another thing the government was able to learn from the Lamido was that the use of force was not the best way to tackle security problems. A delicate and explosive event in 1982 began with tension between the *Darika* and *Izala* sects in Wukari. The government summoned security meetings to address the issue and contain it before it spread in the state as a similar threat was brewing in Numan. A plan was tabled for the drafting of security men and police to arrest the situation, but the Lamido said no. He advised instead for the leaders of both sects to be brought into dialogue. He foresaw a bloody situation if the police intervened with force and therefore advised that plain clothes men should confer with the chairman of the affected local government and the traditional leader and warn leaders of the sects in the area. The alternative plan of action put forward by the Lamido was adopted and it worked well in defusing the tension.

Former Governor Jutta recalls that:

The Lamido advised us a lot in playing down a lot of explosive situations. The Lamido doesn't like violence at all. That is one thing I know about him. He will never allow either drafting the police to arrest or beat people up. He will always find an amicable and peaceful way of settling things. He will ask for dialogue.

A further benefit for the civilian government was the wisdom of the Lamido in initiating vital projects. In order to bring more infrastructure to the state capital, the Lamido requested in particular for a water scheme which was developed in 1982 and commissioned in 1987 and is still one of the best of its type in the country. The roads, especially in Yola, were initiated and developed on special request by the Lamido. The government made agriculture one of its priorities and the result was of great benefit to the masses.

The Lamido advised us to develop agriculture. Infact that is one of the things he always talked about. The Lamido always talked about making agricultural input such as fertilizer available to peasant farmers. He always emphasised about the common people and preferred ways to improve agriculture and animal husbandry.

Landmarks abound in the capital and other areas of the state to show the development brought by the civilian regime which had the Lamido's son as its Commissioner of Works. All the township roads in the Yola metropolis were started by the government. A substantial part of the Commissioners' quarters, the state secretariat complex, among others, were either started or completed by the administration. The Yola International Hotel project could not take off due to a little misunderstanding with the contractor and was completed by the Jang administration in 1988.

Barkindo recounts that:

The School of Nursing was brought to Yola due to my influence. They wanted to take it to Numan, but I really lobbied the Commissioner for Health at that time who was my very good friend and we sited it here in Yola. Also I constructed five roads Mubi - Mayo Bani-Bazza road, Ganye - Dinduwari-Jada-Kojoli road, Takum-Kashimbilla road and Garba Chede-Mutum Biyu road. They were part of many things I did as Commissioner of Works.

During the civilian era between 1979-1983, the Lamido's role as a royal father to all brought peace, understanding and unity in Gongola State. The attribute of employing frankness in public policy-making was highlighted by the Lamido as Juta recounts

what transpired in one of the meetings between the Lamido, the governor and the other three first-class chiefs in the state. The Council of Chiefs met to discuss issues which had to do with the creation of chieftaincy areas. As usual, the Lamido was more upcoming, and seemed to advocate frankness in the outcome of the dialogue. He sympathised with the government's position in creating the new chieftaincies and accepted the governor's arguments.

During the discussion, the governor was reported to have pointed out to the Emir of Muri that contrary to how he put it, the colonial and military governments did in fact make changes in the traditional set-up. The governor recalled that Adamawa Emirate used to include Ngaundere, Garua, Marua and other parts which today are not even in Nigeria. To the Emir of Mubi, he pointed out that as a child he (the governor) knew Mubi as being part of Adamawa Emirate. But (today) Mubi is a chiefdom of itself with a first-class chief. Other chiefdoms like Ganye were created by the military government of Musa Usman.

The Aku Uka, contributing to the discussion, said, "Well you make the policy, you implement and administer it." But he was reminded by the governor that he and the other chiefs were promoted to first-class and second-class status and in view of that new ones should be considered too. The next challenge should be how to administer these new areas properly.

In order to completely remove doubts that the government was actually preparing to institute the new chieftaincies, the traditional rulers were shown eight staffs of office. Governor Juta explained that his predecessor may not have told the chiefs that he was carrying out the creation. As the Lamido picked one of the staffs and looked at it he expressed his appreciation for being told the truth no matter what. Juta was happy too because his frankness was appreciated. And he realised that double-speak at that moment was not the best tactic in informing the chiefs about the situation. The Lamido's confidence in the method was like a balm on frayed nerves.

During his tenure as the chief executive of the state, Juta used to visit the Lamido in the evening at his palace. Usually, the conversations were casual and off-the-cuff. Juta however recalls a particular incident that had an impact on his life till today. It

was a piece of the Lamido's philosophy. He narrates that:

The Lamido is a very simple and friendly person. When you meet him alone in fact he will treat you as if you (the visitor) are the Lamido and not himself. One day we sat in his *zaure* and were talking away. When the chat narrowed to birth control and population, the Lamido didn't see it as alarming. But I pointed out the need for parents to be able to cater for their children, to educate them, to feed them and to raise them. The Lamido sat back and said "*wallahi wannan ba naniu ba*". It is God who gives and cares for the child. The Lamido then added "I never sit to worry about my child as soon as he is born. It is God that brought him into this world and it is only God that can raise him.

The Lamido told the governor about an incident that happened not long before his reign. The Waziri and one other adviser were eating from the same dish and were discussing when a cat appeared and sat down near them. The cat was more interested in the food and watched how the two men dipped their hands in the dish and lifted the food to their mouths until they finished eating. A boy was called to remove the dishes and the left-over food. All the while the cat was not noticed until a small bird flew from nowhere and landed in front of the cat which immediately grabbed it for a meal.

The adviser looked at the Waziri and asked, "have you seen what has just happened? This cat was lying here and watching us eat. Each time we put our hands in the dish it looked and when our hands went to our mouths, its eyes followed. When we finished we still didn't offer any food to her, instead we sent a boy to pack the dishes. But lo! God saw the whole thing and put us to shame by sending this bird. The noble men had to fast to atone for their sin."

After the story, the governor couldn't help laughing and promptly agreed about the lesson which he narrated in his preaching, arguments or discussion that God takes care of all his creatures including the tiniest cat and people can only do their best in their responsibilities.

The first term of the democratically elected governments in the states was coming to a close and the first months of 1983 were used by the rival political parties to campaign for

re-election of incumbent civilian governors or plan for their defeat as the case may be. The process was not peaceful as fourteen of the nineteen states in the federation were thrown into chaos by the political party supporters. In Gongola State the situation did not break down as in other areas where innocent people lost their lives and property worth millions of naira.

Apart from series of meetings by representatives of the six political parties including the latest registered Nigeria Advance Party, traditional rulers and religious leaders were invited by the Gongola State Government to assist in maintaining law and order in the state. The Council of Chiefs contributed significantly in bringing down the acrimony between rival party supporters until the elections.

Bamanga Tukur, NPN candidate, won the elections and was sworn-in as the new chief executive in October 1983. In his first assignment in Government House, Yola the new governor met with the Lamido and the Council of Chiefs to solicit for support. Tukur reiterated the important role of the emirs and chiefs in the success of his administration. He even promised them the composition of a new council through a proposed bill to the House of Assembly. He then finally pledged to always consult the traditional rulers and involve them fully in government matters.

The second civilian administration in Gongola State ended with a military coup on December 31, 1983. Twelve days later the new military governor, Maj.-Gen. Jega in a meeting with emirs and chiefs explained that politicians had betrayed the hope in the return to civilian rule (in 1979) which was thought would be conducted with due propriety, efficiency and for the good of all. Unfortunately, he asserted, selfish interests of the few in position of power became paramount and the public suffered unprecedented neglect, crime increase, bribery and siphoning away of public funds leaving the common man to suffer.

A major criticism of the previous government was the creation of too many local government areas that could not even pay salaries, let alone carry out development projects. The governor therefore reduced the number to the original seventeen created by the last military regime and abolished the twenty-three areas carved out by the Barde administration.

What was the opinion of the military on traditional institutions in that crucial period? Major General Jega declared:

Our emirate and traditional councils will remain and will be expected to play the same role they were playing before. The traditional rulers will continue to enjoy the confidence and respect of the administration. Your leadership role is still as important as ever and your traditional role in maintaining peace and order in your respective domains is even more important than it was during the political era.

Buhari's government identified indiscipline in the Nigerian society as being responsible for the political instability in the country. As a principle, the War Against Indiscipline (WAI) was launched in every state with zeal. When the Gongola State chapter of the WAI crusade was launched in April, traditional rulers were made to understand that they had a significant role to play in the war. The emirs and chiefs were needed to show good example of leadership in the mobilisation of the people towards nationhood, patriotism and above all, discipline.

Lamido Aliyu Musdafa was a strong advocate of the re-orientation not only in words, but in action. He participated in the monthly clean-up campaign known as Environmental Sanitation Day every last Saturday of the month. As the months rolled by, the people imbibed the practice of sanitation and practised it religiously. The WAI succeeded especially in giving Gongola a befitting capital.

Buhari's government made no substantial pronouncement about its overview of the traditional institutions or the transition to democracy generally. However at a conference organised at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan in September 1984, the Chief of Staff, Brig. Tunde Idiagbon said the "Supreme Military Council was determined to restore the traditional rulers and institutions to high esteem and the pride of place which the Nigerian culture accords them." He implored the conference to make useful recommendations for input into government's final decision on the local government reforms. In spite of this seeming romance between the government of Buhari and the traditional institution, the government slammed the hammer on two well-respected natural rulers. In August

1984, the Ooni of Ife, Oba Okunade Sijuwade and the Emir of Kano, Ado Bayero visited Israel as guests of the Prime Minister at a time when Nigeria and Israel had no diplomatic relations. The Buhari government got irked by the action and banned the two rulers from travelling out for six months. Maj.-Gen. Joseph Garba, a former Federal Commissioner of External Affairs in *Fractured History* notes that:

There were questions, since many believed that their visit had government sanction, in spite of Foreign Minister Gambari's disavowal of government knowledge and approval of such a visit. The curious combination of the two visitors, one a Muslim and Northerner, and the other, a Christian and Southerner, only fuelled further the speculation that the government was testing the "domestic waters."<sup>13</sup>

On August 12, 1986, the Governor of Gongola State, Col. Yohanna Madaki deposed Umar Abba Tukur, Emir of Muri and banished him to Yola where he has since remained. The emir was alleged to have misappropriated public funds meant for compensation to displaced villagers. The emir went to court to contest his removal which lasted eight years. He was awarded ₦6 million as damages, but the presiding judge, Chief Judge of Adamawa State, Bamare Bansi, did not order the re-instatement of the emir.

Col. Madaki, however, did not survive the controversy as he was redeployed by the new Babangida regime to Benue State shortly after he deposed the emir. Not long after, he was retired from the army. According to the former emir, Umaru Tukur:

What happened to me was not fair and was not in line with the laws of the land. They used Decree 17 and I went to court to challenge it. The court agreed with me, but the state government went to the Court of Appeal, Jos which also agreed that Decree 17 does not include emirs, chiefs, obas and obis.<sup>14</sup>

The former emir notes that the government did not consult the Council of Chiefs:

They were supposed to have consulted the Lamido of Adamawa and the state Council of Chiefs. They should

have presented the allegations to the council, set up a commission of inquiry independently and then send it to government to study. After, then they would ask me to defend myself. Then the kingmakers of Muri Emirate would consider the case and send a memorandum to the Council of Chiefs which gives advice to the state governor on the matter. All issues of appointment, deposition and suspension of emirs and chiefs must be discussed by the council. But these were not followed and Decree 17 was used arbitrarily to depose me. They perhaps knew the support I had from the emirs and chiefs in Gongola State that was why they (government) avoided the council through Decree 17. I don't know whether the council protested or not but the procedure was not followed.

Maj.-Gen. Joseph Garba in his book, *Fractured History*, sums it up thus:

It was a striking testimony to the collective power of traditional rulers. Madaki's deposition of the emir was to have served as a warning that elitist as traditional leadership was, they derived their power and sovereignty from the goodwill of the ruled. But the whole affair resulted in quite the reverse. It was Madaki who was removed; and this was seen as warning to those members of the elite corps who might elect to challenge the status quo. Government action in removing the Colonel from office seemed to suggest that those in government derived their tenure from the goodwill and unalloyed support of traditional rulers.

With the ouster of Buhari from power on August 27, 1985, the Babangida government changed the methods used in the campaign which were described as "coercive". A policy of persuasion rather than force was adopted to enforce discipline in all facets of society. So the Sanitation Day continued, but in a different form which is still being observed every month. The policy adopted by the Babangida regime evolved into the Mass Mobilisation for Social Justice, Self-Reliance and Economic Recovery (MAMSER) in 1987.

The Lanido embraced the MAMSER crusade whole-heartedly and appealed to the people of the state to support it. His

involvement in the People's Forum, workshops, seminars and other activities of MAMSER lent credence to the campaign. On the other hand, the Lamido encouraged officials of MAMSER to act impartially and not to be daunted by critics.

Jonathan Zwingina, first Director of MAMSER in Gongola State observes that:

It was clear the Lamido wanted positive development and we felt encouraged about that. I certainly do not recollect any instance where he felt unhappy with us or complained about anything. Each time we met he was always impressed and thanked us about what we were doing and I felt really motivated. He was a great inspiration to the MAMSER idea.<sup>15</sup>

The Babangida era has affected so much of the political history of Nigeria. General Ibrahim Babangida's eight-year tenure witnessed a lot of developments in the country such as the autonomy of local governments, the 1989 Constitution and a new dimension in relations with the traditional institutions.

The royal fathers usually visited Dodan Barracks in Lagos or Aso Rock villa in Abuja to express appreciation on behalf of their people for the location of new projects in their domain. The traditional rulers may also appeal for government assistance in certain areas of development which the federal government obliges either by donations or relief funds. During crises, such as the closure of universities in 1989 and 1993, some traditional rulers who incidentally are chancellors in some of the institutions, met with government several times for the re-opening of the schools.<sup>16</sup>

State visits in 1987 and 1990 presented the opportunity to give the honour of the president in commissioning the Song cottage hospital, Federal University of Technology, Yola, library complex named after Ibrahim Babangida, Yola International Hotel and the Yola Water Treatment Plant, among others.

In 1988, the Chief of General Staff commissioned the Gongola State Television, Highland Bank, Gongola Press Ltd etc. In 1991, Admiral Aikhomu's second, but brief, visit was for the opening of the Nigeria/Cameroon Boundary workshop in his capacity as the National Chairman of the National Boundary Commission.

The setting up of a Political Bureau headed by Dr. S.J. Cookey was a watershed in the transition to civil rule. The president cautioned the Bureau about the need for the country to respect and maintain the virtues of its traditions and political culture. "We cannot, indeed, we must not, lift foreign constitutions and political models... we share neither the political history nor the political culture of these lands. Our demographic settings and social structures differ vastly from theirs."

Subsequent to the Political Bureau's recommendations for a new constitution, the role of traditional rulers in the nation's politics surfaced again and eventually the new constitution in 1989 provided for a council of state whose membership included state governors, former heads of state, traditional rulers and former chief justices of the federation among others. Before this development, the defunct Constituent Assembly chaired by Justice Anthony Aniagolu attempted to expunge the provision for traditional councils. But 233 members voted against 64 to allow the traditional rulers play advisory roles in government.<sup>17</sup>

The issue of a constitutional role for emirs and chiefs was raised out of a desire for the legislative powers and advisory functions they had in the first republic. However, the two committees on the issue rejected the proposal and left untouched the roles and functions of traditional rulers in Part II of the Third Schedule. That section provides for traditional councils to have powers to advise the governors, on the request of the local governments they reside in, on issues relating to customary laws, cultural affairs, inter-communal and chieftaincy matters.

A merged clause reads: "The council shall have power to advise the governor whenever requested to do so on any matter relating to customary laws or cultural affairs, inter-communal relations and chieftaincy matters; the maintenance of public order within the state or any part thereof, and such other matters as the governor may direct." The strength of the amendment was that a situation could arise where a governor needs to be advised, but which he might not be aware of in good time to call for the opinion of the council.

The creation of states was an issue that strongly affected the structure and functions of traditional institutions. Since the

creation of Akwa Ibom and Katsina States in September 1991, the agitation for creation of more states increased from various communities who were not satisfied with the power-sharing formula. This situation warranted the statement by Babangida that "no further comments or petition... will be tolerated on state creation during the period of transition."

General Babangida had to re-address the state creation issue. He announced in his 6th anniversary speech on August 27, 1991, the creation of nine additional states. Against the background of agitations for new states and the government's position on not creating any more, the president explained that the administration was, however, persuaded by the basic premise and the imperative of transition as a learning process and was also compelled by the axiom that the quest for justice cannot be foreclosed in any meaningful democracy such as the Nigerian experience. He outlined the three principles in the new wave of state creation as social justice, development and balanced federation.

Thus, Nigeria's new states were named Abia, Anambra, Kebbi, Kogi, Delta, Osun, Taraba, Jigawa and Yobe. Also, new local governments were created in which Adamawa State got Madagali, Jada, Shelleng and Demsa. While some people rejoiced at the new development, others were not so lucky. The dream of a Saradauna State again could not be realised. In a petition, representatives of Mubi, Maiha, Michika and Ganye Local Governments argued that the creation of a new Saradauna State out of Gongola would make the area economically viable as coffee, tea, livestock and other agricultural potentials were fully tapped. For administrative convenience, they said the territory made up of divisions of former Saradauna Province — Mubi, Michika, Ganye, Gashaka, Maiha, Saradauna and Gwoza Local Government areas — has been administered for most part of the century as a single entity, even though it was under a form of trusteeship. So with the creation of a new state, a lot of administrative anomalies would be rectified.

Perhaps drawing the curtain on the issue of new states and local governments in the country, the government believed that the creation would also neutralise, if not completely eliminate further agitation for states in the future. In a speech the president said: "Fortunately each of the old colonial provinc-

and divisions contain communities that are more or less socially and culturally compatible, and thus justifying the critical factor of common socio-cultural ties and institutions."

Following the carving out of Taraba State, what remained of Gongola State was renamed Adamawa with headquarters at Yola.<sup>18</sup> However, the new name was termed to be synonymous with Fulani hegemony by some people in the non-Fulani communities in the state. But the name Adamawa was derived from Modibbo Adama, while the territory was officially named by the British colonial administration as Adamawa Province. Out of the belief that the Federal Government was trying to realign the boundaries of some states after the 1991 state creation, the people of Ganye and Jada Local Government areas appealed to the government not to merge them with Taraba State as was being speculated. In the end, the fears and other speculations were allayed as no merger or realignment from either state was carried out.<sup>19</sup>

The Babangida administration in its efforts to implement a successful transition programme counted on the role of traditional rulers. At the peak of political activities, the Lamido was seen as a moderating influence on the politicians, on supporters and on the electorate. That moderating attitude tampered with the attitude of political leaders with whom he also spoke. According to Ambassador Ibrahim Jimeta<sup>20</sup>:

What the people will hear from the Lamido about the transition, about the election usually governed the attitude of this people against the inciting urges of the political leaders (party leaders). We had no doubts in our mind about the ability of the traditional institution to resolve some of the political conflicts. They moderated in all maturity and the government listened to them.

The Babangida administration wanted government to start from the local level which was usually guided by the Emirate Council. At the district level, ward and local council elections were carried out without a hitch. Although members of the House of Assembly were elected without difficulty, the party primaries for the governorship had to be cancelled in October 1991 due to disagreement between the aspirants in the SDP. The

traditional rulers helped in conflict resolution by discussing with the aspirants who came from their domain.

However, Ambassador Jimeta observed that the fire-fighting nature of the traditional rulers in this kind of situation oversimplified. Like all institutions of government that are involved in:

quenching the fire, traditional rulers cannot be expected to start discussion at the early stage of conflicts. That is why we get the impression that it is only when things are spoilt that the traditional rulers are called. A lot of freedom persists at the consulting stage and it is only when you reach fisticuffs that pacifiers are brought in, pacifiers like the Lamido will emerge here.

In effect, the rift in the SDP over the primaries nearly caused confusion in Adamawa State. This situation was reflected at the national level where the same party had problems among the governorship aspirants. Eventually, the Federal Government banned some contenders nationwide. Abubakar Atiku and Bala Takaya were affected in Adamawa State which gave way to another party election to select a candidate in the governorship polls in December 1991.

Ambassador Ibrahim Jimeta recalls that:

In times of crisis, the Lamido would talk peace. He preferred peace to turmoil. He would express the hope that we would reconcile whatever our political or other differences. And he would do so convincingly and I will be convinced that his statement is genuine. That is the merit of the man because he would come out and tell you yes or no in the way that it will be clear to you that it is yes or no as far as he was concerned. I have never experienced his anger, I have experienced his delight and laughter. Very often you know that this is a genuine laughter, a genuine hillary. But I have observed him during difficult moments especially in his speeches. He used his speeches well. They are very, very profound, profound in leadership, profound in expression of the appreciation of the society, the government and so on. His listeners are usually very, very touched.

The creation of districts came as a political development that was pervading the whole country. Adamawa was in fact behind

other states in the creation exercise. It was felt by government that the size of districts were too large and was to promote a sense of belonging in the emirate. Moreover, the district creation was an emirate exercise and was done in consultation with the Emirate Council and the Lamido.

Ambassador Jimeta recalls that "the Lamido is a great historian and he will give you deep, deep information that before we would not have made, had we not met him. On the whole, the contribution of the Lamido helped the government in a successful district creation exercise."

The procedure of creation came from the emirate to the Local Government Affairs Department in the Office of the Deputy Governor. It was a mandate for the new civilian deputy governor.

