

# On the Emergence of Gung Zaar

## Introduction

We believe that the path to freedom is a path only the brave and the resilient can take. Those who have traversed this path can attest that it is filled with obstacles and challenges. It can be rough and stormy, with numerous ups and downs that may discourage and dishearten individuals. At times, it can be frustrating and disappointing, leaving a sense of betrayal and denial. However, if we refuse to give up or succumb to the naysayers who claim that success is impossible, the path to freedom will lead us to our desired destination - the promised land.

This is the story of the Zaar people's pursuit of hope, freedom, and dignity. Our patriarch, Baba Peter Gonto, of blessed and glorious memory, had a dream that one day our people would break free from the clutches of tyrants and those who denied our inherent rights to freedom, dignity, and the pursuit of happiness. As John F. Kennedy once said, "*The rights of every man are diminished when the rights of one man are threatened.*"

Baba Gonto dreamt of a time when the Zaar people would have their own King (Chief) on their terms. He envisioned a paramount leader who would serve as a unifying figure for the Zaar Nation. This dream represented the realisation of self-rule, the actualisation of Gung Zaar of the Zaar Chieftdom, in our ancestral capital or headquarters, Puji (Tafawa Balewa). It was a dream crafted by the Zaar people, for the Zaar people - a dream of a separate and independent Zaar Chieftdom, distinct from the Bauchi Emirate.

It was a dream rooted in the rights we hold dear: the right to life, liberty, and personal security; the right to self-rule and self-determination; the right to pursue happiness; freedom from discrimination; freedom of belief and religion; individual liberty; access to education; fair and just treatment; equity; and freedom from discrimination (Assembly, 1948).

## **Sources of Power for Self-Rule**

Before the emergence of the Baba Gonto era, the Zaar people governed and led themselves through their culture and traditions. Various clans within the community had their own systems of justice, law, and order, which were upheld by leaders such as family heads, Hamlet Heads, Village Heads, elders, women heads, youth heads, and priests. These clan leadership hierarchies were further supplemented by inter-clan structures, and the Chief Priest of the Zaar Nation received instructions and guidance from a superior authority overseeing the affairs of the land and its people. Before Nigeria's independence in 1960, there were recommendations made, particularly by the 1957 *Willink Minority Commission*, where leaders of minority ethnic groups advocated for self-rule and independence (Izuagie, 2015). This was because the culture and traditions of the ethnic nationalities were fundamentally different from the Emirate system. As Zaar people, for example, we are predominantly Christians, and this means that the principles and procedures of our leadership are unique and distinct from those of the Bauchi Emirate. Asking us to conform to a different system would be like fitting a square peg into a round hole (Eichner, 1998).

## **Historical Background Behind the Emergence of Gung Zaar**

The idea of selecting a Community Leader started with the Zaar Development Association (ZDA) Abuja Branch shortly after Dr. B. B. Bukar, now Prof. B. B. Bukar assumed office as the ZDA National President. ZDA National leadership together with ZAYODA National leadership led by Mr. Y. Y. Mbishida started discussing the issue with the ZDA Abuja Branch and other ZDA Branches across Nigeria. At that time, Barr. Istifanus Bala Gambar was the ZDA Chairman Lagos Branch and was privy to all the plans that took place. It was later agreed to bring in Zauren Baba Peter Gonto. However, members of Zauren Gonto did not exhibit the needed cooperation, with the suspicion that the ZDA

National body wanted to displace their functions with the introduction of a Community Leader.

To them, if they allow the emergence of a Community Leader what will be their role? It was at this point that they began to refuse honouring our (ZDA National) invitations for the meeting on the issue. In short, the attempt to execute the plan was aborted by the Zauren Gonto. Before then, the (Zaar) Community had plethora of complaints laid before the ZDA National leadership against Zauren Gonto. During the 4th joint meeting of ZDA and ZAYODA in 2003 at the Government Day Secondary School (GDSS) Tafawa Balewa. One Sunday, the meeting unanimously passed a vote of no confidence on members of Zauren Gonto and was pronounced dissolved. In view of this, an interim Committee including persons such as late Baba Rev. Iliya Mailafiya, late Baba Damina Sara, Baba Bala Madaki, etc. were appointed as members to pilot the affairs of Zauren Gonto. Dr. B. B. Bukar led ZDA National tenure terminated in 2007 and Barr. Istifanus Bala Gambar took over the mantle of leadership in the year 2007.

The consequence of the absence of leadership made, the ZDA National body lead by Barr. Istifanus Bala Gambar in 2008 to inaugurate a 20-man committee tagged 'RECONCILIATION COMMITTEE ON THE MISUNDERSTANDING BETWEEN ZAUREN BABA GONTO AND ZAAR DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION' whose Chair was Dr. Ajemasu Riks. It was a move to douse the conflict between the two apex bodies and get them unified. The Committee spent eight (8) months and submitted its report but sadly the implementation of the report was resisted by Zauren Gonto. The Community had waited eagerly for a change, but it turned out not to be! Now ZAYODA National body having seen that the effort to effect change in the leadership of Zauren Gonto was foiled, re-started the movement for the emergence of a Community Leader christened the Gung Zaar of Zaar Kingdom. The inauguration by ZAYODA was not in breach at all because the whole thing started during the regime of Dr. B. B. Bukar. For the records, the

ZDA, the ZAYODA, and the Women Wing have a single corporate registration. Thus, the decision of the ZDA National then enjoyed the full backing of both the ZAYODA and the Women Wing.

### **Constitution of the 2009 Committee**

Following the passing of our revered freedom fighter, the late Baba Gonto, in the year 2000, a leadership vacuum emerged. Recognising the need for a unifying figure, the Zaar people embarked on a search for a paramount leader. To address the nine-year leadership vacuum in the land, the Zaar Youth Development Association (ZAYODA) initiated a journey in search of a solution. Under the leadership of the then ZAYODA National President, Mr. Polmi Ibrahim, a 7-member committee was established on 13 April 2009. This committee was tasked with finding a paramount leader, referred to as the "Community Leader." Mr. Darabo Danja served as the ZAYODA Secretary at that time. The committee's first meeting took place at the Area Development Office of Marti Community, and it was attended by the hamlet head of Marti. This choice of venue was made because Marti had been actively involved in the Zaar struggle for self-determination.