In October 1991 the state military government announced the creation of forty-two new districts with twenty-five in Adamawa Emirate Council. Additional twenty-two districts were created in November 1992 by the Saleh Michika administration and eventually the district heads for the areas were appointed by that government. This new development called for more caution and discretion by the authorities in balancing political, ethnic and religious factors. The secretary to the state government at that time, Zakka Nagga recounts:

We tried as much as possible to involve the traditional rulers to use their position to sort out some of the tussles out of court. To be specific, those difficult areas were Numan and Michika, but some of the cases were settled out of court. I was impressed with the posture of the Lamido in bringing the people together. I want to be very frank, the so-called minority groups in the state tend to have a wrong impression about the role of the Lamido here, but because of my closeness to him I came to realise that some people were misleading people from far outside. The Lamido is interested in security and peaceful co-existence among the people without bias. May be some officials may behave otherwise but I can testify as an independent person. This is what I find about him.<sup>21</sup>

The *Chiroma*, Barkindo Aliyu Musdafa, is in charge of district administration in the emirate. All the elections of village heads are conducted by him. According to him, there was never

a time the conduct of an election was challenged or the elections cancelled by the Emirate Council so far.

"This is a very special assignment because if I do not perform my duties as expected of me petitions would be pouring into the council. So far I have conducted not less than one hundred elections but no single petition has been filed to challenge the Emirate Council."

Nagga adds that the Lamido was particular in his advice that the appointment of district heads was a sensitive matter and government must appoint people from the local areas. The Lamido emphasised that historical facts must be taken into consideration so that people were not taken from one place to another so as to avoid mistakes of the past for the interest of peace. "Infact, I didn't hide my feelings, during one of my visits to the palace where I said to the Lamido that I was impressed with the method which helped us (the government)."

On June 12, 1993, the country went to the polls for the presidential elections, the last step in the journey to the third republic. The two political parties, NRC and SDP, had put in place in government, local council chairmen, legislators at the National and State Houses of Assembly. And now the parties were to decide who would become the next president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

But the decision of who would not become the president of Nigeria was made between the eve of the elections and June 24 by a tangle of factors. Most prominent were court actions to stop the elections, NEC's resolve to continue the polls, the parties' efforts to make or mar the presidency and the military's final say which cancelled the election results on June 24. The events of the period are described as a watershed in the political history of Nigeria by the successive Interim National Government Chief Shonekan and the military government of General Sani Abacha.

General Ibrahim Babangida who announced the annulment of the June 12 elections contested by Bashir Tofa and M.K.O. Abiola of NRC and SDP respectively was accused by politicians and the press of trying to prolong his handover of power to civilian rule. After intense pressure from several quarters, the president offered to "step aside" if that would bring peace to the broiling body politic over the annulment. In his farewell

speech on August 26, 1993, General Ibrahim Babangida expressed gratitude to all Nigerians for their contributions to his eight-year stewardship:

My gratitude is without bounds to our most respected royal fathers who have served as sources of inspiration to me and my administration, and as volunteer "fire-fighters" in many communal and national crises. I hope they will continue to place their wise counsel at the disposal of successive administrations, for on this, communal peace, order and tranquility in this nation is assured.

Chief Ernest Shonekan, chairman of the Transitional Council headed the new Interim National Government made up of thirty civilians and two military officers. On November 17, the Secretary of Defence and Chief of Defence Staff, Gen. Sani Abacha assumed power. The general, for the third time, announced a military take-over since the fall of the second republic. All democratic structures were dissolved together with the National Republican Convention and Social Democratic Party, national and state assemblies and executive governors. The local government councils were dissolved the previous month to prepare for fresh elections.

Traditional rulers, amongst other groups in the country, severally paid solidarity visits to Dodan Barracks in Lagos to express loyalty and support to the new military government. Lamido Aliyu Musdafa led the delegation of Adamawa Council of Chiefs on December 15, 1993 to meet the new head of state, in company of Emir of Mubi, late Abubakar Isa Ahmadu;<sup>22</sup> Hama Bachama, late Rev. Wilberforce Mwyawehgi; Gangwari Ganye, Adamu Sanda and Wakili Adamawa, Hassan Adamu, who was Secretary of Mines and Power in the ousted Interim National Government.

The Lamido saw the change of government as having saved the country from total collapse and disintegration and called on all Nigerians to support the military government's objectives in solving the political and economic problems as a result of annulment of presidential election by President Babangida on June 24. General Abacha, on the other hand, reiterated his pledge to consult elder statesmen and traditional rulers for

advice on national issues.

In his palace earlier on December 13, the Lamido declared total support for, and loyalty to the government when the new military administrator of Adamawa State, Group Capt. Gregory Agboneni, arrived Yola. In his address, the Lamido identified some strong political points which had led to the failure of the civilian and other regimes in the state:

Let me salute the courage of General Sani Abacha and all those who supported him both in the military and the larger society for their timely intervention not only to save the nation from total collapse, but complete disintegration following the protracted political impasse which was created by the June 12, 1993 election annulment. We are, therefore, assuring your administration of our total support and co-operation in your struggle towards national rehabilitation, reconciliation, socio-economic and political reconstruction. We are confident that with maturity, determination and commitment to the aspirations of the state an impartial and balanced government in which unity, peace and progress will exist and can be enhanced and preserved in this state. We say this because of past experience relating to the leadership and followership of the state, and the observed tendencies, whereby some of the previous administrations, by some acts of commission or omission fell into the trap of some individuals and interest groups for their selfish interests and for the purpose of serving the interests of only a section of the community at the expense of the overall development of the state. As fathers of the people, we the traditional rulers as well as religious leaders, will continue to live and operate above partisanship and give you fatherly advice when needed and if called upon to do so.

The Abacha regime, in search of acceptance and credibility to the wider Nigerian public, consulted various political and interest groups. A relationship, too, developed between the military government and the traditional institutions. Especially in its early days, the government constantly had to meet one traditional ruler or another for consultation and counselling on pressing national issues.

## Notes

1. Interview, April 1995, Yola.
2. John Paden, *Ahmadu Bello*, (1986) p.686.
3. *Ibid.* p.689.
4. *Ibid.* p.688.
5. *Albshir*, December 6, 1975, p.3 "Reflections On Col. Buhari's Tour of the State".
6. Interview, Hamidu Alkali, June 1993, Yola.
7. Interview, January 1994, Yola. Gidado Abubakar was Chairman of Yola Local Government, August 1989-January 1991.
8. Excerpts of Lamido's address to the head of state, General Olusegun Obasanjo.
9. Obasanjo, Olusegun, *Not My Will*, p.109.
10. Interview, Wilberforce Juta, December 1995, Yola. Wilberforce Bafte Juta was born on 3rd May, 1944 at Pakka, in Adamawa State. He attended Pakka Primary School, 1955; Bangshika Primary School 1956-1957; Pella Primary School 1958-60; Numan Teachers' College, 1961-65; Waldorf College Forest, Iowa, USA, 1966-68; Concordia College, Moorhead, Minnesota, USA, 1968-69; University of Iowa, USA (1970-71), where he bagged a Master of Arts degree. Wilberforce Juta had a long career in teaching, starting as headmaster, Pakka Primary School in 1966. He worked as a teacher at Proviso High School, Chicago, USA (1971), principal, Hong Secondary School, (1972-77); principal, Jalingo Secondary School (1977-78). He joined politics in the second republic and was elected deputy governor of Gongola State (1979-83). He became governor May-September 1983. He was director Northern Nigeria Development Corporation (NNDC) (1979-82), director IFL Warri (1988-93); director, North-South Bank Plc (1989-95) and chairman and member of several governmental and non-governmental commissions, committees, seminars, etc.
11. Interview, Barkindo Musdafa, Chiroma Adamawa, December 1995, Yola.
12. David Williams, *President And Power, The Life of Shehu Shagari*, (1982) p.192.

13. Joseph Garba, *Fractured History*.
14. Interview, Umaru Abba Tukur, December 1995, Yola. Allhaji Umaru Abba Tukur, also known as Umaru Abba Karim, was born in 1936. He attended Barewa College (1949-53) and Institute of Administration in 1954. He started work in 1954 at the Native Treasury, Mubi Emirate, Jalingo as an accountant. In 1956, Umar Abba Tukur became the chief scribe/secretary to the Council. A year later he attended a two-year public administration course in the UK. In 1959 he was made councillor for Education, Finance and Local Government. The same year he was re-elected into the House of Representatives for Muri North. In 1960 he was appointed parliamentary secretary, Ministry of Mines and Power. He went into regional politics and was elected into the Northern House of Assembly where he became minister of state in October 1961. Umaru Tukur was in-charge Technical Education with cabinet rank. When his father died in 1965, Umaru Tukur succeeded the throne of Muri on November, 6, 1965 as emir. He became a member of the House of Chiefs, chairman, Public Accounts Committee in the North Eastern State and later Gongola State. The Emir of Muri was promoted first class emir on 15 March, 1983 by Governor Abubakar Barde and was deposed by Col Yohanna Madaki in August 1986.
15. Interview, Dr. Jonathan Zwingina, December 1993, Yola.
16. Chidi Amuta, *Prince of the Niger — The Babangida Years*, Lagos, Tanus Communications (1992) p.5.
17. *Newswatch*, March 27, 1989 p.20.
18. In an open letter to the president in September 1991 some people called for the reversal of Adamawa State to Gongola associating the name with "a single ethnic group and individual" and "reintroduction of politics of domination". In a rejoinder, Ahmadu Ribadu, *Dan Galadina Adamawa* and representatives from all the local government areas of the state stated: "There is no time for pointless communal quarrels and rivalries. Posterity will not forgive any group which for self-serving reasons starts playing on primordial sentiments. The so-called domination theory is

*As chancellor, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, the Lamido is here with the former Governor of Kaduna State, Colonel Tanko Ayuba at the institution's convocation in 1991*



*The Lamido with Alhaji Shehu Malami, Sarkin Sudan at Sokoto on his visit in 1976*



*Alimat Barkindo Alya, Abesha, Chroense Adunizere*

part of deliberate disinformation, historical distortions and brainwashing by a cabal of tribal extremists in order to create hatred against certain ethnic groups in the state."

19. After the creation of Taraba out of former Gongola State on August 27, 1991, the Gangwari of Ganye, Adamu Sanda was escorted by the chairman of Ganye Local Government area, Ahmed Akawu, district heads, village heads, religious leaders and representatives of the business community, farmers and youth organisations to Government House, Yola. In a statement, the chief said they were compelled to express their collective position on the boundary adjustment issue and called on the president "not to be misguided into carving out Ganye and Jada Local Government Areas out of Adamawa and merging them with Taraba State." In his reaction, the vice-president, Admiral Augustus Aikhomu in October 1992 called on the people concerned not to allow the wild allegations gain ground as they could generate misunderstanding between the two affected states. The Secretary of Ganye Traditional Council, David Jelani, revealed that the issue of merger may have started when the people of the two areas visited and condoled Governor of Taraba State, Rev. Jolly Nyame over the crisis in Jalingo in March 1992 which claimed many lives.
20. Interview, Ambassador Ibrahim Sulaiman Jimeta, December 1995, Yola.
21. Interview, Zakka Nagga, January 1996, Yola.
22. The Emir of Mubi is the only other first class chief in Adamawa State. The late Isa Ahmadu was upgraded to first class status in 1982. He was the district head up to July 1963 when he was installed second class chief of the new chiefdom. The Lamido of Adamawa, the premier, Ahmadu Bello; governor of the region, Kashim Ibrahim; provincial commissioner and traditional leaders attended the ceremony. He died in July 1991 and was succeeded by his son, Abubakar, in the same year.

## Chapter Seven

### The Custodian

Just like in any other political institution, the Lamido's position in society is to serve and protect the people. Furthermore, as the head of a traditional institution he has remained relevant in the good governance of the nation. In the present political system, the Lamido of Adamawa is the only link between the government and his people. Even mentally the villager deep down in his mind knows that there is a government house and a governor and other important people in Abuja and so on. But really, his loyalty and allegiance lies not directly in those government officials but in the *jauro*, *hakimi*, *ardo* and the *Lamido*.

The traditional institution, to the masses, is the only permanent and accessible institution which they can relate to. To argue on behalf of the common man, he wakes up on a fine morning and suddenly discovers that the governor of yesterday is not good and has overstayed and is therefore replaced. He may later learn that the rulers of yesterday have been killed or thrown into jail for a misdemeanour or two. After, he hears the names of a new team of administrators and policy-makers for the country and tomorrow these same men are out of the system.

So, the common man finds it difficult to learn the workings of the body politic. What he actually knows and accepts easily as ever present is the traditional ruler who is there when he is ill or travels or when he dies. Even at death, the ordinary man is assured of a less cumbersome and orderly way of getting somebody into the empty place. Under any circumstance, the people therefore have a custodian at all times in the Lamido of Adamawa.

In the over forty years of his role as the custodian of the

people, the Lamido has participated in a government system where the colonialists recognised the relevance of the power and influence of the traditional institution and maintained it. During the first republic, the emirs and chiefs exercised executive powers in the courts, police, treasury and prisons. Though these powers were such that they could be taken away anytime by the Northern Nigeria government, nothing like that happened.

At that time most influential members of the regional government were also products of the traditional institutions. For instance, the premier himself was the Sardauna of Sokoto and had been a very important figure in the Sokoto N.A. He was waiting to become the Sultan of Sokoto. Makaman Bida, Mahmud Ribadu, Tafawa Balewa, the prime minister, Sir Kashim Ibrahim, the governor were all people of substance in the traditional institution. They had powers in government but they didn't act against the Native Authorities and they wouldn't have wished to, because the system built them and they looked forward to going back to the system.

Under the first military government led by Ironsi, some people wanted to antagonise and destroy the traditional system, but they realised that there was nothing to replace it with at that time. During the riots that ensued in 1966, the emirs and chiefs were called to a meeting in Kaduna by the government for help as the people had gone out of control. The traditional rulers were the only leaders who could bring back law and order. Within one week, law and order was restored and maintained and since then military regimes have learnt to rely on, if not to respect, the traditional institutions. To this end, emirs and chiefs have more influence under military rule.

When the 1979 Constitution ushered in the second republic, the traditional leaders found a place as advisers to the government at the three levels — local, state and federal. In addition, the Lamido assumed the defined role of royal father, adviser of government and custodian of culture and heritage. Subsequently, the Lamido participated in the various civilian and military governments as a father-figure and more often than not, a political factor. In November 1995 when the Abacha regime was feeling the heat in the wake of threats by the

international community and the Nigerian opposition, the Federal Government set up a body of fifty traditional rulers and leaders of thought to help it in reducing the tension. Among the delegates who had extensive deliberations over the matter was Aliyu Musdafa, Lamido Adamawa.

It has become incumbent on visiting top government functionaries or prominent figures in the private sector to Adamawa State, as matter of policy, to pay courtesy calls on the Lamido in his palace. Usually, ministers, chief executives of corporations or security chiefs reveal new plans or policies on these visits to the palace. As protocol would demand, these important personalities call on the Lamido before embarking on the next item on their itinerary. It has also become important for government or private organisations holding seminars or annual business meetings to send representatives to receive the blessings of the Lamido.

The role of custodian befalls the Lamido as an extra duty of a family man. As usual the *Pulaku* code of conduct of the Fulbe influences how the man performs the function of a leader, guardian or father. The Lamido's role as father began with the raising up of his eldest son, Barkindo. The *Pullo* father, according to tradition, does not interact with the eldest child, his *afo*, as much as his other siblings. Their relationship is nevertheless covered with *shyness* and *formality*.

Barkindo lived in the palace with his grandfather, Lamido Musdafa since birth in 1944. After two years, when Lamido Musdafa died in 1946, Barkindo moved out of the palace to live with one of Lamido Musdafa's former wives who got married to Modibbo Gijaro at Dodore in Yola town. He spent five years of his early life there before leaving for school at Mubi. His new home was at the palace of Lamdo Mubi, Ahmadu Waziri who was married to Barkindo's aunt. The growth of the first child away from the father was obviously an attempt not to pamper him.<sup>1</sup>

Being a prince was no reason to feel somewhat important. Even at an early age, Barkindo was not aware of his status as he was not allowed to feel different from other children. When his father became Lamido, his lifestyle did not change as to affect his attitude. He was not made to feel more special than the other

occupants of the palace. Any person that becomes Lamido takes over the responsibilities of dependants of the previous Lamido. So in effect the members of the royal family, relatives, advisers or servants are seen as 'brothers and sisters' of the ruling Lamido's children.

In the course of maturing, the prince received lessons on how he should be a man of his own. Barkindo remembers the kind of lessons he got in life from his father, the Lamido, which are still meaningful. He recounts that when he was in Mubi, before age ten, his father was asked to take him back to Yola as the boy was suffering in school.

He said "no, let him suffer, that will teach him how to live in the world." When I was in ABU, Zaria I once came for holidays when the sallah (Id el Kabir) was being celebrated. I went to my father and asked for a ram to slaughter. He said "no I will not give you a ram, go and get your own ram. If I start giving you a ram now after I am dead who will give you a ram?"

That was what he told me and I went away. I was annoyed, but later when I thought about the whole thing I said yes that was a real inspiration. Since that time I never asked any thing from him or another person. That is the discipline the Lamido taught me not to ask for favours, but be a man.

A relationship was built between Barkindo and his grandmother, Da. According to Fulbe culture, the paternal grandmother is a strong catalyst in the development of the child. The grandmother is liberal towards the child and the affection builds a close relationship that lasts a lifetime. Barkindo says,

Even though I was not very much attached to my father, I got solace in being attached to my grandmother, so ever since I started knowing what the world is all about I became attached to her. Anytime I came on holidays we were always together. Whatever I wanted she would give me and if she would not I took it by force and she would run after me.

As an adult, Barkindo remembers that when he started work, he needed a house to stay during his annual leave in Yola.

What he got was the traditional house handed down from his great-grandfather to his father and now to him. When his father became the Lamido, the house was left for sometime before being occupied by Barkindo. "By 1975 the house was in a state of disrepair. Neither my father nor anybody contributed to the rehabilitation of that house, I did it myself. That one also taught me a lesson not to depend on anybody, but myself. So I always want to bring up my children the way I was brought up".

As a man in his early 50s, Barkindo recalls that his grandmother used to prepare special dishes and keep special gifts for him and now that he is grown-up, he is taking care of her. *Da* is living in the same royal house close to her beloved grandchild. Barkindo's children are being raised in the palace and their closeness to the Lamido Aliyu Musdafa is one that is usual between children and grandparents. Every morning they eat breakfast with him. He gives them horses to ride and other favours that will attract children to their grandparents.

After the collapse of the second republic, Barkindo Aliyu Musdafa left office in 1983 as Commissioner of Works. The military governor of Gongola State, Major-General Muhammadu Jega approached the Lamido and asked him why he did not appoint his son, a holder of the Chiroma title, into the Emirate Council. Barkindo was described by the governor as young, experienced, energetic, influential and educated who could represent the Lamido in many capacities. At present the Chiroma takes on special assignments to deliver messages to ministers, heads of state, emirs and chiefs and other top personalities. It was not the tradition to appoint the son of the Lamido into the Emirate Council. So the Lamido said he would think about it. And he later informed his council about the matter and a request was written to the government that the Chiroma be appointed into the council. However it was not until Group Captain David Jang came that Barkindo's appointment into the Emirate Council was approved in 1987.

The Chiroma asserts that his honorary conferment of the title in 1980 while he was commissioner and his appointment into the council are not related. The appointment was formally made without any ceremony with just an appointment letter and a radio announcement.

I decided to come home not only to become a councillor, but to come back home and serve my people. And luckily for me I was appointed into the Emirate Council. I kept saying that it was time I came back home to serve my people, to know my people and my people to know me. I am proud of it, and I am proud of my ancestry, my culture, my tradition. I am proud of all these things because they are natural to me.

As a councillor of the Lamido, his father, the Chiroma participates in the council meetings every Monday and Thursday of the week and a special meeting every month. The Chiroma narrates that because the Lamido is the chairman of the Emirate Council one would think he is the sole controller. However, he does not assume that posture but would always listen to advice from the other council members, and take decisions based on those advice in a democratic fashion. The Lamido always respects the majority opinion on issues.

I am his son and he would always look at me as at the time I was born. It would be presupposed that he will try to, may be, influence me by the fact that he is my father. That's not the case. I always hold my opinion and I tell him. He respects my opinion as his councillor and does not move away from majority opinion.

Having been closer to the Lamido more than ever as a councillor since 1987, the Chiroma reveals that he has confirmed other people's views about the simplicity of the Lamido. One incident, according to him, further confirms this attitude:

There was a time the Shettiman Hadeijia, Alhaji Hassan Hadeijia came to the Lamido's palace. He announced at the gate that he was around and within five minutes he was ushered into the presence of the Lamido. The Shettima was so impressed. When we met again in Kaduna, he asked me my father and said "I have never seen anybody like him". He said he had been to all the emirs' palaces in the north, but in some places he had to wait for hours or even a couple of days to see the emir. He was impressed with how brief he had to wait to see the Lamido who was so simple, unassuming and receptive.

The Chiroma observed that the Lamido does not look for favours from his subjects but instead bestows favours on them. These two acts of simplicity and benevolence, he notes "really endear him to the hearts of the people." That is why on occasions like Njuwa, Fridays, sallah days, etc, people troop into the palace to pay their allegiance. As a Muslim, he is enjoined to give up a portion of his harvest. That he does every year. And as the leader of his subjects, there is always a small kindness which he does to his people. There are hundreds of people in Yola that he sends, every Friday, 10,30 or 40 measures of guinea corn or maize. And during Id el Fitr sallah he gives them clothings, while on Id el Kabir sallah, he distributes rams to the needy.

Outside the home front, the Lamido is always in touch with the leadership of the country. He is highly respected by the leaders so that he is always consulted on virtually all issues affecting the country.

Two emirs, Umaru Abba Tukur (now deposed) and Abubakar Isa Ahmadu had long-standing rapport with the Lamido even before their enthronement. As destiny would have it, Umaru Abba Tukur, a prince had never met the Lamido privately or formally until he became a minister of state in charge of Technical Education in 1962. The minister went on working tour to Sardauna Province where he was to visit Ganye, Mubi and Bama towns. But before then he left Jalingo, his hometown, to stop over in Yola and pay respect to the Lamido of Adamawa.

I can never forget the experience. I came for a private call to see him. But he honoured me with a durbar at the eastern gate. He gave me a seat next to him which I politely refused in deference. After the durbar I went back home and he sent me two heavily decorated beautiful stallions.<sup>2</sup>

Three years later, the minister himself was enthroned Emir of Muri. During the selection, a lot of consultations were made with prominent people outside the emirate, especially from neighbouring emirates. The Lamido of Adamawa was co-opted into the process. As a senior emir in the council of chiefs, he was required to air his views on the candidate to the throne of Muri.

Abubakar Isa Ahmadu, Emir of Mubi, used to escort his late father as a small boy to greet the Lamido whenever he was on tour to Uba. Though Mubi was not under Adamawa Province, it was on the way to Uba so the Emir of Mubi felt it incumbent to pay his respects to the Lamido, a senior ruler and also the head of the Council of Chiefs.

Many years later, Abubakar Isa Ahmadu became the emir in succession to his father. On appointment in November 1991, the new emir consulted the Lamido who reminded him that whenever a throne became vacant, definitely people will seek to become emir. Therefore whatever misunderstanding or rivalry which ensued should be forgotten but instead, mend fences. This advice, the emir reveals, remains one of the secrets behind his ability to hold together his emirate.

The emir sees the Lamido as a father. During council meetings, he exhibits his fatherly status, he allows the council to have majority opinion and gives respect to individual opinion. The emir sees the two emirates as cousins:

We have a common history and culture, we are still one. When we have ceremonies we invite the Lamido. For example, he attended my installation ceremony and for the first time the Lamido stayed the night in Mubi. When he sends for me I have to come but when we invite him, since he is a father, he sends the Waziri. I am a son to him, whatever I want from him I go to him. At the same time, when an invitation is sent from outside the state, the Lamido delegates one of us (the chiefs). Recently, I was delegated along with the Murum Mbula to Jos to attend the second anniversary of the military administrator of Plateau State, Col. Mohammed Mana who is an indigene of Belel in Mubi emirate.<sup>3</sup>

According to a former deputy governor of Adamawa State and a long time federal permanent secretary, Ibrahim Jimeta, the Lamido developed this rapport within the leadership of this country over the years.

He is highly respected (because of his experience and his insight) by the government, that I know. Shagari, Buhari and Babangida regimes, up to the time I left government service, I know they had high regards for him and the institution of the Lamido.

The leadership of the day's government in the state also have the same kind of rapport, if not stronger rapport as shown in the reminiscences of Ambassador Jimeta. He recalls that his first official contact with the Lamido was in 1976 when he was made ambassador and he had to come to Yola to pay homage to His Royal Highness.

Eight years later, Ambassador Jimeta was approached to be the next Secretary to the Gongola State Government. The government was searching for new blood after the military coup which sacked the civilian government on December 31, 1983. After several retirements in the civil service, manpower in the state was depleted. Ambassador Jimeta was in the Supreme Headquarters as a permanent secretary and he was approached to serve as secretary to the state government. He was interested in the offer as he had hoped to leave government at the demise of the Shagari administration.

The offer was a better option than to come back to Yola only as a retiree. He decided to inform important people of his desire to serve. The first person he consulted in that regard was the Lamido. Ambassador Jimeta told him his view on the appointment and also asked him about his opinion and for his blessing.

And he gave his blessing and said that it was good. In any case, eventually I didn't take the appointment but I remember his intervention because he was the first I hinted. I was working with General Tunde Idiagbon and I was aware that I needed to inform him, but I came to the Lamido first before I went to Idiagbon. This explains the power of the house of the Lamido over us. Even though I was intimated on the position I felt I needed to come to him and get clearance before accepting it, which I did. Eventually I told General Idiagbon. In short it didn't happen and Dahiru Bobbo became the secretary to the state government. It was not my turn yet until 1990. And of course between 1984 and 1990 we were regularly in touch. When I came to Yola I made sure I got in touch with the Lamido and we discussed current matters of importance. He was alert and understood my points of view. So it was generally a relationship of respect that we had for the Lamido.<sup>4</sup>

The Lamido, according to Jimeta, often called the leaders in

government and spoke on the significance of unity and well thought-out policies. A forum which addressed these matters were at several times attended by Ambassador Jimeta, Ahmed Joda, Hamidu Alkali, *Dan Lawan*, Muhammadu Gambo, Ali Baba and a few members of the traditional institution. Between 1980-1989, these leaders of great calibre met and exchanged views and continued to interact with the Lamido, including Ambassador Jimeta who in 1990 at last became the secretary to the state government under Group Captain Abubakar Salihu.

The same scenario that took place in 1984 occurred again especially to the appointee. There was a depletion of experienced people in government and yet the military government wanted someone to help in the transition programme of the Babangida administration; someone from both sides, i.e., an indigene of Adamawa State and a federal public officer. Ambassador Jimeta consulted the Lamido as he did in 1984 over the same situation.

I think in 1984, he had to be consulted before somebody else was considered. We got the impression that only he can intervene to prevent.... drop my name... I felt he was keeping his words unless I changed my mind and I told him in order for other interests to come in people felt that they had to go back and tell him. They did before somebody else was appointed. And when I was appointed deputy governor, there again, I consulted the Lamido and expressed the desire to be coming to him and he blessed my wish.

Ambassador Jimeta recalls that there were many contestants for the new office of deputy governor. And he was quite aware of the political balancing that was required as the military governor was a Muslim so apparently the next man in government should be a Christian. He reveals that he narrated his encounter and thoughts to the Lamido who gave him useful advice on the matter. "Even during my tenure and after, I valued those periods of consultations with the Lamido because of the insight the man had and I was able to understand some of the explanations he made, although guarded, but I was convinced in myself that I understood the man."

Being the custodian of the people's culture and traditional

values, Lamido Aliyu Musdafa believes that peace and stability are cardinal to the preservation and promotion of culture, stressing that, "we must therefore uphold the tenets of our culture and heritage and shun all practices of evil and turn from foreign culture whose origin we really don't know. As a way of curbing the influences of western culture, we should always display to the world, the beauty and glamour of our own culture. So we must unite, all of us to achieve our goals."

At the third cultural fiesta organised by the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation in Maiduguri in November 1977, the Lamido who was chairman of the occasion strongly advocated the use of local music in programmes instead of the western type. He suggested that if the local music like *molo*, *garaya*, *ganga* and *algaita* are used for local and network programmes, local cultures would be given its rightful place in the mass media.

The Lamido is a promoter of the Fulbe culture and Fulfulde language. He believes that the Fulfulde language is a perpetual bond between the Fulbe people spread all over the West African sub-region. At the second International Fulfulde Conference organised by the Centre for the Study of Nigerian Languages, Bayero University, Kano in August 1982, he opined that it was imperative to put more efforts in the promotion and study of the Fulfulde language which is widely spoken in as far as Central African Republic, Cameroun, Chad, Niger, Guinea, Mali and Senegal. The development of the language, he suggested, cannot be over-emphasised as users of the language are found in leading positions in government, traditional institutions, commerce, education, politics, etc.

The Lamido, in his address at the conference, drew attention to the fact that the Fulbe, one of the largest linguistic groups in the sub-continent, are losing their dominance to other languages, especially Hausa. He observed that it was a pity to find that a person whose parents are Fulbe can not understand or speak Fulfulde fluently and called on every Fullo person including researchers, the educated elite and the academics to save the language. He then recommended that books and other literary works on the history, folklore, customs and literature of the Fulbe people be written and distributed, while Fulfulde as a language of instruction in schools should be revived. "We must all do

something about it, if we do not nobody will do it for us. We must therefore develop and improve Fulfulde by teaching it, writing it and speaking it."

Five literature books in Fulfulde were launched on February 21, 1996 by the Yola Development Appeal Fund Trust Board. The chief launcher of the occasion, Prof. Jibril Aminu, expressed regrets that Fulfulde language had been relegated in preference for other languages in official communication and wished for a reversal of the trend. He launched the books with ₦100,000. Other donations amounted to ₦1.2 million while the military administrator, Commissioner of Police Mustapha Ismail announced the state government's contribution of ₦500,000.

Ahmadu Ribadu, Dan Galadima Adamawa, in a review of the books also lamented that the language was losing its qualities due to the influence of other languages and the absence of a means to improve its standard. He raised an alarm on the fact that the language could die and more efforts should be made to produce Fulfulde literature. In a general tone, the Lamido alerted the public about the diminishing state of education that was affecting the sub-sector and called for urgent steps to correct the situation.

One of the major problems of the Fulbe as a people, especially the Fulbe Na'i, is the lack of formal education. The Federal Government in 1987 introduced the Nomadic Education scheme to educate the nomadic Fulbe herdsmen and their children. The programme achieved tremendous success in Adamawa State and several parts of the country, despite doubts in some quarters. The Lamido, nevertheless, believes that if the constant clashes between the cattle Fulbe and farmers in the country at large can be curtailed, it will go a long way in achieving more success for the nomadic scheme.

As a cultural group, the Fulbe have lost a lot of their norms and tradition to other societies. As a result, millions of the Fulbe people today see themselves as Hausa-Fulani due to the blending of their culture and urbanisation. The Fulbe of Adamawa, in contradistinction to their brethren in Sokoto, Katsina, Kano, Bauchi, Misau, Katagum and Jama'are for example, have over the decades maintained their identity and values known as *Pulaku*.

The Laka people are one of the dominant ethnic groups in the emirate. The Lamido is known to be assisting in the cultural revival of the people. At the launching of a ₦2.5 million development appeal fund for a centre and secretariat for the Laka Cultural Association, the Lamido was commended for his support for the Laka people "who have distinguished themselves in his service." The launching was noted to be a forum for the resuscitation of the Laka Cultural Association which aims at reuniting the ethnic groups spread across Adamawa State.

The chief launcher of the development fund, Mahmud Waziri, saw the occasion as a challenge for "rediscovery of our lost sense of community. As a people we inherited cultures and virtues to make us proud, inspite of this we have jettisoned this culture, neglected our roots and foundation." The chairman of the ceremony and Commissioner of Health, Jonathan Zwingina, described the Laka people as friendly, straight-forward, honest, adaptive to circumstances, enduring and humble which "makes it proper and befitting for all of us" to identify with the cultural expressions of the Laka people.

Ethnic groups from other parts of the country have equally enjoyed the goodwill of the Lamido over a long period of time. There are groups such as Igbo, Yoruba, Igala, Idoma, Tiv, Igbirra, Efik, etc, that have integrated into the society. In view of this, the Lamido has supported and nurtured the respective cultural or tribal associations as grand patron.

One of the cultural associations, the Igbo Cultural Association has had cordial relations with the emirate in the past forty years. Back in 1945, with the support of Lamido Muhammadu Musdafa, the Igbo built a hall of their own in Jimeta to provide a common place for social development and the promotion of the Igbo culture and heritage. At one time, the hall served as a lodge for visitors who came to Yola for business but had no hotel accommodation. When the hall was taken over by the Abandoned Properties Committee after the Nigerian civil war, it was the *Dan Iya Adamawa* who handed back the building to the Igbo Community. The Igbo through their cultural association have continued to identify with the community through such activities as the annual Igbo day and contributions

to disaster relief funds, the annual Njuwa fishing festival and development appeal funds.

The inter-relationship between the Igbo and the Adamawa Emirate was described by the Lamido as one of deep mutual understanding and brotherliness on the occasion of the visit of Lt.-Comm. Amadi Ikwechegh, then governor of Imo State, to his palace in Yola in October 1987. The Lamido told the military governor that *nai coggal*, the historical cattle trade link between Umuahia in Eastern Nigeria and Adamawa brought together the Igbo and the Fulbe closer than ever before and established a rapport between the two ethnic groups. The Lamido then reassured the governor that everything possible was being done to foster better relationship.

A fine example of the relationship between the emirate and the Igbo traditional leadership was made in Aba when the son of the Lamido, Ahmadu Aliyu Musdafa was honoured with a chieftaincy title in 1995. Ahmadu Musdafa, deputy comptroller-general in the Customs and Excise Service was conferred with the chieftaincy title of *Odiireozuo*, the benefactor, for his numerous contributions to the community. The Chiroma Adamawa, Barkindo Musdafa who represented the Lamido at the occasion, noted that the chief never knew Ahmadu but heard about his support to the community and that he was from a royal family. So the Aba chief not only honoured Ahmadu Musdafa but the entire Adamawa Emirate.

The Njuwa fishing festival is one occasion that receives top priority attention of the Lamido. The annual fiesta, Njuwa has become a symbol of unity, a sort of bond between him and the community. On the other hand, the festival binds together the fishing people of Bata and the Fulbe who ensure that every year, Njuwa takes place successfully and with all the usual thrills of competition to the thousands of spectators that include people from all over the emirate and tourists to the state.

The Njuwa lake, venue of the festival, is the largest lake around and sources its water from various tributaries of the Benue River. It has a lot of fishing potentials that is left untouched for a whole year before the big catch that usually takes place just before the rainy season. Fishing is not allowed in the lake until libation is made by the *Njubare*, a Bata high priest

and custodian of the lake. The Njuwa festival is kicked off by the *Njubare* after certain rituals and appeasement of the deities of Bata. The opening ceremony is marked with hues and cries of elation by the eager fishermen who glide into the water like a thousand crocodiles.

The business of the day is the hunt for the biggest catch in a display of skills by the young and old, men and women who use calabash, net, bare hands and any other methods to win. Winners of the competition receive cash, bicycles, sewing machines, radio-cassettes and other prizes presented by the Lamido. He is, however, presented with the biggest catch, according to custom, which is paid for through the *Magaji*.

The biggest catch in April 1995 weighed 7 kg with a prize of ₦1,500 in addition to ₦10,000 awarded by the state government to the winner. The second catch weighed 6.5 kg with ₦1,000 cash award and ₦7,000 from government, while the third winner with a fish of 6 kg got ₦500 and ₦5,000 from the government. The winner of the first catch, a small boy, was rewarded ₦5,000 by the state government and ₦500 by the wife of the state military administrator, Mrs. Aishatu Mustapha Ismail. The administrator's wife also rewarded the woman with the best catch of 4.5 kg with three wrappers in addition to ₦10,000 cash prize. The second and third best catches (3 kg and 2.5 kg) respectively received ₦7,000 and ₦5,000 from the government.

The Njuwa fishing festival is not all about fish. It is one of the platforms the Lamido uses to talk to the people about elections and the people's civic duties, about the need to send their children to school, about the need to be steadfast in religion, about the need to be productive and law-abiding for the betterment of the whole society. On the other hand, the Lamido calls on the government to listen to the yearnings of the people for better living conditions.

Another usual area of concern to the Lamido is the shrinking of the lake and the need for dredging to allow free passage of water from the Benue and its tributaries. He also warns on the use of explosives and poison by poachers who endanger marine life and even pose a threat to human beings. It is always the wish of the Lamido to see the standard of the Njuwa raised to

tourist centre, but the poor finances of the government could not make that possible as indicated in the 1977 budget of Gongola State when the government promised to build fishing villages around the Njuwa lake. Moreover, the festival which used to last two days was cut to a day's affair to reduce expenses.

During the 1995 festival, the state administrator, Commissioner of Police Mustapha Ismail revealed government's intention to come to the rescue of the Njuwa lake and said the Adamawa State Government and the Yola Local Government would meet and consider ways of improving the annual festival.

The Njuwa festival serves as the people's forum, a meeting-point where the leaders of the society and the common-folk converge and get entertained. Cultural dances and representation by all the ethnic groups make the Njuwa one big jamboree as thousands of people come to share what they have and blend their cultures into one.

Muslims in Adamawa Emirate celebrate, with devotion and glee, their festivals at certain periods of the Islamic calendar. The Id el Fitr and Id el Kabir *sallah* festivals are the most pronounced. The former marks the end of Ramadan month, while the latter commemorates the sacrifice of Prophet Abraham and also signifies the conclusion of hajj pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia.

During the *sallah* festivals, the Lamido is the centre of attraction as he conducts the obligations in his capacity as the spiritual leader in the emirate. At both *id* prayers, he dominates the occasion held at the *Sallikere* (praying ground). The Lamido's attendance symbolises the official closing of the Ramadan as any other *id* that takes place after will not be approved. For Id el Kabir, the Imam slaughters a ram at the grounds after which Muslims follow suit in their various homes. This is in view of the conflict between the various sects as to the proper day for celebrating the *sallah* based on the sighting of the moon. The generality of the muslim *ummah*, including the Lamido, follow the pronouncement of the Sultan of Sokoto, while other sects dispute that and mark their *sallah* a day or two after.

What takes place after the *sallikere* is an exquisite manifestation of the rich culture and heritage of the Adamawa people. From the *sallikere*, the Lamido in a trail of horse riders

and footmen, goes back to the palace where he receives compliments of the season from courtiers, top government officials and the general public. During the congratulatory visits, gifts and salutations are exchanged with utmost courtesy. The Lamido does not fail to pay the customary *sallah* greeting to his mother at the Yelwa royal house. Leaving the rest of the entourage outside, he climbs down his horse and pays his respect to her. It has also become a routine for the Lamido to come here every Friday for the same purpose. In a short while, the people gather at the western gate of the palace for the Lamido's address. The occasion is graced by the governor who would at the end present the traditional *goron sallah* to the Lamido. Other dignitaries are top government functionaries, district heads, title-holders, judges, kadis, etc.

For about the second time in his reign, the people of the emirate marked the Id el Kabir without the presence of the Lamido who was in Saudi Arabia in his capacity as Amirul Hajj. On April 28, 1996, the ceremony was low-keyed except at the reception where the military administrator presented the *goron sallah* to the Waziri, Muhammadu Babba Lawan.

In his address, Lamido Aliyu Musdafa, always reminds Muslims in the emirate about the values of Islam and the need for peace which is its guiding principle. He tells the *ummah* to worship Allah with all devoutness and abide by the laws of the land. He also appeals to the people to exercise their civic responsibilities and participate fully in elections, enrol their children in schools, pay taxes regularly and pay attention to farming, etc. After the speech, the palace guards and the *Sarki Bindiga* boom their guns in salute to His Royal Highness.

All other activities of the *sallah* festivals are from then held at the eastern gate of the palace, which turns into a beehive of celebration. People in the emirate from far and near converge at the palace to watch the various delegations, made up of title-holders, princes, district heads and captains in the palace, who come to salute the Lamido as he sits astride his stallion some few metres facing the palace gate. Meanwhile, display of horsemanship forms part of the royal salute as the Lamido and the crowd of enthusiasts are thrilled by charging armed men on horse-back.

Every participant in the festival, young and old, male and female, is dressed in his or her best attire. The warriors and the blue-blooded are the most resplendent with their heavily decorated rich regalia complemented with swords, spears, shields, bows and arrows and dane guns. Delegations from the districts such as Yola, Gurin, Malabu, Song, Fufore, Yungur, Verre, Ga'anda, Kilba, etc, represent their various communities in paying homage to the Lamido. Cultural dancers and traditional musicians entertain spectators and visitors with side attractions by snake-charmers, body-twisters, fire-eaters, conjurers, wild animal tamers, monkey trainers, etc.

Throughout the *sallah* festivals, usually celebrated in four days, the community is tied together in a brotherly mood that lasts into the following year. The last evening is more or less symbolic as the people watch the Lamido ride his horse past them, greeting with the traditional closed fist, into the palace. The last glimpse of the Lamido as he disappears into his house marks the end of the merry *sallah* celebrations.

It is observed that Lamido Aliyu Musdafa plays a dominant role in the festivals for he is looked up to by the Muslim *ummah* in the emirate as both the spiritual leader and custodian of their culture. The sight of Shehu Usman's flag to Modibbo Adama, the symbol of authority is not lost on the on-looker as the *Sarkin Tuta*, custodian of the flag, leads the Lamido's entourage from the palace to the *id* praying grounds. The flag was made from the 19th century handwoven cloth and ostrich feathers. It is a constant reminder of Modibbo Adama's legacy.

Lamido Aliyu Musdafa believes in sports, an activity that exercises the body and soul in competition. Sporting events in the emirate have had an effect of blending together competitors and spectators alike for a common interest. The most important thing is not the winning or the losing but the interaction of the community during such events. In the 1950s and 1960s, regular football competitions in the emirate, especially between the rival towns of Jimeta and Yola relaxed moods and tensions of the moments in friendly matches. One town would always want to be smarter than the other in all endeavours, but sports provided the most peaceful and agreeable mode of competition.

In 1957, the Adamawa NA opened its football ground which was celebrated with a friendly match between Jimeta and Yola. The game was exciting and thrilling with the two sides playing well. It ended 3 goals to 1 in favour of the Jimeta team which was captained by late Mamman Indiya. Such games were watched by hundreds of spectators from the two communities in a friendly atmosphere which fostered unity and understanding. Often the Yola Youth Club and Jimeta Football Association would clash to thrill prominent people, especially NA staff who were being sent-off or welcomed on transfer.

Horse-racing is one sporting activity that the Lamido cherishes very much. Moreover, the horse is the closest and dearest animal to the Yola royalty. When the horse is not on the warpath, it goes to play. Races are organised during *sallah* celebrations with an event set aside to win the Lamido's Cup by the best horseman. The Lamido would never want to miss the horse races. Fascinated by the game of polo and horse *durbar* organised to honour the newly arrived military administrator of Adamawa State in December 1993, the guest, Group Capt. Gregory Agboneni, pledged to assist the Adamawa Emirate Council financially to improve the sports grounds.

On March 14, 1994, Group Captain Agboneni commissioned the grandstand of the polo/race course ground at Damare in Yola which cost the state government the sum of ₦500,000. The military administrator who was made a life member of the Polo Club at the occasion recalled that he noticed with concern the temporary nature of the grandstand which was not befitting in status. "In view of the historical background of the polo/race course and also taking into account the important personalities who usually grace the occasion, I decided to make a grant on behalf of the state government." Two years later, the Lamido himself was honoured with a *kilisa* (mini *durbar*) at the polo/race course by the Adamawa Emirate Council to mark his safe return on May 5, 1996 from hajj in Saudi Arabia.

Polo games are also enjoyed with a kind of obsession by the Lamido and the people of Adamawa generally who come out in their hundreds to watch the competitions. Even tournaments outside the emirate attract the participation of Yola team to polo centres such as Lagos, Jos and Kaduna. The Lamido's support as

grand patron of Yola Polo Club is unflinching as shown at the Yola polo tournament in September 1993. He keenly inspected the polo grounds at the Benue Valley Farms in preparation for the tournament. The Lamido's interest in the take-off of the games was a great inspiration and encouragement to the Yola team. The former chairman of the Nigerian Polo Association, late Gen. Hassan Katsina, polo enthusiasts and teams from all over the country participated in the week-long fiesta.

At school competitions, Lamido Aliyu Musdafa would not fail to show up whenever he was invited. His interest in, and support for, school children boost the development of sports in them. The Lamido never rejects invitations to sporting events despite tight schedules and would come to watch opening ceremonies and present prizes at the closing day. The attachment between the Lamido and the school communities in the emirate is a long-standing relationship. Almost all affairs of the schools drew the immediate interest of the Lamido. For many years students in Yola went to greet the Lamido every Friday. His love for General Murtala Mohammed College cannot be over-emphasised perhaps due to the fact that it is his alma mater. The president of the school's Old Boys' Association (Tiddo Yo Daddo), Abubakar Atiku, *Turaki Adamawa*, on June 16, 1995 presented a letter of commendation to the Lamido for his contributions to the college as grand patron and to the society at large.

The Government Girls' Secondary School, Yola has also been receiving the Lamido's attention from the time he helped in its establishment in 1957, while Yelwa Government Secondary School remains a pet project of the Yola community who set up the school in 1969 through self efforts. The school was earlier named Aliyu Musdafa Secondary School, before it was changed to Yelwa, a name related to the Lamido's ruling house. In a speech at the 20th anniversary of Yelwa G.S.S. in 1989, Lamido Aliyu Musdafa noted that the institution came into existence because of the need to place primary school pupils into secondary schools. At that time, there was only one secondary school in Adamawa Province which was grossly inadequate for the growing number of children passing out of primary schools. Today, the emirate is enjoying the products of these schools

who have become prominent in all walks of life.

Conversely, when the nation began facing the threat of brain drain from universities to other fields and overseas, the Lamido was one leader who expressed concern on the danger. In his address as the Chancellor of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria in 1989, Lamido Aliyu Musdafa drew the attention of the Federal Government to the brain drain phenomenon and urged for immediate government intervention to restore the dignity of the society and harness its potentials and talents.

As a royal father, the Lamido's personality hangs over the community like a father-figure. Every event that happens in the society, sadness or joy, is shared by the Lamido with a personal touch. One of the disturbing trends in the society currently is armed banditry, which has cost a lot in lives and property. In the vanguard of the campaign against this vice, the Lamido has consistently related to visiting top military and police officers the ordeal of his people in the hands of cattle-rustlers, armed robbers, bandits and other night marauders. At last, the Adamawa Emirate Council launched a vigilante group to fight the menace of armed robbery and to complement the efforts of security agencies.

The forming of the Chusal Vigilante Organisation was the result of the Lamido's campaign against crime which was launched in June 1993. With the Lamido's support and the Galadima's efforts, the vigilante group received cash donations from wealthy individuals and government for the purchase of items such as bows and arrows, boots, uniforms, torchlights, etc, for operation. Chusal opened offices in Yola and Jimeta and a lot of commendation has been made about the activities of the vigilante group in protecting the lives and property of the public. The General Officer Commanding, 3rd Armoured Division, Maj.-Gen. Lawrence Onoja on familiarisation visit to Yola in May 1995 told the Lamido in his palace that Chusal Vigilante had gone a long way in complementing the efforts of army/police joint patrols.

The Lamido would not hesitate to wade into any crisis that threatens the community's corporate existence. Alerted by a conflict between the members of National Union of Road Transport Workers and the Road Transport Employers' Association in January 1994, he found it imperative to intervene

in order to save the common folk from hardship as a result of the strike by commercial transporters. During the four-day strike between January 20 and 23, 1994, members of the two unions disagreed over the control of operations in the motor parks which paralysed business and public activities. Thousands of people were stranded and hundreds of thousands of naira were lost by government and individuals. When the government did not take an immediate action over the matter, the Lamido intervened in a meeting with the two parties who agreed to go back to work on his advice. In a press interview, the chairman of National Union of Road Transport Workers, Gidado Hamman, announced that the strike was suspended as a mark of honour for the Lamido and because of the concern he showed for peace and stability.

Apart from occasions which put the Lamido in public glare, in times of crisis he sends messages of peace through delegates to belligerent parties or communities to achieve peace through the path of honour and non-violence. He also sends his sympathy and condolences to communities that are bereaved over the death of a leader, or after one form of disaster or the other. The Lamido occasionally attends funerals, but usually conveys his feelings through able representatives. In May 1995, the Waziri, on behalf of the Lamido, paid a condolence visit to the state military administrator, Mustapha Ismail who lost a brother. Other examples are the Tiv-Jukun crisis, Jalingo religious disturbances in March 1992, perennial flood disasters, etc. Similarly, in times of joy such as installation or turbaning ceremonies, the Lamido attends or sends representation in the spirit of good neighbourliness. He was present at the installation ceremony of the Emir of Mubi, Abubakar Isa Alunadu, in November 1991. The ceremony was attended by many dignitaries, e.g., governors, emirs, chiefs, diplomats, top government officials, etc, from neighbouring states.

In times of need when the community looks up to the Lamido for the achievement of certain goals, he takes up the challenge. An example was when local governments in the emirate launched development appeal funds to improve or provide amenities for the people. A former sole administrator and one time chairman of Yola Local Government, Major Aliyu

who have become prominent in all walks of life.

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Apart from occasions which put the Lamido in public glare, in times of crisis he sends messages of peace through delegates to belligerent parties or communities to achieve peace through the path of honour and non-violence. He also sends his sympathy and condolences to communities that are bereaved over the death of a leader, or after one form of disaster or the other. The Lamido occasionally attends funerals, but usually conveys his feelings through able representatives. In May 1995, the Waziri, on behalf of the Lamido, paid a condolence visit to the state military administrator, Mustapha Ismail who lost a brother. Other examples are the Tiv-Jukun crisis, Jalingo religious disturbances in March 1992, perennial flood disasters, etc. Similarly, in times of joy such as installation or turbaning ceremonies, the Lamido attends or sends representation in the spirit of good neighbourliness. He was present at the installation ceremony of the Emir of Mubi, Abubakar Isa Ahmadu, in November 1991. The ceremony was attended by many dignitaries, e.g., governors, emirs, chiefs, diplomats, top government officials, etc, from neighbouring states.

In times of need when the community looks up to the Lamido for the achievement of certain goals, he takes up the challenge. An example was when local governments in the emirate launched development appeal funds to improve or provide amenities for the people. A former sole administrator and one time chairman of Yola Local Government, Major Aliyu

Tahir (rtd) observes that one of the landmarks of his tenure was the successful launching of the Yola Development Appeal Fund in 1988. He recalls that the Lamido's goodwill and support boosted contributions to the fund which eventually swelled to the sum of ₦2.5 million. According to the former chairman, the Lamido appended his name on the letters of the invitation to guests and launchers. It was an honour which attracted hundreds of people to the launching of the appeal fund.

After the fall of the Second Republic in December 1983, the whole nation found itself in economic doldrums. Local governments were completely broke and teachers were not paid for months. Government incomes were extremely low, and out of necessity the development appeal fund was introduced by various local governments. And this was one function the Lamido gave full support to see that the exercise in the emirate succeeded. The Song Local Government's version of the appeal fund in 1986 was equally successful. Song, being of immense historical significance to Adamawa Emirate, got enormous assistance from the Lamido and the state government. The occasion attracted people from far and near who donated generously to the fund.

Touring, *rangadi*, is one of the strategies taken by the Lamido to keep in touch with the communities in the emirate. By a regular tour of the districts, Lamido Aliyu Musdafa meets the people and takes note of their yearnings and aspirations. Being a pillar of the emirate, he seeks solutions to such plights as communal strifes, floods, distribution of fertilizer and other agricultural input, shortage of drugs, lack of roads and other basic needs.

During such tours which were extensively undertaken in 1985 and 1986, the Lamido visited markets, schools, health centres, motor-parks, hospitals, media stations, post offices, etc, in the various local government areas. A visit could take up to a week in one local government area. For instance in January 1985, the Lamido toured Girei, Malabu, Dirma, Song, Loko and Zumo; while in Gombi local government in April 1986, his itinerary included the booster station at Hong and the post office at Wajah.

In the early years, the Lamido went on tour every year. The itinerary could for instance take him from Yola to Yungur, Song, Gombi, Kilba, Uba, Michika and Madagali in the northern parts of the emirate. He would then continue his tour from Yola to other parts of the emirate. According to Tafida Idris, what happened in those days was more than this. Lamido Musdafa embarked on extensive working tours of the emirate. On one occasion, the Lamido spent three days in Madagali in order to settle a communal dispute between the Marghi and Cattle Fulbe. In 1993, he visited all the new districts for the installation of the district heads. This tradition in Yola perhaps is to allow the Lamido prove to the people that the new appointment has been approved by him. Moreover, the people in that district feel honoured that the Lamido himself has come to their town to turban their new ruler.<sup>5</sup>

Tafida, former district head in Michika, has escorted the Lamido on many of such tours. He recalls that he had accompanied the Lamido to Gembu which is over 500 kilometres away from Yola. A letter of notice is usually despatched to the number of districts in a particular area marked for the visit. For example, districts east of the capital such as Fufore, Gurin and Karlahi would be written formally to expect the Lamido and two or three of his councillors. The village heads in a particular district, along with the district head receive the Lamido in a colourful ceremony which lasts throughout the days of the tour. The Lamido will inspect areas of interest and talk with the people on specific problems affecting their communities. The visit provides the opportunity for the people to meet the Lamido and discuss issues instead of sending delegations to Yola with the attendant cumbersome bureaucratic procedures.

Such moments are terrifying to the district heads because the tours are like the people's court. Matters that would have been presented at the NA Council would ordinarily be dealt with by the Lamido. Even personal or communal conflicts are brought to the attention of the Lamido for adjudication, otherwise a difficult case is referred to the Alkali's court. Tafida Idris notes that he was usually not comfortable as he could be reported to the Lamido by his own subjects.

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The Waziri is never part of the delegation as he is the prime minister and acts on administrative matters on behalf of the Lamido. He can however not take any major decisions until the Lamido comes back.

The Lamido's visit provides a channel of communication for the people to express their problems, while the forum with His Royal Highness indicates the solidarity of the people and their confidence in him. The people welcome the Lamido to their areas with whole heartedness and loyalty, and celebrate visits like this with pomp and pageantry.

When the Lamido is away from his palace in Yola or absent from his domain on official engagement in the northern part of the country, he is most likely to be in Kaduna which was the then capital of Northern Region. A member of the House of Chiefs, the Lamido like other emirs, has his lodge, *Gidan Lamido Adamawa*, at the prestigious Unguwan Sarki area of the capital. Though the House of Chiefs is defunct and the Lamido has no legislative function in the capital, his house has continued to be a home away from home during Jama'atul Nasril Islam conferences, ABU convocation ceremonies or other meetings that may be held in Kaduna, Kano or Abuja. *Gidan Lamido Adamawa* provides succour and lodging not only to kings, but to commoners from Adamawa. Students and strangers in Kaduna have had a day's lodge at the house in times of need. Also, members of the Adamawa community and student associations in Kaduna come to pay courtesy calls on the Lamido whenever he is in town.

The Lamido also plays host to eminent sons of Adamawa who receive appointments at the Federal Government level. He joins the community in celebrating the honour in such appointments. A case in point was when the *Wakili Adamawa*, Hassan Adamu was made Secretary of Mines, Power and Steel in the Interim National Government in August 1993. A grand reception, attended by prominent persons in the society, was organised by the Adamawa Emirate Council for the new secretary. Not long after in September, a home-coming ceremony was arranged for the retiring Deputy Chief of Defence Staff, Admiral Murtala Nyako who served the nation for thirty years in various capacities. The reception for the naval officer

from Mayo Belwa was also marked with the conferment of a traditional title of *Sarkin Yamma* on him in addition to two previous Yoruba titles. In April 1995, the *Dan Lawan Adamawa*, Muhammadu Gambo Jimeta, was given a reception by the Lamido, the Emirate Council, the government and people of the state on his appointment as Minister of Agriculture.

The Nigeria-Cameroon boundary may have split about two-thirds of the territories of Adamawa Emirate to the Cameroon Republic, yet the borderline could not separate the people living in both countries. The different ethnic groups and various communities in Nigeria and Cameroon share common ancestry, languages, customs, culture and territory and are still interacting despite political barriers created by British and French colonialism. The international boundary evolved through series of treaties and undertakings between the colonial powers of Germany, Britain and France.<sup>6</sup> However, Adamawa still maintains relations and brotherliness with its brethren (from the lost emirate) living in the Cameroon Republic.

The inter-relationship between areas of the former Adamawa Emirate, to an extent, is still in bond and the sense of belonging between the communities and the traditional institution has continued. Moreover, the Adamawa Emirate Council keeps in touch with the districts and villages across the border and the Lamido keeps the faith, for example, by sending heavily embroidered traditional gowns to district heads appointed by the Cameroon authorities for their installation ceremonies at Turwa, Ngaundere, Beka, Banyo, Rai, etc.

Some parts of north-western Cameroon, before the coming of the white imperialists, were part of Adamawa Emirate under the Lamido, the political head. Fulfulde was the administrative language of the emirate by virtue of the Fulbe controlling the affairs of the Upper Benue region which explains the wide usage of the language not only among the Fulbe, but also among the peoples of Adamawa, Taraba and Bauchi States of Nigeria and parts of Cameroon, around Nigeria's north-eastern border. Fulfulde is the only West Atlantic language spoken in Nigeria, extending to Cameroon where it is the predominant lingua franca in the northern part and appears to be maintaining its position despite the growing influence of Kanuri, Shuwa and French.<sup>7</sup>

At the government level, both Nigeria and Cameroon recognise that communities at the border areas are a good factor in fostering common understanding and friendly relations, no matter the foreign policy adopted by the two countries. An example on borderland co-operation was when the Lamdo of Garua was invited by the Adamawa Emirate to attend the North-East Region Trade Fair held in Yola in 1991. The visit was a re-union that formed a prelude to the Nigeria-Cameroon boundary workshop in 1992.

### Notes

1. Interview, Barkindo Musdafa, December 1995, Yola.
2. Interview, Umaru Abba Tukur, December 1995, Yola.
3. Interview, Abubakar Isa Ahmadu, December 1995, Mubi.
4. Ambassador Ibrahim Sulaiman Jimeta was born on April 5, 1936 in Jimeta, Adamawa State. He attended Elementary School, Jimeta (1944-48); Middle School, Yola (1949); Barewa College, Zaria (1950-55) and Shoreditch College (1956-59) where he got a diploma in Handicrafts. He started his career in teaching at Okene Secondary School (1959-60). He went to London as Students Officer, Office of the Agent-General for Northern Nigeria, London (1961-63). He came back to Nigeria as Secretary, Northern Nigeria Schools Board, Kaduna (1963-66).

Ambassador Ibrahim Jimeta's diplomatic career spanned 13 years. He began as Aids and Agreements Officer, Lagos in 1966, First Secretary, Education, London (1966-67); Head of Chancery, Abidjan, (1967-68); First Secretary, Africa Department, Lagos (1968); First Secretary and Head of Chancery and later Minister-Counsellor and Head of Chancery, Moscow (1968-71); Head of International Organisations Department, Lagos (1971-72); Minister-Counsellor, Nigerian Permanent Mission to the United Nations Organisation, New York, (1972-76); Ambassador Extra-Ordinary and Plenipotentiary to Niamey, Niger Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso (1976-77); member, Sub-Commission on Human Rights 1977-80; Ambassa

Extra-Ordinary and Plenipotentiary to Vienna, (1979); so he was Permanent Representative for Nigeria to International Atomic Energy Agency 1977-79 and United Nations Industrial Development Organisation both based in Vienna, Austria 1977-79 and Government Representative to OPEC in the same period. Ambassador Jimeta was AEA Governor for Nigeria 1977-79 and member UNIDO Board of Directors (1977-79).

For the next 11 years, Ambassador Jimeta went into General Administration, beginning as Permanent Secretary, Executive Office of the President, Information Department, (1979-83). He was re-elected member, UN Sub-Commission on Human Rights (1980-83). He transferred as Permanent Secretary, Supreme Headquarters (1984-85), Permanent Secretary, General Staff Headquarters (1985-87) and Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Transport and Aviation (1987-88), Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Information April 1990. He came back home to Adamawa State as Secretary to State Government, May-August 1990 and was appointed civilian deputy governor of Gongola State later Adamawa State, 1990-91. He retired into private life until May 1995 when he was appointed Liaison Officer to the National Economic Intelligence Committee under Presidency.

5. Interview, Idris Tafida, December 1995, Yola.
6. Balogun, "Nigeria's International Boundaries" in Asiwaju, P.O. Adeniyi, (eds) *Borderlands in Africa*, (1995), p.198.
7. See C.M.B. Brann, "A Socio-Linguistic Profile of Nigeria's Northern and Eastern Borders", *ibid.*, p.213.

## Chapter Eight

### The Cabinet

Before the British conquest in 1901, the Lamido of Adamawa enjoyed absolute control in the governance of the emirate. The emir's position was at the top of this centralised and organised structure with autocratic functions devolved through the political offices in the metropolis of Yola and the surrounding sub-emirates.

The Adamawa Emirate was administered on feudal lines with the Lamido at the top of the hierarchy. In the capital, the officials, *Saraki'en*, performed civil, religious, palace and military functions. The Lamido was assisted by local heads, *Lawan'en*, in the vassal territories and fiefs in the important districts. In the sub-emirates, the officials of the government were led by *Lamibe* who were assisted by his appointees — *Lowan'en*, *Jaur'o'en*, *Ardo'en* and *Arnabe* — who in turn represented local groups.

With the coming of European rule, the Lamibe had to operate in an indirect rule system whereby the exercise of power and responsibilities was shared with the Native Authorities and council. This was the situation in which Aliyu Musdafa became Lamido until the local government reforms of the military government between 1966-75 which took away control of the courts, police, prisons and the treasury. In fact these were strong executive powers transferred from the chiefs to the state and federal governments. The 1976 reforms put the local government in place as the third tier to substitute for the provincial authority in the decision-making and administration of the territory. An emirate council was therefore formed to function separately and independently from the local government councils, but with the Lamido's powers reduced with regard to decision-making at the local level.

The Lamido heads the Emirate Council which comprises the Waziri, Galadima, Wali, Wakili, Chiroma, Dan Buram, Chief Imam, Dan Lawan, Sarki Yamma, and the chairmen of the six local government areas in the domain. This council is responsible for the running of the affairs of the emirate.

As described above, the structure of the Emirate Council evolved on the framework of the early Adamawa government. Modibbo Adama had only one appointee, Modibbo Hamman Gurin, as the Qadi, while he himself acted as the Imam. The council, more or less a war cabinet, was simple and *ad hoc* in nature due to the on-going wars. The other members were only close advisers of the Modibbo and included Ardo Hamman Song, Ardo Dembo of Malabu and Buba Jam. In addition were close associates of the Modibbo such as Alkasum and Sambo Holma. In comparison to what was obtained in other emirates, Modibbo Adama's cabinet was small. The Caliphate recommended at least the appointment of four officials — a vizier (Waziri) judge (Qadi), chief of police and a collector of land tax.

Modibbo Adama did not however appoint anybody into office until 1831 when he moved his capital from Gurin to Ribadu leaving behind Modibbo Hamman Gurin with a new appointment as Khalifa, at that time the only titled officer of the government with purely religious duties. By 1841 when Yola was set up as the capital of the emirate, the need arose for civil officials, so Modibbo appointed the Galadima and Kaigama for administration and defence duties respectively. Hitherto, all officials were actually warriors participating in a growing emirate.

The office of Waziri in today's council has been a permanent feature in the history of the emirate government. He deputised for the Lamido (who had the power to remove him) and made official pronouncements on his behalf. He served as ambassador to other emirates including Sokoto and went on missions within the emirate. The Waziri did not join in jihad campaigns and could act during the absence, death or deposition of the Lamido.

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of Fadimatu Yaya, the Lamido's sister, and was made the most powerful person in the cabinet over the Galadima who was hitherto the most senior official.

After Aliyu, his own brother, Abdulkadir Pate became the second Waziri, (1891-1924). The third Waziri was Mallam Hamman who held the office in the reign of three Lamibe (1924-57). His successor, Mahmud Ribadu, then central minister was in Lagos and Madaki Bello Malabu, head of administration, was made to act for him (1957-68). The fifth and current Waziri, Muhammadu Bello Babba Lawan, appointed in 1968, is a cousin, former schoolmate and loyal prime minister of the Lamido. Usually only men of unflinching loyalty to the Lamido hold the office of Waziri.

Born in 1920, Babba Lawan is a maternal great-grandson of Lamido Zubairu and a paternal great-grandson of the first and second Waziri of Adamawa. He attended Yola Elementary School (1931-1934) and Yola Middle School (1934-1941). He attended courses at Oshogbo and Zaria (1949-1954). He held the posts of Scribe, Central Office, Yola (1941-63), Assistant Development Secretary (1957-59), Development Secretary (1959-63), and was at the Ministry of External Affairs (1963-68). Waziri Babba Lawan was a board member of National Youth Service Corps (1973-94).

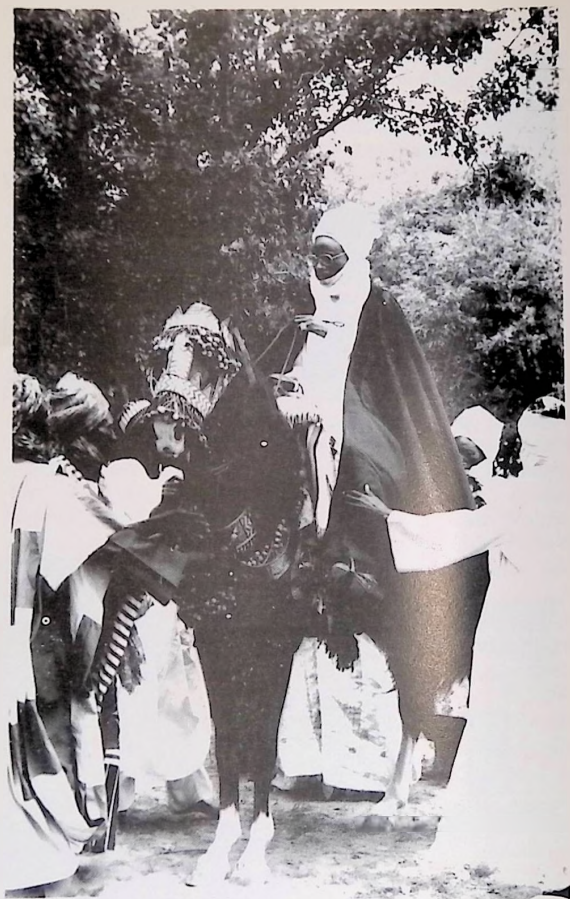
The Galadima is next in rank to the Waziri. It is one of the first offices to be introduced by Modibbo Adama who appointed Buba Mbamoi to hold the post, then the highest in the government. The second Galadima was Fariku (1853-1901), another son of Alkasum and half brother of Waziri Aliyu, while a third son of Alkasum, Adamu Goni (1901-20), was made the third Galadima. However, the title of fourth Galadima was conferred on Dahiru, the great-grandson of Modibbo Muhammadu Raji, a one-time Chief Alkali of Gwandu. Dahiru was succeeded by his cousin, Aminu, who himself was succeeded by his brothers — Usman and Bello Ahmed, and his son, Murtala Aminu, the incumbent. The function of the Galadima, before the introduction of Waziri title was to advise the Lamido on all matters, the administration of Yola metropolis and all markets and trading centres. Galadima Aminu doubled as the district head of Yola in addition to his official duties.



*Yelwa Royal House, now occupied by Chiroma Adamawa*



*Chief of Police's office. Lamido's office as a police officer*



*The Lamido mounting his horse after prayer at the Id ground on sallah day in October  
1981*

Murtala Aminu, OFR, a barrister and solicitor, holds the position of Galadima since October 1986. Born in Yola on April 1, 1937, he attended Yola (now Musdafa) Primary School, (1946-49), Yola Middle School (January-December 1950), Government Secondary School, Zaria (now Barewa College) (1951-56), Institute of Administration, Zaria, Diploma in Native Treasury Accounting (January-July 1957), Nigerian College of Arts, Science and Technology, GCE O and A Levels, (1957-60), Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, LL.B Hons, (1962-66), and Nigerian Law School, Lagos, B.L., (September 1969-June 1970).

The Galadima worked with John Holt Ltd, Jos (1961-1962) as Manager; Nigerian Tobacco Company Ltd, (1966-74) as Personnel Manager (North); Arewa Textiles Ltd, (1974-76) as Assistant General Manager (Administration); Gongola State Government (1976-79) as Attorney-General and Commissioner for Justice; Bajabure Industrial Complex Ltd, Yola (1979-81) as Managing Director; and Murtala Aminu and Co., Solicitors, Advocates and Notaries Public (1981 to date) as legal practitioner.

Murtala Aminu was member, Judicial Commission of Inquiry set up by Kaduna State Government on the purchase and distribution of fertilizer (1976); member of a five-man Legal Drafting Committee of the Constituent Assembly and took part in drafting the 1979 Constitution; member, Constitution Review Committee (1987-88); chairman, the eleven-man Committee set up by Gongola State Government to review the structure of districts, village areas and wards and review responsibilities and remunerations (1985); member, Presidential Advisory Committee on the Prerogative of Mercy; member, Constituent Assembly; member, Constituent Assembly Drafting Committee which produced the clean copy of 1989 Constitution and member, Judicial Service Commission, Adamawa State. He is chairman of Jama'atu Nasril Islam, Adamawa State and national legal adviser of the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs.

The third member of the Emirate Council is the Wali, Abba Mohamuned, who was appointed in 1965 by Lamido Aliyu Musdafa. He is the third official in that post after Lamido Muhammadu Musdafa appointed the present Lamido in 1945 to head the NA police. The incumbent Wali is the Lamido's

son-in-law, being married to the eldest daughter of the Lamido, Fadimatu Batulu. He is a grandson of Adamu Goni (of the Alkasum family), the third Galadima.

Born in 1926 in Yola, Abba Mohammed attended Musdafa Elementary School (1934-1938), Yola Middle School (1938-43), Clerical Training College, Zaria (1950-51), Institute of Administration Zaria, Diploma in Native Treasury Accounting (1956-57), South Devon Technical College, Torquay, UK, Diploma, Social and Public Administration (1963-64), member, Tariff Advisory Board (1959-65), Electricity Corporation of Nigeria (1960-66), and Gongola Scholarship Board (1977-83). Abba Mohammed is the third holder of the Wali title, after Lamido Aliyu Musdafa (1945-53) and Dahiru (1953-64).

In 1958, Abba Muhammed was acting Chief Scribe/Council Secretary. Other previous council secretaries were Mormoni Bazza (1959-60), Abba Muhammed (1960-63), A. Abdulkadir (1963-78) and Musdafa Baba Yola Musdafa (1978-88).

Before the judicial reforms in the late 1950s, the Chief Alkali was a member of the Lamido's Council. The last Chief Alkali, *Alkalin Alkalai*, was Abubakar Mahunud who was appointed in 1957. He rose to become the Grand Khadi of Gongola State Sharia Court until his retirement in 1991. He came from a long line of *alkalai* beginning with Alkali Hamunajoda, his great-grandfather.

Hammajoda, qadi and member of Lamido Zubairu's cabinet, made a historic mark in his foresight about the British invasion of Yola in 1901 when, at a council meeting, he advised the Lamido to accept the conditions by Dr. Cargill, a member of the expedition sent by Lugard. The other officials, Waziri Pate, Galadima Fariku and Kaigama Nuhu told Lamido Zubairu, to defy the British.<sup>1</sup>

As stated earlier, the qadi was the only titled officer of Modibbo Adama's government till 1841 with only a religious role. In *Kitabul farq*, the Shehu recommended the inclusion of the qadi among at least four officials, men of deep intellect and Islamic learning. Modibbo Hamman Gurin, the first qadi, was succeeded by Modibbo Tongude in 1831 when the capital of the emirate moved to Ribadu. In addition to Modibbo Adama's duties as emir and imam, he acted as judge for cases referred to him by the qadi dealing with capital punishment.

In subsequent emirate governments, the qadi was among the large body of officials in the seat of power, but only he and the imam performed religious functions. Still, the appointment was strictly based on Islamic qualifications. The various qadis in the reigns of Modibbo Adama and Lamido Zubairu, apart from Modibbo Hamman Gurin, were immigrants from the western emirates.

The qadi, apart from the Lamido, maintained a very high position in the judicial system. Though each sub-emirate had its qadi appointed by the Lamido, the qadi's court in Yola received cases from the sub-emirates for appeal especially on matters involving inheritance, land and capital offences. The Lamido's court in the capital served as the final appeal court for all cases and has prerogative decision on death sentences as duly recognised by the caliph.

Before Nigeria's independence, the government of Northern Nigeria abolished the Lamido's court in a regional judicial exercise and transferred the power of final appeal to the provincial and regional levels. The military government in 1966 finally removed the courts from the jurisdiction of the emirs.

Barkindo Aliyu Musdafa, *Chiroma Adamaawa*, the eldest son of the Lamido, was appointed into the Emirate Council in 1987. He was born in Yola, on February 14, 1944. He attended Junior Primary School, Mubi (1951-54), Yola Middle School (1955-57), Dutsin Ma Senior Primary School (1960-64), Barewa College, Zaria (1965), Institute of Administration, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria (1967-69), North London Polytechnic and Chartered Institute of Transport, London (1973-75).

Barkindo Musdafa worked in the Customs and Excise Department (1969-73), Nigeria Ports Authority (1973-78) and National Freight Company, Kaduna (1978). He was appointed Commissioner of Works in the Gongola State Government (1979-83).

The Chiroma was turbaned in 1980 as the fifth holder of the title. He was preceded by Muhammadu Maigari, district head, Kilba, later Lamido (1908), Ahmadu Maigari, district head of Nassarawo Jada, later Lamido (1924), Ahmadu Maiha, district head of Maiha (1948), and Ahmadu Malabu, district head of Malabu (1964) and later councillor, natural resources.

The first two officials were district heads of royal descent who became Lamido at later periods. Thus, the conferment of the Chiroma title on Barkindo elevated him to the prestigious membership of the Adamawa Emirate Council with the approval of the state governor.

The Chief Imam of Yola, Ahmadu Bobboi, was appointed into the Emirate Council in 1994 and turbaned the following year. He was born in Yola in 1948. Ahmadu Bobboi attended Islamiyya Primary School, Yola (1960-66), School of Arabic Studies, Kano (1966-70), and University of Maiduguri (1983-86). He was a school teacher (1970-71), and an Assistant Registrar, Sharia Court (1976). He was appointed Chief Registrar (1991) and made a Qadi in 1993. Previous Chief Imams were Mallam Hussaini, Umaru Ngaundere and Muhammadu Barkindo.

Fundamentally, the Lamido is the Chief Imam as enumerated by the guidelines of the jihad in establishing Islamic governments in the caliphate. The emirs appointed religious leaders to deputise in the role of imam and as mentioned earlier, Modibbo Adama occasionally acted as imam in addition to his principal function as Lamido.

Muhammadu Abubakar Mai, MON, *Dan Buram Adamawa*, was appointed in November 1967. Born in Yola in 1925, he attended Musdafa Primary School (1933-36), Middle School, Yola (1936-41), Audit Attachment Course - Benue, Kano, Plateau and Zaria Provinces (1945), Institute of Administration, ABU, Zaria, Intermediate Diploma in Treasury Accounting (1954-55) and Institute of Administration, Diploma in Local Government (1966-67).

The Dan Buram started his working career as Junior Treasury Clerk, Adamawa LA (1941), Cashier (1952), Divisional Supervisor of Accounts (1953), Provincial Supervisor of Accounts (secondment to Northern Regional Government 1956), Treasurer, Adamawa LA (1957), Councillor for Finance (1967) and retired from NA service in 1977.

Muhammadu Mai was member, Nigerian Ports Authority representing the Northern Region (1958-66); member, Parastatals Review Committee for Northern Region (1966-67); member, Northern Nigerian Self Development Fund Council (1966-68); Civil Commissioner for Agriculture (1968-1975); member, North Eastern State Self Development Fund Council (1968-1975);

chairman, North Eastern State Revenue Resources Review Committee (1970-75); chairman, North East Transport Board (North East Line) (1971-75); chairman, North East Drought Relief Committee (1973-74); and chairman, Upper Benue River Basin Development Authority (1976-79).

Among the councillors of Adamawa Emirate is Hassan Adamu, *Wakili Adamawa* and Nigeria's current ambassador to the United States of America. He was Secretary of Mines and Power (1993) and member, Interim National Government. He is president, Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN). Born in 1940 in Yola, the *Wakili* attended Yola Primary School (1945-51), Yola Provincial Secondary School (1952-60), Yaba Higher College (Yaba College of Technology) Lagos (1960), Newport College of Technology, South Wales and North Western Polytechnic, London (1961-66).

Bagging degrees in Statistics and Law of Transport, and a post-graduate diploma in Transport Studies, University of London, Hassan Adamu was Commercial and Traffic Officer, Nigerian Ports Authority (1966) and General Manager of Kadara Traction and Kano Leather Co., both subsidiaries of Northern Nigeria Development Corporation (1969-73). He has been in private business to date.

He served as chairman, Industrialisation and Commercialisation of Gongola State; leader, Trade Delegation to Taiwan; member, Presidential Trade Delegation; member, Board of Institute of Health, ABU, Zaria; Nigeria Merchant Bank, Civil Aviation Training Centre, Committee on Shipping Policy of Nigeria, Shippers Council; chairman, National Fertilizer Company (NAFCON) and several other boards of public and private corporations and companies. Hassan Adamu was appointed Ambassador to the United States of America in April 1996.

The office of *Wakili* was first held by Yero (1912-22) who served as liaison with the colonial administration. He was succeeded by Muhamunadu, later Waziri, (1922-23) Hamman Tukur (1923-29), Musa and Abba Gumbi (1950-57). The office had been vacant for twenty-five years before the appointment of Hassan Adamu.

Muhammadu Gambo Jimeta, *Dan Lawan Adamawa*, was appointed into the Emirate Council in 1990. He is also Minister of Agriculture and member, Federal Executive Council. The *Dan*

Lawan was the Inspector General of Police and member, Armed Forces Ruling Council (1986-89). He held the post of National Security Adviser to the president after his retirement and chairman of MAMSER in 1992. Gambo Jimeta was born on April 15, 1937 in Jimeta. He attended Jimeta Elementary School (1947-49), Yola Middle School (1950-58) and Government College, Keffi (1958-59). He joined the Nigeria Police Force in 1959 as Cadet Sub-Inspector. He attended Police College, UK (1963), International Police Academy, Washington DC, USA (1980), National Police Academy, Cairo, Egypt; Wolfson College, University of Cambridge, UK (1980-81) and National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies, Kuru.

The Dan Lawan is a member of the Board of Governors, Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON), Badagry; Board of Governors, National Youth Service Corps (NYSC); National Institute (mni); British Institute of Criminologists and International Association of Police Chiefs.

Another member of the Emirate Council is Admiral Murtala Nyako (rtd) who replaced his relation, Maliki Hamman Yero who until his death in November 1995 was untitled and represented the business community. The *Sarki Yamma*, Admiral Murtala Nyako was born in Mayo Belwa on August 27, 1942. He attended Mayo Belwa Elementary School (1952-54), Yola Middle School (1955-57) and Provincial Secondary School, Yola (1958-63). He joined the Nigerian Navy in 1963, trained at Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, United Kingdom where he earned his commission as a sub-lieutenant in September 1965. At various times between 1966 and 1974, Admiral Nyako served on the seas and on the shore: *NNS Nigeria*, *NNS Kwa River*, *NNS Ekpe*, *NNS Lokoja*, *NNS Obunia* and at the Naval headquarters. In February 1976, the *Sarki Yamma* became the first military governor of Niger State, to December 1977.

He went back to sea as commanding officer of *Erinomi*, the first Nigerian missile-carrying naval ship. He was appointed director of operations and pioneer director of Naval Intelligence, chief of operations at the Naval headquarters, member Nigerian Navy Reorganisation Committee, reappointed chief of operations all between 1980 and 1982. Admiral Nyako was flag officer commanding Western Naval Command and member of the

Armed Forces Ruling Council, and chairman of the Internal Security Reorganisation Committee from 1985-1989. He was flag officer commanding Naval Training Command, 1989-90. The Admiral was appointed the seventh Chief of Naval Staff on December, 1989 and later became deputy Chief of Defence Staff on 10 February, 1992.

The Lamido of Adamawa conferred on him the title of *Sarki Yamma* in recognition of his 30 years of service to the whole nation, in addition to two chieftaincy titles from Ondo State — *Oluwa-Eri* of Ilaje Ese Odo and *Olori Ogun Ajadi Yara* of Ikaleland.

The chairmen of the six local government areas — Yola, Song, Hong, Gombi, Mayo Belwa and Fufore represent their people in the Emirate Council as ex-officio members as long as their tenure lasted.

As secretary of the Emirate Council, Dahiru Adamu Musdafa attends all meetings and co-ordinates affairs of the council. Born in Yola in July 1956, he attended Musdafa Primary School, Yola (1961-67), Government Secondary School (General Murtala Mohammed College) (1968-72), Co-operative College, Ibadan (1975-76) and Adamawa Polytechnic, Yola (1988-90). Dahiru Musdafa was Co-operative Inspector, (1973-78), Accountant, Adamawa Emirate Council (1979-88) and Secretary, Adamawa Emirate Council, (1988-date).

Following is the list, at a glance, of the Emirate Council's members.

#### Adamawa Emirate Council

Title	Name	Function
Lamido	Aliyu Musdafa	Chairman
Waziri	Babba Lawan	Member
Galadima	Murtala Aminu	"
Wali	Abba Mohammed	"
Chiroma	Barkindo Aliyu Musdafa	"
Chief Imam	Ahmadu Bobboi	"
Dan Buram	Muhammadu Mai	"
Wakili	Hassan Adamu	"
Dan Lawan	Muhammadu Gambo Jimeta	"
Sarkin Yamma	Murtala Nyako	"
LG Chairmen	Yola, Fufore, Song, Hong, Gombi and Mayo-Belwa	Ex-Officio members
	Dahiru Adamu Musdafa	Secretary

An important part of the Adamawa institution is the Kingmakers' Council which, apart from its advisory role in the day-to-day affairs of the emirate, selects a candidate in the event of the death or deposition of a Lamido. The kingmakers, eleven men of high repute and calibre, are responsible for the selection and scrutiny of candidates for the throne of Adamawa. Members include the Waziri, Galadima, Lamdo Katsina and Kaigama who are title-holders. Others are the district heads of Guirin, Malabu, Ribadu, Song, Zumo, Daware and Mayo Farang.

When Modibbo Adama died in 1848, there was a vacuum for a while as there was no existing mode of selecting a successor, the Modibbo being the first emir. According to Fulbe custom, the Ardo'en had the right to select a candidate to succeed an Ardo. However, Modibbo's closest advisers (to avoid chaos and open contest between the sons of the Lamido) decided that Muhammadu Lauwal should be the next Lamido based on seniority as the eldest son and the first in the hereditary order (La-U-Zu), said to have been decreed by the Modibbo, that is Lauwal-Umaru Sanda-Zubairu.<sup>2</sup>

Nevertheless, the decisions of the *Maube* (Ardo'en) in choosing Lauwal, Umaru Sanda and Zubairu were all referred to the Caliph in Sokoto for approval. The Ardo'en's tasks in selecting a successor to the throne in Yola were not smooth due to challenges from Hamidu, son of Modibbo Adama on two occasions, that is after the death of Modibbo and demise of Lauwal on the basis that he was equally qualified to become the Lamido.

The *Maube* also had some difficulty, but maintained Modibbo Adama's will of succession — La-U-Zu — as they had to prevail on Lauwal's decision to abdicate for Yerima Sudi, his eldest son, and also when Umaru Sanda wanted to voluntarily vacate the throne for Iya, his eldest son. The fourth Lamido (Zubairu), at the time of his ouster by British soldiers, had no son to succeed him even if he had left in a proper way. Moreover, Zubairu fled from Yola with his leading officials and refused proposals by the British invaders to come back to negotiate on the vacant office, and probably return. To resolve the stalemate, Bobbo Ahmadu, a junior brother and of the same mother with Zubairu, was chosen to be the fifth Lamido and the first emir ever to be appointed by the colonial government in

the early years of the 20th century after nearly 100 years of Fulbe rule in the Upper Benue region.

The procedure of selecting the Lamido since then was ratified by the Resident in Yola who was the representative of the High Commissioner (later Lieutenant-Governor and Governor in various eras) and the British Colonial Office. Following the shift of power to the Northern Regional Government, the choice of the present Lamido in 1953 by the Kingmakers' Council was approved by the Lieutenant-Governor, a position which is replaced today by the Governor of Adamawa State.

Today's kingmakers include the Waziri, the prime minister and the most important official in the government, the Galadima and Kaigama. These office-holders have held high positions in the early emirate governments. The Kaigama, however, became the highest ranking military official, while Lamdo Katsina was a community leader and army commander. The rest of the kingmakers are Ardo'en or leaders of the principal districts.

In the period before the establishment of Adamawa Emirate and after the jihad, the Ardo was the most senior man selected by closely related groups to be the head and guardian. He was expected to perform judicial and political functions as dictated by the *Pulaku* code of conduct. By virtue of his position in this system, the Ardo was respected and was given the honour to officiate at ceremonies such as naming and marriage ceremonies. He also presided as judge in communal conflicts between the Fulbe groups and represented them in such matters with non-Fulbe groups. This explains the predominance of the Ardo'en (district heads) in the Kingmakers' Council.

### Kingmakers' Council

Title	Name
Waziri	Babba Lawan
Galadima	Murtala Aminu
Lamdo Katsina	Mohammed Umar
Kaigama	Usman Pate
Wakili Gurin	Ibrahim Maigari
Ardo Malabu	Hammawa Ahmed

Ardo Song	Saidu Hammadikko
Ardo Zumo	Suleiman Mohammed
Ardo Daware	Mohammed Iya
Ardo Mayo-Farang	Ahmadu Bakari
Ardo Ribadu	Aliyu Mahmud Ribadu

In the administration of Adamawa Emirate, the district heads have a prominent role to play by overseeing affairs in the thirty-three districts which make up the domain. They are answerable to the Emirate Council and also the Local Government Affairs Directorate and Office of the Secretary to the State Government respectively.

An adequate description of the duties and responsibilities drawn by Shehu Malami, *Sarkin Sudan Na Wurno*, in a lecture at the Army Command and Staff College, Jaji in August 1978, sees the district heads as the encyclopaedia of administration.

They know every single individual in their locality and have detailed knowledge of their movements. They know the location of all the farms and grazing grounds and to whom they belong and have even detailed knowledge of how many wives a particular man has, how many children, and their various ages. The ward head even knows how many herds of cattle or how many donkeys a particular person possesses.

With this detailed knowledge of the area, security of the place is guaranteed. Indeed, one of the cardinal duties of the ward heads is to report movements of strangers with a view to preventing the villagers from harbouring thieves and other criminals. They must report immediately the occurrence of violent deaths and any outbreak of human or animal diseases... as well as any unusual movements of livestock, game and news of the appearance of locusts. They are even expected regularly to report the sighting of the new moon! In addition to all these duties, with other ward heads supervised by the village heads, they must play an active role in organising and implementing village social and economic activities such as adult education, community development etc. etc. etc.

The district head, the village head's superior, is both the Emir's on-the-spot agent and official head of his district. He

performs not only the task of coordination but he also ensures that all the activities of the government are carried out according to policies laid down. His regular touring reports covering all aspects of life in the district, from the condition of crops on the farms to self-help efforts, from availability or scarcity of water or food to the conditions of various roads are sent to the emir, with copies to the local government and the state government officials concerned.<sup>4</sup>

In the early years of the 19th century, over three dozen decentralised units came together to form a large-scale centralised system, populated by numerous diverse ethnic groups. The Fulbe before then were living in small units led by Ardo'en who later supported Modibbo Adama in the jihad and helped to establish the emirate having pledged their allegiance and received subordinate flags. The Ardo was a kinship term for a head or guardian who had judicial and political functions as earlier mentioned.

Apart from the emirate government in Yola, there were forty other units called sub-emirates each with a Lamdo and a cabinet of officials. Modibbo Adama himself in 1831 appointed Modibbo Hamman Gurin as his first Lamdo of Faro valley in the east in his absence during the shift of the capital from Gurin to Ribadu. North of the Benue, he established the sub-emirates of Malabu and Song with the respective Ardo'en, Modibbo Hamman Song and Ardo Dembo Malabu, as Lambe in 1830.<sup>5</sup>

With the establishment of the capital in Yola in 1841 the emirate's administrative structure expanded with the establishment of fiefdoms in the southern regions of Chamba and Verre headed by Hamidu and Bakari, the only two sons of Modibbo Adama who held any appointments during his lifetime. However, after the establishment of Yola as a permanent base, some of the Ardo'en established their governments with themselves as Lambe in defiance of the authority of the Lamido but had to submit again to him as Lamido.

The second reign in the emirate saw the establishment of fiefdoms and fortresses in the conquered areas in the west by Lamido Lauwal who appointed his brothers and clients to head the districts while slaves took charge of the fortresses. By 1860, the conquest of Chambaland by the Lamido led to the

foundation of districts south of Yola such as Nassarawo which had its headquarters at Nyibango.<sup>6</sup>

Settlements in the Bagale areas north of the Benue River which include Sangaje, Takkande, Girei and Wurodole were developed to serve as fortresses to protect the new Fulbe villages and grazing areas against the Bata. These fortresses combined to form a district north of Yola owned by the Lamido in the charge of personal servants. Other major towns that developed from these fortresses are Ngurore, Namtari, Mayo Belwa, Wafango, Gijaro, Mayo Ine and Mayo Farang.

The establishment of districts therefore in the north, west and south of the emirate capital, in addition to existing sub-emirates, was a further step in the expansion of the emirate and consolidation of Fulbe authority by Lamido Lauwal in the final subjugation of remaining independent ethnic groups. At the time of the imposition of British rule in 1901, the colonialists found an administrative structure in place where the districts were manned by loyal officials of the Lamido which came in handy for the operation of an indirect rule system in the emirate.

The British colonial administration mapped out twenty-seven districts in the 1940s namely — Nassarawo, Mubi, Balala, Mayo Belwa, Uba, Ga'anda, Chubunawa, Mambilla, Song, Gurin, Malabu, Girei, Madagali, Toungo, Mayo Farang, Kilba, Verre, Belel, Gashaka, Maiha, Binyeri, Sugu, Mayo Ine, Holna, Gurumpawo, Yandan Waka and Yebbi.

In 1970; the districts in Adamawa Province were zoned into six, namely:

1. Uba, Kilba, Ga'anda, Zumo, Song, Yungur, Malabu and Girei with headquarters at Little Gombi.
2. Balala, Binyeri, Gurin, Mayo Belwa, Yola, Mayo Ine, Nassarawo - Jereng, and Verre with headquarters at Yola.
3. Zinna Sub-Local Authority with headquarters at Zinna (now Zing).
4. Lau, Wurkum, Old Muri with headquarters at Lau.
5. Dakka, Jalingo, Mutumbiyu, Bakundi, Gassol, Kwaji and Mumuye with headquarters at Jalingo.
6. Numan Local Authority Area with headquarters at Numan.

There was no major exercise in the province to either restructure or create new districts until 1991 when the Babangida administration introduced a policy in line with the transition plan to civil rule. In May of that year, a 10-man-committee under the director-general in the Deputy Governor's Office was set up to look into the possibility of creating more districts. The committee had one member each representing the seven emirate and traditional councils. The Galadima represented Adamawa Emirate, while other members represented the Local Government and Political departments.

The committee studied the demands of the creation of new districts, harmonised recommendations of the various emirate and traditional councils and came up with recommendations to government for new districts based on the submissions of both the communities and emirate and traditional councils in the light of the existing economic and social factors in the state. The committee received memoranda from various individuals and communities in the state. In October 1991 (two months after the carving out of Taraba State), the Adamawa State Government announced the creation of forty-two new districts bringing the number to seventy-seven in the state and thirty-three in Adamawa Emirate. The population of Adamawa, according to the 1991 census, is 2,124,049; while 928,661 people are counted in the local government areas in the emirate.

Sequel to the appointment of the new district heads, Lamido Aliyu Musdafa personally attended the turbaning ceremonies in all the new districts. In most cases, he spent the night in the headquarters which was regarded as an honour by the host communities. At each installation, the Lamido implored the new helmsmen to discharge their duties with transparent honesty and commitment to government policies for the overall development of their respective domains. The climax of the ceremony was usually the conferment of a traditional title on the district head by the Lamido.<sup>7</sup>

Aliyu Musdafa, at the head of the Emirate Council, is the most powerful person and is surrounded by officials whose responsibilities are designated with titles. The numerous district heads usually have titles that are conferred on them on appointment. The exceptions to this rule are the heads of the

home districts who are simply called Ardo'en. They are Malabu, Song, Ribadu, Daware, Mayo Farang and Zumo. The district head of Gurin is titled Wakili. Below is the list of district heads under the Adamawa Emirate Council.

LG	District	H/Quarters	District Head	Title
Yola	Yola	Yola	Adamu Bawuro Musdafa	Yerima
	Namtari	Namtari-Manga	Muhammadu Baba Musdafa	Sarkin Kudu
	Jimeta	Jimeta	Hamman Bello Gabdo	Dan Amar
Fufore	Ribadu	Fufore	Mallum Mohammed	Ardo
	Daware	Pariya	Mohammed Iya Daware	Ardo
	Verre	Karlahi	Yaji Ardo Maaji Tofa	Jakada
	Nyibungo	Yadim	Ahmadu Jika	Sarkin Yaki
	Malabu	Malabu	Hammawa Ahmed	Ardo
	Mayo-Ine	Mayo-Ine	Mukhtar Musdafa	Marafa
	Gurin	Gurin	Ibrahim Maigari	Wakili
M/Belwa	Mbilla	Mayo-Belwa	Usman Ardo Jabbo	Ardo
	Binyeri	Tola	Danjuma Ardumi	Dallatu
	Bajama	N/Jereng	Hamman Bello Lawal	Ardo
	M/Farang	Mayo-Farang	Ahmadu Bakari	Ardo
Gombi	Lamjadangsa	Ganglamja	Ahmadu Saka	Dan Maje
	Ga'anda	Ga'anda	Muhammadu Shuaibu	Zarma
	Lala	Fotta	Dahiru Musa Ripath	Kubu Lala
	Guyaku	Gombi	Shuaibu Barde	Mukaddas
Song	Garkida	Garkida	Mahmud Alfa	Dan Isa
	Ditera	Dirma	Yusuf Awulekyan	Iya
	Waltandi	Waltandi	Titus Dawe	Kpara
	Suktu	Simbo-Sokoron	Aliyu Dakkitido	Koh Suktu
	Mboi	Mboi	Isa Ardo Falama	Santuraki
	Girei	Girei	Ahmadu Abba	Ubandoma
	Zumo	Zumo	Suleiman Mohammed	Ardo
	Song	Song	Saidu Hammadikko	Ardo
Hong	Hong	Hong	Mohammed Umar Babangida	Dan Maliki
	Pella	Pella	Mamman Daksiri	Dan Kade
	Kulinyi	Bangshika	Shuaibu Manaunda	Maidawa
	Gaya	Gu-Dutse	Usman Aditai (DSP rtd)	Fagaci
	Hildi	Hildi	Yusuf Lawal Abba	Sai
	Uba	Uba	Yahya Njidda	Sardauna
	Dugaba	Garaha	Tol Andi Bulus	Barde Dugwaba

Another category of the Lamido's officials are title-holders who do not have specific responsibilities but are conferred with honorary titles by the Lamido in recognition of their contributions to the development of the emirate. In some cases, the titles are hereditary, while generally the title-holders must have made their mark in various endeavours such as politics, government, business, military or police, academic or in the service of the Lamido. Wherever they may reside or work, the

title-holders are seen as and expected to be worthy ambassadors of Adamawa. It is noted that no female personality is yet to hold any title. The Lamido has conferred the title of Masari on a Christian and non-Pullo, Col. Andrawus Sawa (rtd).

In the 1950s and 1960s, Lamido Aliyu Musdafa's title-holders were either councillors in the Adamawa NA or district heads. For example, the 21-member council of the NA in 1956 had, apart from the Waziri and Galadima, four councillors with titles of *Turaki*, *Madaki*, *Tafida* and *Wali*. Hassan Yola (Turaki), a member of the House of Representatives and Councillor for Education and Adult Literacy contributed to the formulation of new education policies and establishment of new schools. Idris (Tafida) who played a prominent role in the political and social development of Chubunawa as district head for fifteen years, made giant strides as Councillor for Agriculture, Forestry and Animal Husbandry; and later Police and Prison Affairs. Bello Malabu (Madaki), member of House of Representatives was a strongman in the affairs of the council. Muhammadu Dahiru (Wali) discharged with impartiality judicial affairs of the Native Authority. The only district head (Malabu) in the NA Council was Mallam Ahmadu who retired in 1954 and was succeeded by his eldest son and scribe, Yerima Hammawa.

Ibrahim Demsa (Dan Iya) remains in the emirate's records as an educationist and one of the early teachers. He was appointed district head of Verre in 1954 and is acknowledged for bringing down the Verre people from the hills to take up farming, trading and other productive activities. In 1959, following the removal of Almadu Waziri as district head of Mubi, Ibrahim Demsa was sent in acting capacity and later confirmed as the new district head. He was replaced in Verre District by another hard-working personality in acting capacity, Mallam Umaru, Wambai. Adamu Bawuro Musdafa, *Makama Doka*, was the Chief of Police with tremendous experience in NA administration having served in various capacities before succeeding his elder brother, Aliyu Musdafa. In 1960, Adamu Bawuro was appointed district head of Yola with the prestigious title of *Yerima*. Buba Vokna, in succeeding the Santuraki as NA Councillor for Police and Prison, was turbaned by Lamido Aliyu Musdafa as *Dan Madami Adamawa*.

The conferment of traditional titles, according to the Lamido, "is entrusting leadership unto capable and trustworthy personalities who are committed to reviving and developing the culture and heritage of Adamawa." Lamido Aliyu Musdafa believes that the number of people seeking for traditional titles is a testimony of the respect the institution has which further indicates increasing respect for tradition not only in Adamawa, but all over the country.

On the occasion of the turbanning ceremony of *Chiroma* in May 1980 in Yola, the Lamido pointed out: "Differences between our people and the diversity in our ethnicity and religion have not stifled the development of culture and heritage which clearly shows that the Nigerian is proud of his/her traditional belonging. In every nook and corner, you can see the educated, those in business, politics and in government being turbanned with titles."

At the turbanning of *Turaki* and *Dan Madani Adamawa* on November 19, 1982, the Lamido said the conferment on Abubakar Atiku (who was Assistant Director of Customs and Excise Department) and Ali Baba (Minister of Internal Affairs) was in recognition of their contributions to development of the community and the nation in general. "We therefore honour them with these titles to pay back what they did for us, for they are glorious sons of Adamawa and they deserve it."

Unlike the present times when traditional titles are conferred on deserving personalities, the title-holders in the 19th century Adamawa were officials in the service of the Lamido who were given specific responsibilities. However at the inception of the emirate system, Modibbo Adama rewarded his closest friends and advisers not with titles but his daughters whom he gave in marriage to them. His eldest daughter, Adda Gurin, was united with Modibbo Hamunan Song, Hauwa'u with Ardo Dembo of Malabu and Yaya was tied in matrimony to Alkasum, Modibbo Adama's former student and warrior.

Modibbo's government was simple in style and was taking shape which showed absence of formal titles and specific duties. However, his marriage alliances with the top men strengthened his position as emir, who saw him more as an in-law than just a leader.



*Tafida Idris, Lamido's teacher and  
headmaster at Middle School*



*Alhaji Babba Lawan, Waziri Adamawa*



*Muhammed Abubakar Mai,  
Dan Buram Adamawa*



*Ahmadu Ribadu, Dan Galadima*



*Abba Muhammed, Wali Adamawa*

Modibbo Adama appointed only two of his sons to fiefdoms. They were Hamidu and Bakari. Muhammad Lauwal did not hold any office or fiefdom during the Modibbo's reign which was in line with *Pulaku* that a father should not show open love to his son. Lauwal was referred to only as *Yerima*, prince, without a formal designation though he was active in the war against the Bata especially in the west. In subsequent reigns, the sons of an incumbent Lamido were collectively called *Yerima'en* including the brothers of the Lamido and their children. However, only one prince is officially designated *Yerima* who could be either the Lamido's eldest son or brother. The *Yerima'en* were highly respected because anyone of them could become the Lamido.

The only other titles in Modibbo's time included the Qadi, Kaigama and Galadima. The last two were borrowed from Borno because at that time the Fulbe had limited terminology with which to designate the offices. Moreover, Modibbo Adama's attachment to Borno had been instilled during his scholarship there. He was still influenced to borrow the *Yerima* title from Borno.

Lamido Lauwal too borrowed his titles not only from Borno but from older emirates. The offices created by him were made to take charge of new responsibilities. For instance, Ajiya was the custodian of wealth, Shamaki was the supervisor of the Lamido's estate and farm provisions. Other titles such as Baraya, Majidadi, Sarkin Gobir, Magaji, Adar and Mai Kanoma were created to cover some inadequacies in the administrative structure. Lauwal borrowed more titles from Hausa emirates due to increasing ties with them.

The western emirates had more influence on Adamawa during Lamido Sanda's reign which showed the increase of the number of the titles borrowed from outside. Thus, the emirate government was expanded and almost equalled those of the other emirates in the caliphate. Therefore, the Lamido's council included more scholars, royal members and leaders of the immigrant community in Yola.

These community leaders included Lamdo Kebbi, Lamdo Kano, Lamdo Katagum, Lamdo Zamfara, Lamdo Katsina, Magaji Adar and Mai Borno. Lamido Sanda put more officials in

the cabinet such as Sarkin Shanu, in-charge of pastoral nomadic Fulbe and collection and distribution of *zakkat*. Also the Magaji was appointed to represent the Bata in the government and to win their support, he was in-charge of allocation of land in Yola District. More and more officials were appointed by subsequent Lamibe into the government with titles of Hausa origin. Officials appointed for specific duties for example in commerce included Sarkin Karo (for the collection of caravan tolls), Sarkin Kasuwa (market chief) Sarkin Dillalai (chief hawker), and Sarkin Pawa (chief butcher) who was appointed by Sarkin Kasuwa. In recent history, Lamido Aliyu Musdafa introduced titles such as Sa'i, Fagaci, Dan Maje, Dan Isa, Katuka, Masani, Dan Madami, Dan Masani, Talba and Dan Amar to mention a few.

### Traditional Title-Holders

Title	Holder
Turaki	Atiku Abubakar
Dan Iya	Adamu Bello
Barade	Hammawa Toungo
Baraya	Zubairu Yahya
Lamdo Katagum	Hassan Mohammed
Lamdo Hadeija	Adamu Iya
Mai Borno	Aliyu Girei
Dan Galadima	Ahmadu Ribadu
Masani	Andrawus Sawa (rtd. Colonel)
Dan Madami	Ali Baba
Dan Masani	Maigari Usman
Madawaki	Aliyu Mahmud
Mutawalli	Muhammadu Kwairanga Jada
Tafida	Idrissu
Lamdo Adar	Garba Lamdo Adar
Sarkin Shanu	Yusuf Sulaiman
Makama	Ibrahim Musdafa
Katuka	Muhammadu Yola
Talba	Kyari Madikime
Bunu	Mohammed Bunu

Among the large body of officials surrounding the Lamido are men of slave origin who occupy the important offices in the

palace who in the past had both civil and military duties.<sup>8</sup> As shown below (palace officials), today's palace officials have their responsibilities overtaken by events. Examples are Ajiya, Magajin Gari, Sarkin Sulke, and so on. Their functions are at present mainly ceremonial. However, the Lamido is still assisted by these officials in certain functions necessary for staff and protocol duties, e.g., Sarkin Fada, Sallama, Mabudi, Kofa, etc. They are loyal servants who are dedicated to the service of the Lamido.

In the early years of the jihad when the emirate had limited sources of income, slaves were an important factor in the production of food for the Fulbe. They later became very useful in other areas such as economic, political and military. Men and women captured during wars were turned to the Lamido by the Fulbe as slaves or they could come to the palace as tribute and gifts from the Lambe of the sub-emirates. However, the slaves were only captured when they rejected Islam or opposed Muslim rule. In the palace, female slaves were put to use as concubines or domestic servants, while the males became personal servants, courtiers and soldiers.

However, slaves were not acquired and exploited as in the trans-Atlantic slave trade where they lived and died working on plantations. In Adamawa Emirate, slave trading was not emphasised, "but only unsatisfactory slaves were sold at slave markets." The Lamido and his officials kept their slaves who supported them in military campaigns as warriors. Some slaves became the force behind the throne in Yola and in the sub-emirates. Officials of the government could possess about 1,000 slaves at a time living in the fortresses, *dumde*.

When the slaves were not fighting in the wars, they were working in the farms or being just domestic servants. Nevertheless, the duties done by the slaves were also done by free men. Though slaves were regarded as lowly in the society, many of them were able to regain their freedom by accepting Islam and some rose up the social ladder to wealth, power and prestige. For example the Baraya, Ajiya, Shamaki and Dan Rimi were powerful offices held by slaves.

### Palace Officials

Title	Function
Magajin Gari	Mayor
Sarkin Fada	Chief of Protocol
Wambai	Assists Magajin Gari
Dan Rimi	Supervisor of Lamido's Regalia
Sarkin Arewa	Protector of the Northern Gate
Shamaki	Caretaker of Lamido's Landed Property
Sarkin Bindiga	Head of Hunters
Sarkin Tuta	Custodian of Modibbo Adama's Jihad Flag
Sarkin Zana	Supervisor of Buildings
Sarkin Gini	Chief Mason
Mabudi	Chief Gatekeeper
Sarkin Dogari	Chief Bodyguard
Garkuwa	Lamido's Shield
Shantali	Chamber Official
Magajiya	Lady-in-Waiting
Jakadiya	Envoy (female)
Ajiya	Treasurer
Sarkin Sulke	Commander of Armoured Troops
Sarkin Rafi	Guardian of Rivers and Water Resources
Sarkin Daji	Guardian of Forests and Wild Life
Sallama	Protocol Officer
Sarkin Zage	Commander of Footmen
Sarkin Jagi	Supervisor of Horses' Costumes
Tariya	Protocol Officer
Majidadi	Aide-de-Camp
Lamdo Chudde	Commander of Royal Guards
Kofa	Chief Usher

Majority of Lamido Aliyu Musdafa's councillors are either members of the Ba'en dynasty, which started with the reign of Muhammadu Lauwal in 1848 or of Fulbe descent. His Emirate Council is ethnically Fulbe, except in some cases, the ex-officio members who are chairmen of the local government areas. Exceptionally, the Waziri and Galadima apart from being Fulbe have long historical and hereditary ties in the Adamawa cabinet.

The title of Waziri was first held by Aliyu, son of Alkasum who was a trusted student of Modibbo Adama who married

Fadimatu Yaya, his daughter. The second Waziri, Abdulkadir Pate, was a brother of Waziri Aliyu. The fifth and present Waziri, Muhammadu Bello Babba Lawal is a great-grandson of Waziri Aliyu. The Alkasum family did not only produce three Waziris, but also two Galadimas. The second official to hold the title was Fariku, Waziri's half-brother. Aliyu was followed by another half-brother, Adamu Goni, the third Galadima. Subsequent Galadima title-holders did not come from the royal family, but from the Modibbo Raji family till date.

The Chiroma, Barkindo Aliyu Musdafa, is not only a member of the dynasty but the eldest son of the Lamido. Modibbo Adama's eldest son, Lauwal, was Yerima. Though not a cabinet post, Yerima is a significant designation. Lauwal's son, Sudi, was also Yerima and fief-holder of Mundangland.

Previous Lamibe such as Iya, Abba, Maigari and Musdafa at one point or the other officially held the title of Yerima in the emirate government. This trend was one way the dynasty ensured that officials continued to be loyal by picking men who had some family relations with the dynasty.

One important group in the royal family that is given official prominence are brothers of the Lamido. The immediate brother of Lamido Aliyu Musdafa, Adamu Bawuro, is the district head of Yola (seat of government) with the official title of Yerima. While two other brothers, Muhammadu Baba and Mukhtar are also district heads, Ibrahim, a third brother, holds only a titular position as Makama.

Muhammadu Lauwal had his brothers, Hamidu and Bakari, as district rulers in Nyibango and Mayo Ine respectively. Moreover, eight of his brothers served as commanders during expeditions. Subsequent Lamibe appointed their nephews, cousins and brothers as district heads. Ahmadu Abba, district head of Girei, is the last child of Lamido Abba, grand-father of Lamido Aliyu, while Hamman Bello Hamman Gabdo, district head of Jimeta, is a cousin from Lamido Sanda's ruling house.

The district heads in the home districts are descendants of Ardo'en, while non-Fulbe district heads are either members of their respective ruling families or chosen on merit.

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## Notes

1. Abubakar, Sa'ad, *Lamibe of Fombina*, (1977) p.146.
2. *Ibid*. p. 84.
3. *Ibid*. p.147.
4. Williams, David, *President and Power In Nigeria, The Life of Shehu Shagari*, p.8.
5. Abubakar Sa'ad, *op. cit.* p.61.
6. *Ibid* p.89.
7. The Local Government Edict 1977 (as amended) provides that "the traditional councils shall continue to exercise such administrative powers and perform such functions in respect of districts ".... and shall have power to appoint district heads using traditional methods and where these do not exist a person shall qualify to contest the election if he is from the royal family from any village area. The Adamawa House of Assembly in November 1992 enacted the District Creation and Amendment Law stating that "where the traditional methods do not exist, village heads in a particular district would select three contestants whose names would be submitted to the traditional council out of which they would recommend only one name to the state governor for final approval."
8. Abubakar Sa'ad, *op. cit.* pp. 102-104.

## Chapter Nine

### The Flag Bearer

The Commander of the Faithful, *Amir ul Muminin*, Usman Dan Fodio gave each of his commanders flags and called them his flagbearers to fight for his jihad and help to reform, establish or entrench Islamic values in the emirates of Northern Nigeria. The flag, a symbol of the mission, has been passed from Modibbo Adama to the various successors of the Adamawa throne till date.

Jihad can be described as a holy war by Muslims against non-believers in order to uphold Sharia law and the religion of Islam. Before the Sokoto jihad in 1804, Adamawa was a non-Muslim region, the Fulbe themselves had only a few of them practising the religion. In other regions, Islam was introduced by Muslim traders who travelled widely and deep into Borno and Hausaland which helped in its spread. Adamawa, however, had little contact with the Islamised areas such as Borno and Bagarmi in the north, and Hausaland. The trade links with the areas too were limited.

The Fulbe played a significant role in the spread of Islam in Adamawa before the jihad. The leading Fulbe took to the study of the Qur'an and the Islamic sciences and became *Modibbe* (singular: Modibbo, meaning scholar). These Modibbe were instrumental to the spread of Islam and subsequently the jihad.

Islamic learning required strict observance, therefore, the Fulbe elders or scholars were forced to abandon or give less attention to their cattle. So, they settled down and devoted themselves to learning and changed their nomadic life to a settled life. Soon they became the most Islamised group in Adamawa.

Though the jihad was a religious war which laid the

foundation of a caliphate system of government by the Fulbe in Northern Nigeria, the case in Adamawa in particular can be said to have become necessary following the social, economic and political situation in the Upper Benue region which was not favourable to the Fulbe.

On appointment as jihad leader in Adamawa, Modibbo Adama was given the mandate by the caliphate to set up an Islamic government and carry out the duties of an emir which included organisation and deployment of the army to impose Islam and to administer Sharia law, lead at prayers or appoint an imam and aid pilgrims to the holy land.

When Modibbo Adama secured the support of other Fulbe leaders to help him in the jihad, he gave them subordinate flags in accordance with the creed of the Shehu. At the ceremony in Sokoto in 1806 where Usman Dan Fodio formally presented Modibbo with a flag as a symbol of the mission, the Shehu said:

When you return tell them this is what Shehu gave you. Say also that I accept their greetings. Bid them place their hand in yours; whoever gives his hand to you, joins his hands with me. Tell them I greet them. Make flags for them like this that I have given you, and give them the flags with the orders I have laid upon you. You are the envoy; whatsoever they desire let them tell it to you, then do you come and tell me.

By virtue of this legacy, Lamido Aliyu Musdafa's authority includes all matters of religion.

As spiritual leader, the Lamido has the exclusive right of four prerogatives: (1) The announcement of the beginning of the Ramadan period after the moon is sighted; (2) the announcement of the end of Ramadan and approval for the celebration of Id el Fitr festivals; (3) the call for Islamic jihad and (4) the announcement of the day of Arafat and the subsequent celebration of the Id el Kabir. Officially, the Lamido is the Chief Imam of Yola and delegates the role to a carefully selected scholar who among other duties, leads congregational and *Jumma'at* prayers in the central mosque and on *id* days.

The Lamido has always preached tolerance and unity among all Muslims, and Christians. The government seeks his

advice on how to settle disputes between Muslims and Christians or among followers of the same faith over location of houses of worship. At every *Sallah* or any other forum, he would always remind the people that the development of the nation and the community in particular, largely depends on peace and tolerance. Echoes of his remarks are consistent:

The unity of all muslims is paramount in all our endeavours in this world and the hereafter. We must, therefore, solidify all intents and purposes that will bring us together. We must shun divisive acts and practices. By so doing, we would be making our existence, both in this world and the next, the most blissful.

Furthermore, the Lamido would ask for prayers for the safe return of pilgrims to Saudi Arabia. He would also in his various speeches remind the people to always adhere to prayer. "Pray to your God, be it at Qur'anic schools, graduation ceremonies, mosques, wedding *fatihahs*, naming ceremonies and so on, for the salvation of the individual and the nation."

Apart from the strong belief in prayer as a person and in the capacity of a leader, the Lamido participates in every activity that would promote Islam especially as the vice president-general of Jama'atu Nasril Islam (JNI) and the head of its branch in Adamawa State. The Lamido is a strong supporter of the building of mosques and its spread throughout the Muslim communities in the emirate. At the fund-raising ceremony, in 1979, for the building of the new Jimeta central mosque to complement the 60-year old Friday mosque in the town, Lamido Aliyu Musdafa quoted from the Holy Quran: "He who builds a mosque for worship, Allah shall build for him a mansion in paradise. Let not our mosques be less beautiful than our houses." In about eight years, the new Jimeta mosque was completed, a giant and beautiful edifice that stands tallest on the landscape. The Lamido was also one of the brains behind the building of the central mosque in Yola town in 1964, with the efforts of Mahmud Ribadu, First Republic Minister of Defence who helped to build the mosque at the cost of 40,000 pounds.

The Lamido personally attends fund-raising ceremonies for the building of mosques, or their opening. In March 1979, he

was in Malabu to witness the renovation of the Friday mosque and the launching for the building of a new mosque for the Malabu community. In March 1995, the Lamido laid the foundation stone for a befitting mosque in Dasin village in Fufore local government area with a generous donation towards the building of the new mosque.

In 1962 the idea of bringing Muslims together for a common interest developed into Jama'atul Nasril Islam (Movement for the Promotion of Islam). JNI had as its objectives, giving welfare to pilgrims with support of the government, improving Islamic literature for Nigerian readers, building of mosques, standardising Islamic education, etc., through centres of learning. Its caretaker members in 1962 were Abubakar Gumi, (Grand Khadi), Abubakar Imam (Chairman, Public Service Commission), Haliru Binji (Deputy Grand Khadi), Ali Akilu (Secretary to the Premier), Ahmed Talib (Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance), Abubakar Al-Nafaty (Controller of the BCNN) and Ahmed Joda (Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Information).

Being a private organisation without government finance, JNI began in Kaduna under the chairmanship of Waziri Junaidu and the Sultan of Sokoto, Sir Abubakar III as president-general and the premier, Sir Ahmadu Bello as patron. The council had all emirs and chiefs, eminent scholars and leaders as members. The Lamido of Adamawa has been playing the role of patron in Adamawa since its formation there.<sup>1</sup>

The Lamido chairs all occasions under the organisation's auspices which must have first received his approval. Problems confronting JNI are brought before him for advice. The patron would periodically donate a sizeable amount of money to the organisation to reduce the financial burden. Most of all, the Lamido's goodwill at high levels of the society attracts positive contributions to JNI from Muslim individuals and organisations. During JNI's Central Council meetings in Kaduna, the Lamido and leaders in the state represent the interests of Muslims on issues such as sighting of the moon for Ramadan, *Riba'u*, Islamic calendar and factionalisation of Islam and so on.

A traditional function of the Lamido in religious affairs has been to encourage conversion of non-Muslims to Islam. Those

who want to change to the Islamic faith are continuously encouraged to do so. Most of the time, the converts are given financial support to settle down in the new faith, while most of conversions to Islam are conducted in private under the supervision of learned scholars.

During the Sardauna days in the mid-1960s, the Northern premier encouraged mass conversion to Islam and asked the emirs to co-ordinate the activities in the provinces. Officials of the JNI undertook tours throughout the region leaving behind preachers to complete formalities. The emirs were an important factor in the conversions as they served as one of the links with the communities. According to Hamidu Alkali, the premier put emphasis on areas that were predominantly non-Muslim and non-Christian so that the whole concept of conversion would not be misunderstood to be anti-Christian. In Adamawa province, attention was focused on neutral areas with the distribution of salt and clothes to the new converts. In his words, "though the Lamido supported the idea of converting people to Islam, the emir delegated officials and preachers to do it on his behalf as patron of JNI".

In 1973, at the opening of the Islamic Education Trust headquarters in Yola, the Lamido commended the body for converting 450 people to Islam through preaching embarked upon by five of its members in the Verre, Yungur, Kilba, Mayo Belwa, Nassarawo Jereng and Yola districts in its first year of formation. The Trust set up in 1977 was coordinated by Muhammadu Wali. The committee raised funds for its take-off and got one Islamic school from JNI, while eleven members were sent for training in Sokoto in preparation for intensive Islamic preaching.

Generally, Adamawa Emirate has been peaceful in the affairs of the different religious groups without a record of any violent clash between the sects — Tijjaniyya, Qadiriyya or Izala — as experienced in other parts of the country. The people of the emirate are moderate and unassuming about such matters. Modibbo Zailani, a Tijjaniyya leader, practised in his house with his followers and was not seen as a threat in Yola where the Maliki doctrine predominates. He also met with his followers every Friday quietly and peacefully. Modibbo Zailani also

conducted *Tafsir* during Ramadan periods before he died, while his group participated in all other religious activities.

During the reign of Lamido Lauwal, the Tijjaniyya brotherhood was seen as a threat to the establishment and a break with intellectual tradition. Therefore their activities were curtailed. The sect was founded in Adamawa by Modibbo Raji bn Ali bn Abubakar, a respectful scholar born in 1790 who specialised in *tafsir* and lived with his followers independent of the palace and regarded itself as exclusivist and morally superior. The Tijjaniyya laid the foundation of a real Islamic community which attracted other leading Islamic scholars from the western emirates.<sup>2</sup>

Lamido Aliyu Musdafa is in the forefront of the promotion of unity between the various Muslim sects in the emirate. He considers misunderstanding between any sects as a threat to the whole muslim community. When in the early 1980s the rivalry between the *Izala* and *Darika* sects, especially in Numan and Wukari was heating up, the Lamido in his *sallah* message on July 21, 1982, pointed out that, "it is not moral to accept the sectional divisions because all of us belong to the Maliki school of thought. Ethnic, cultural and political issues have a clear dividing line, hence they should not be used to bring confusion. These factors must not be used to disunite Muslims."

The Lamido serves as a rallying point for all Muslims in the emirate and the state in general in his role as a father to all without bias. He equally attends functions and ceremonies of the different sects, mostly as guest of honour. Where he is unable to attend, the Lamido sends an able representative to occasions like opening of Islamiyya schools, mosques, Quranic reading competitions, etc.

Sometimes, the relationship between the Muslim sects would turn sour and it became the responsibility of the Lamido to defuse any tension as fast as possible. In 1989, when certain views of two of the brotherhood organisations clashed and tension was heightening, the Lamido summoned seventeen leaders of the various sects to his palace to arrest the development. At the conference, he stressed the need for the many voices to speak as one through the formation of a central leadership for Muslims. That pronouncement formed the

backbone of the Muslims Council of Gongola State (now Adamawa State), under the chairmanship of Muhammadu Abba Yola, former Grand Khadi. As a follow-up, all the Muslim organisations sent three representatives each to form a caretaker committee which deliberated and sent a report to the Lamido. Inter-sect conflicts reached the lowest ebb with the formation of the Muslims Council, for people knew where to channel their grievances.

The Maitatsine massacre in Jimeta in February 1984, however remains one of the saddest events in the life of the people. For nearly a week, a misguided faction of religious fanatics led by Musa Makaniki went on rampage against both Muslims and Christians in a so-called jihad to purify the society. In a combined force, the army, police and concerned citizens fought the Maitatsine fanatics and ended the nightmare. Lamido Aliyu Musdafa joined millions of citizens in condemning the mass murder of innocent people by the sect members. On numerous visits to Jimeta during the crisis, the Lamido sympathised with victims of the carnage in the hospitals and at camps for the displaced people. Residents of Yola town equally provided shelter and food to those sacked by Musa Makaniki and his followers, while the police and army barracks gave protection and temporary shelters to the fleeing Jimeta residents.

Several days after the Maitatsine monster was destroyed, some mischievous persons raised false alarms about Maitatsine to scare away people from their houses and businesses in order to loot. In his sallah message in June 1985, the Lamido reminded the people about their responsibility to their families, especially children who were abandoned in times of such confusion. He asked the men: "If you run, what about your children and wives, should they perish, don't they deserve to live too? Maitatsine cult members are fellow human beings like us, they are neither monsters nor superhumans. And now, hoodlums are seizing the opportunity to cause confusion in the guise of religious crisis to steal your property. When you flee, the hoodlums get encouraged and they strike again because you have shown weakness." It was then the people realised that there was the need to withstand the Maitatsine scourge, fight back and report

any suspicious characters to the authorities. He stressed that "our leaders must maintain their responsibilities and abide by truth in their duties, because Allah sees both the hidden and the revealed".

In his *sallah* speech on April 4, 1992, Lamido Aliyu Musdafa prayed for the souls of the victims of the religious disturbances in Jalingo, the previous month. He implored religious leaders and those in authority to eschew bitterness and enhance religious tolerance among the different faiths in the society. In the wake of the Jalingo crisis which broke out as a result of misunderstanding between Muslims and Christians in a secondary school, the Lamido, the Sultan of Sokoto and other traditional rulers embarked on a peace mission to Taraba State which was engulfed in mayhem. As part of a nation-wide campaign for religious tolerance both Christian and Muslim leaders met and discussed ways of avoiding future religious upheavals.

The Lamido gives opportunities to the development of both Islam and Christianity in his domain without bias. Unlike in other areas, more Christians have been able to secure land for the building of churches in Yola town and environs. Those of the Christian faith are also allowed to go about their convictions without interference in a society predominantly Muslim. Due to his sense of justice and fairness to all irrespective of religious or ethnic differences, the Lamido was honoured in appreciation by the Christian community. Christian institutions and establishments have always invited the Lamido to attend special ceremonies which he honours. At the convocation ceremony of the Bronum Seminary held at Mbamba, near Yola on February 11, 1994, a hot, fasting day the Lamido was the guest of honour accompanied by many of his council members.

The Chiroma Adamawa, Barkindo Aliyu Musdafa notes that:

The Prophet Muhammad preached tolerance and practised it during his time. In his lifetime there were Christians and Jews who were staying in both Mecca and Medina and the Prophet co-existed with them. That is the apex of tolerance. That character is what the Lamido is copying. A leader must learn to tolerate all sorts of opinion. In Adamawa,

there are Muslims, Christians and pagans, so it will be really disastrous to tolerate one section and ignore the other.<sup>3</sup>

The sighting of the moon for the Ramadan has for long been a divisive factor in the Muslim community. Though the Lamido has the prerogative of declaring the beginning of fasting in his domain, some individuals or groups would not abide by the official announcement and commence their Ramadan a day or two days after. By this, the date of celebrating the Id-el-Fitr would always be at variance. On one or two occasions, this disparity led to controversy in the emirate. On one rare occasion, Thursday, February 25, 1993, (the 5th day of Ramadan' 1413 AH), the Lamido addressed a press conference in which he encapsulated the raging controversy about the sighting of the moon in Yola and the actual date Muslims should start fasting.

On Saturday, February 20, at about 10.00 p.m. His Eminence, the Sultan of Sokoto and *Sarkin Musulmi*, announced to all Muslims in the country over the radio that the moon for Ramadan had been sighted in various locations in the northern part of the country. The Sultan identified more than five towns and wards where people sighted the moon.

The Lamido summoned a meeting attended by members of the Emirate Council including the Chief Imam of Yola, Muhammadu Barkindo and his deputy, Abdullahi Gamu. At that meeting, it was unanimously agreed that the following day, Sunday, February 21, all Muslims should commence fasting. The collective decision was in accordance with the guidelines in the Holy Quran, Hadith and teachings of learned mallams. Subsequently, all Muslims obeyed and fasted on February 21.

However, on Tuesday after evening *ishai* and *asham* prayers, the imam announced that all muslims should start a fresh intention, *anniya*, for the Ramadan, the following day. This pronouncement by the imam brought a lot of confusion capable of dividing the Muslim *ummah*. Muslims are supposed to pray together, fast together, go to Hajj together, attend funerals of their loved ones together, etc.

"Being the Lamido of Adamawa, the Imam of Yola is my representative and derives his authority from my office. In that

context, there is no way I can allow the Muslim community to drift into a chaotic situation such as in *sallat* and fasting. By this, I have relieved Muhammadu Barkindo of his duties as the Imam of Yola on this fifth day of Ramadan. Similarly, the Imam's deputy, Abdullahi Gamu is relieved of his post with immediate effect", the Lamido announced. Consequently, the rendering of the Holy Quran, *tafsir*, at the central mosque in that month by the imam was stopped, while Imam Barkindo ceased to be a member of the Adamawa Emirate Council.<sup>4</sup>

The removal of the imam and his deputy was received differently in Yola as some quarters had the opinion that the action was severe and the imam should have been admonished or warned not to repeat the misdeed. Others assented to the Lamido's move saying, the imam in his seven-year tenure had the practice of not beginning or ending fasting on the stipulated dates. "How can a religious leader tell his followers to do what he says and not what he does?" they queried.

Split opinions on the sacking of the imam created a rift in Yola especially with the media spotlight that blew the issue. Radical mallams sided with the imam and the moderates simply followed the Sultan's and Lamido's orders on the Ramadan issue. It is believed that the mallams pressured Umaru Mbamba into not accepting the offer of imamship due to his friendship with the previous imam. The new candidate, after being approached for the appointment, agreed to act as imam; but after leaving the palace, he declined the post. The following day, the Lamido appointed Abubakar Buba as acting Chief Imam of Yola until a new imam, Abubakar Bobboi was confirmed the following year.

Meanwhile, *tafsir* at the Yola Central Mosque was taken over by Hamidu Alkali and Hamman Adamu from Jada. According to Hamidu Alkali the underlying factor of the controversy was misunderstanding of the position of western educated scholars by the mallams. They (mallams) thought that they were being despised because of their lack of western education. Yet the educated scholars respected them and interacted with them. But there remained this element of distrust on the part of the mallams.



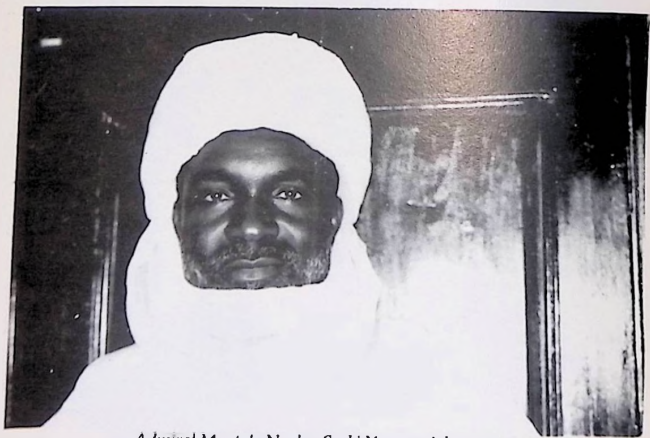
*Alhaji Murtala Aminu, Galadima Adamawa*



*Alhaji Muhammadu Gambo Jimeta, Dan Lawan Adamawa*



*Alhaji Hassan Adamu, Wakili Adamawa*



*Admiral Murtala Nyako, Sarki Yamma Adamawa*

What happened was that there had been a lot of agitation in our minds both openly and privately about how certain learned people who should set example for others to follow were in fact betraying the confidence reposed in them. Whenever the sighting of the moon was announced by the Sultan of Sokoto, the Lamido would call some learned scholars for consultation according to the dictates of *Sharia* to establish the authenticity. In the case of 1993, when the Sultan announced the sighting of the moon in various towns, the Lamido called the mallams to his palace and the Imam, Barkindo was the first to agree. The traditional beating of the *tumbal* drum was made at the palace and the people got to know about the commencement of Ramadan. There is no two ways about the sighting of the moon. But imam Barkindo later told the people to renew *anniya* therefore declaring the previous day's fasting null and void. The Lamido heard about it and sent for the imam who did not deny his action and accepted full responsibility. And then the Lamido asked him how he came about his position because the council had met and accepted the Sultan's message. The imam answered that he only told the people to renew *anniya*. The imam was supposed to be acting on behalf of the Lamido and not for himself. The best thing to do was for the imam to resign in protest. After he left, the Lamido asked us (in gathering) and we all agreed that the imam had committed a very serious offence by misleading the public and it was not in the best interest of the society for him to continue his imamship, even though, we were aware there were quite a number of people like him who were not fasting even though the moon was sighted.<sup>5</sup>

The Ramadan moon controversy has been a perennial problem to the Muslim community in the country. Concerted efforts, in this light, have been geared to resolving the issue in various fora. In 1992, the Nigerian Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs (NSCIA) met in Kano to discuss the divisive tendency in the method for observing Ramadan as a whole. The Kano conference deliberated specially on the lack of consensus of the Muslim community on Ramadan the previous year, which was observed on different days.

Lamido Aliyu Musdafa attended the conference and was

accompanied by the Galadima, Murtala Aminu, who is also the national legal adviser of the NSCIA including a few notable scholars from Adamawa. The forum decided that methods on determining a uniform and acceptable Islamic calendar should be outlined. Sultan Dasuki invited the meeting to Sokoto to continue deliberations on the issue. For three days in Sokoto, the meeting discussed on the issue of the Ramadan moon, Islamic calendar, *Riba'u* and other matters. The intellectuals agreed that:

- (1) The sunna of Prophet Mohammed (SAW) should be strictly followed in the sighting, authenticating and announcement of the Ramadan moon;
- (2) Before the announcement of the fasting, those persons who saw the moon must be interrogated to know the position and size of the crescent at the time of sighting for authenticity;
- (3) At the time of announcement, the name of the person or group of persons who saw the moon and their addresses must be identified and recorded on tape;
- (4) The moon sighted must be in Nigeria or neighbouring countries such as Niger and Cameroun having the same time with Nigeria.

The General Assembly of the NSCIA ratified these four points and advised that committees on sighting of the moon should be set up in each local government area of the country. These committees are to receive all reports of the sighting of the moon for Ramadan, and other Muslim festivals for immediate communication to the Sultan through the emirs.

However, before the end of the fasting period and in anticipation of the conflict of date for the forthcoming *sallah*, the Lamido called a meeting of district heads, village heads, learned mallams, Emirate Council members, JNI officials and other members, three days before the festival to discuss ways of avoiding problems in the sighting of the *Shawwal* moon. At the meeting, the Lamido called on all Muslims to regard the misunderstanding as the handiwork of the devil to weaken Islam and advised them not to allow the disintegration of the *ummah*:<sup>7</sup>

There exists some people who do not abide by this tradition, but without justification. It is sad to note that this ignorance is rearing its ugly head here in Adamawa. Last year, after the *id*, some people went out the following day again for the *id* on their own. It should be known that their actions are not based on the injunctions of the Holy Quran or the teachings of Prophet Muhammed or from the preachings of our learned mallams, but on their own misconception. What these people did is an exhibition of indiscipline, moral laxity and disobedience to learned authority. I will not allow the above mentioned incident to occur again. We must all unite in the name of Islam and follow the commandments of Allah.

The Lamido observed that signs of disunity among Muslims were being manifested deliberately and it behoved everyone to take urgent steps and stem the ugly trend before it got too late. In this kind of situation, he said when a Muslim's personal conviction goes against the laid down procedures of Islam, that individual should worship alone in his house. However, he should not and must not be allowed to have influence on other Muslims or to incite fellow Muslims to disturb the peace. The Lamido noted three basic methods to be followed after the Sultan of Sokoto must have confirmed the sighting of the crescent.

1. In the Holy Quran, the Hadith and other teachings, there is no one particular provision that states that the moon should be looked for at dawn. This is a misconstrued practice not approved by Islam.
2. After the moon is sighted, and its authenticity cleared, Muslims are to abide by the date for Ramadan unanimously. But, if at the end of the fasting period or *sallah* an error is detected, that mistake should be publicly announced and people should be told to fast again for the equal number of days fasted in error. The persons whose faulty decision lead to the wrong commencement of fasting should not be punished, flogged or imprisoned. Only their mistake should be exposed. Also, if the moon is sighted in any other part of the country, and it is investigated and confirmed, but later found to be wrong,

the error should be made public and people are to be told to compensate for the days of fasting. Nevertheless, it should be noted that once a person or group of persons commit an error they should not be branded as liars or put into distrust. Furthermore, punitive measures should not be taken against them, though it is not a licence for them to allow further errors.

3. In this country, most Muslims belong to the Maliki School of thought which believes that if the moon is sighted in one's particular country that observation should be generally accepted.

The Lamido continued that Muslims should not forget that the Maitatsine sect is unIslamic and not part of the Muslim society. The activities of the sect members should not be connected with the affairs of the Muslim *umamah*. In this context, he said, the destabilising factors as shown in the recent violent dispute in Funtua, Katsina State should be condemned and adequate measures taken to forestall a recurrence.

He called on fellow Muslim brothers and sisters to abide by the injunctions of Allah, the traditions of Prophet Muhammed and *ijma'i*, (the teachings of our scholars). He warned that people must shun personal and cultural beliefs that conflict with the tenets of Islam. It is imperative on all Muslims to submit to God, maintain discipline and eschew bitterness; have belief in the oneness of God and follow the Quran and the deeds of Prophet Muhammed. He reiterated his earlier warning that he would not allow any divisive acts in the Muslim society. Finally, he urged all religious leaders to be in the vanguard of unity and peace, exchange ideas freely and resolve differing views and opinions amicably.

I assure you all that in my capacity as the Lamido and leader of all Muslims in Adamawa, my palace gates are open to you anytime. I pray to Almighty Allah to bless this conference and its participants. May Allah guide us in achieving our purpose at this meeting and protect us as we return to our various homes. *Assalamu Allaikum warahmatullahi wa barakatuhu.*

On February 22, Lamido Aliyu Musdafa performed the *id* prayers led by the acting Imam of Yola to mark the *Id el fitr*, the end of fasting. But, a section of Muslims did not attend the prayers thereby exhuming the buried issue of lack of consensus. Security measures were taken by the Lamido to prevent a second *id* the following day by the unorthodox persons. Though nobody was hurt or punished, Muslims that year witnessed only one *id* prayer as hundreds of people were turned away by the Lamido's *dogarai* and the police.

Hamidu Alkali recalls that the Lamido's steadfastness to the Ramadan moon issue, apart from the efforts of the NSCIA, is not unconnected with the incident in 1988 when the moon was seen in Zaria and fasting declared. But, someone who just came to Yola from Zaria reported that the moon was not sighted due to low visibility caused by harmattan there. The Lamido was misled by that statement and therefore missed the first day of the fasting. But on realisation of the error, the Lamido made a public announcement that the fasting should go on, but the missing one day be compensated. So Adamawa together with the rest of the country celebrated *Id el fitr* on the same day.

## Notes

1. John Paden, *Ahmadu Bello*, (1986) p. 548.
2. Sa'ad Abubakar, *Lamibe of Fombina*, (1977) p.105.
3. Interview, Barkindo Musdafa, December 1995, Yola.
4. Imam Barkindo on leaving office apologised to the Lamido and the Emirate Council expressing regrets over the controversy saying his removal was in good faith.
5. Interview, Hamidu Alkali, June 1993, Yola.
6. Interview, Gambo Jika, August 1993, Yola. Jika is the Secretary, Aid Group of JNI in Adamawa State, Secretary of Muslims Council in Adamawa State and member of media committee of Nigerian Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs.
7. The meeting was organised by the JNI on March 18, 1993 for Muslims to speak with one voice and live in peaceful co-existence.



## Appendix 1

An approximate translation of the Hausa song, *Aliyu Lamido Adamiawa*, by Alhaji Musa Dan Kwairo.

*Aliyu, son of Musdafa, you are never an easy prey  
Ali, your reign is fortified and shines like a star  
Whoever comes to Yola would see your glory*

*Celebrate your victory over lesser men, Ali  
Oh lion, celebrate your victory over lesser men  
No enemy dares to look you in the eye, Ali  
Even your words cannot be challenged by men  
No, no, not in your emirate*

*You non-believers, before you is a lion  
Go near him and your days are over  
You know the triumphant Ali, always victorious  
For he is a warrior*

*The Battle of Badr is still fresh in our minds  
Ali's valour has been the enemy's nightmare  
For his footprints are still on the sands*

*Grandson of Abba, brush off the enemy, Great Ali  
Oh, grandson of Abba, you are the enemy's nightmare  
Ali, son of Musdafa, you are never an easy prey*

*Dan Kwairo, the singer is shifting to Yola  
The city of Ali  
Let's go and taste the milk  
Of the white cow  
Dan Kwairo assures you, Yola is bliss  
His boys confirm, Yola is bliss  
The monarch says we can come every year*

*The citizens are singing praises  
"We are blessed with Ali the Great"  
Your epoch, Ali, is full of glory*

*But you, the offsprings of the monarch  
Listen to the patriarch, whoever strays  
From the path is not worthy of the royal family  
That recalcitrant one shall be a herdsman*

*Modibbo, the learned one, had his reign  
It was pure and holy, for he destroyed the non-believers  
Lauwal too had his reign  
It was pure and holy, he destroyed the pagans  
Zubairu had his reign  
It was pure and holy, he cast away the devils  
Ahmadu had his reign  
It was pure and holy, he dealt with the enemy  
Iya had his reign  
It was pure and holy, he slew the non-believers*

*Abba had his reign  
It was pure and holy, he too slew the non-believers  
Maigari had his reign  
It was pure and holy, he drove away the pagans  
Musdafa had his reign  
It was pure and holy, he purged the enemy  
Ahmadu had his reign  
It was pure and holy, he destroyed the pagans  
Alhaji Ali, learned one, you also dealt with the enemy  
And you shall continue to be victorious  
Aliyu, son of Musdafa, you are not an easy prey  
O lion, king of all, the enemy will not come near you  
For you are the triumpher*

*When you hear the clarion-call  
It is the sound of the Lamido, not the village head  
For even among kings, Aliyu is always ahead*

*The lands of Girei, Fufore and Kilba  
Are your gems, Lamido Ali, father of Barkindo  
Father of Tijjani, Lamido Ali  
Father of Ahmadu, Lamido Ali  
Father of Hadiza, Lamido Ali*

*Father of Mamudu, Lamido Ali*

*Father of Batulu, Lamido Ali*

*Stretch your arms and embrace Jalingo*

*It is the land of Modibbo*

*Stretch your reach to Gembu*

*That, too, is the land of Modibbo*

*Turn to the east, to the Cameroon*

*For it is the land of Modibbo*

*The flag of Shehu gave them to you*

*You are the successor of Modibbo*

*And the successor of Lauwal*

*And the successor of Sanda*

*And the successor of Zubairu*

*And the successor of Bobbo Almadu*

*And the successor of Iya*

*And the successor of Maigari*

*And the successor of Musdafa*

*And the successor of Almadu*

*The ambition of the child is to be like his father*

*Today, that ambition has been achieved.*

*The father of Rukayya*

*He who forfeits his night rest*

*To pray for the peace of the land*

*When you see a congregation of kings and princes*

*They come from everywhere*

*When you see him, handsome and fair*

*Tall and youthful*

*He is none other than Ali son of Musdafa*

*That car with the number GGLG 1 Y*

*Don't ask, it is the Lamido's car*

*If you do not know, my friend, let me explain*

*The alphabets GG stand for Gongola*

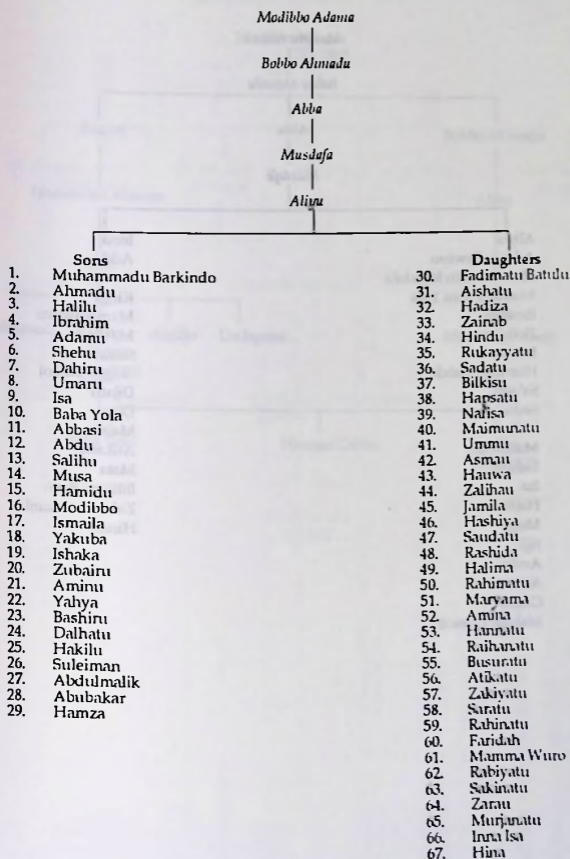
*The Y stands for Yola*

*Here I am singing for the Fulani*

*The Kanuri bow down their heads  
 For they know it is the song of their ruler  
 Aliyu, son of Musdafa, you are not an easy prey.*

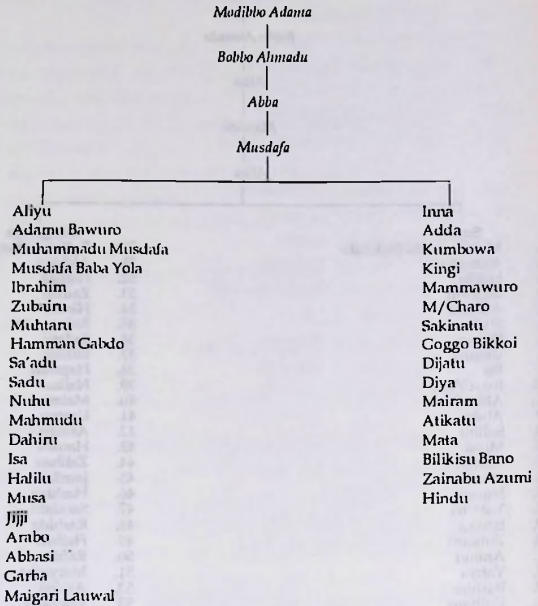
## Appendix 2

### Genealogy showing Aliyu Musdafa's children



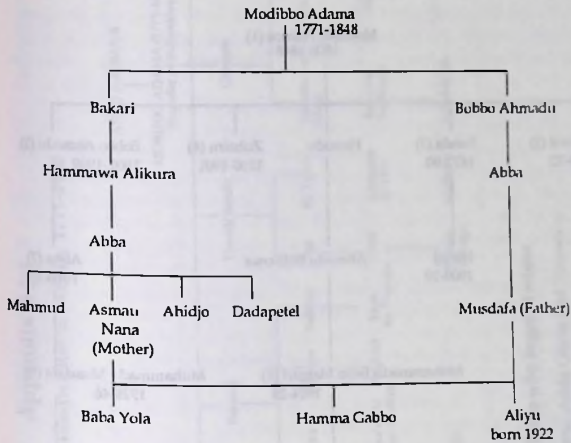
### Appendix 3

Genealogy showing Lamido Aliyu Musdafa's brothers and sisters



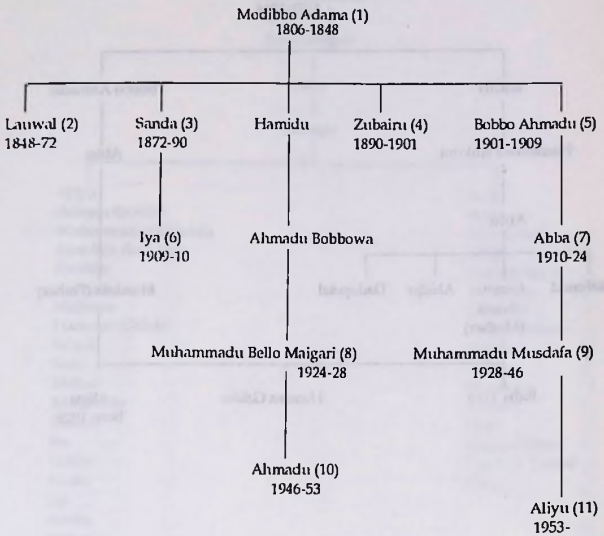
## Appendix 4

Genealogy of Lamido Aliyu Musdafa showing both parents' lineage



## Appendix 5

### The Lamibe of Adamawa







## Appendix 7

### Memorandum on the Jihad in Adamawa

By Sheikh Usman Dan Fodio, Commander of the Faithfuls

I begin in the name of Allah, the Lord of the creation; all thanks be to this Lord who has no rival; peace and blessings be on our Prophet and upon his friends and kinsfolk. May the Lord receive our prayers and fill us with faith.

Modibbo Adama, today I have made you leader from among the Fulani people with who you are, not because you are superior to them, but because of the trust which they have in you. I too accept you.

Certainly, leadership in the disturbed times in which we are is not easy. You are to understand my injunction and hold fast to it. You are to know that as regards all the lands in the south, you have no boundary with anyone, apart from the boundary between you and Buba Yero and Gwani Mukhtar.

I adjure you to strengthen the tradition of the Messenger of Allah (SAW) and conduct holy war for the sake of Allah. Whenever you gain victory in the holy war, you should give good treatment to the slaves you capture; make them moslems; do not force them to any task that is beyond their powers; treat them as well as you possibly can; do good to them first if possible before you do it to yourselves.

If you teach them how to read, and they complete the Qur'an and they acquire understanding of the moslem religion, you may intermarry with them, and liberate those who have had the opportunity of becoming true moslems, as it is written in the holy Qur'an. And in war, you are not to kill women and children and old people, and you should not destroy farms and useful fruit trees, except for eating.

Do not attack, that is make raids, on the pagans unless they break faith with you, as the book of Allah says.

Furthermore, I enjoin you not to conquer the pagans of the Bata and Vere or enslave their children. Because even (if) the pagans oppress you, you are forbidden to retaliate in force but recover by force what they seize from you. But if Allah grants you victory over them, you must let them live their own lives and not disperse them completely, and if they ask for peace you should agree.

Now Adama, the times are difficult, since you tell me that some of the Fulani did not come with you, but they sent you to come and receive the flag of the jihad from me and take it back to them, I instruct you to tell them that it is to you I have given this jihad flag. And tell

them that whoever obeys you obeys me, and whoever swears fealty to you, it is exactly as if he had sworn fealty to me.

You should meet and come to terms with these Fulani leaders, since they have all been chiefs under the rule of the infidels. Since we want them to spread the religion of Allah, you can give to each of them a flag as I have given you; you should allocate to them districts that each can hold, appropriate to their rank. You should choose virtuous ones from among them who will be able to help you with advice and so continue.

I warn you to avoid oppression, wanton damage, spilling of blood without the sanction of law and nepotism. Because if you indulge in partiality and class distinction, your authority would be broken and this would destroy satisfaction, understanding and good relations. And if good relationship is lacking, the holy war would suffer and a destructive war would start. And this would bring harm even after it has been settled.

You should listen to the advice of the Fulani leaders to whom you have given flags, and you must see that you are in agreement with them on just cause and right actions as between you and Allah. You should respect them and behave correctly to them without deception.

Whatever you do you should do it promptly, for too much discussion ruins the best intentions. You should remember that fear of Allah depends on two things — following His orders and eschewing disobedience.

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This book is the first work on the life and service of Adamawa's longest reigning emir which spans over seven decades. Tracing the life and work of Aliyu Musdafa, *Lamido Adamawa* overlaps the biography of a man, a prince, a monarch, a reformer, a statesman, a custodian and spiritual leader. His life is interwoven with the history of Adamawa, the traditional institution and culture of the people. It also encapsulates the journey of Nigeria to nationhood. The biography of Aliyu Musdafa, with a journalistic approach to the events of our times, is therefore a handbook for academics, students and people with general interest in Adamawa, its history, institution, people and culture.

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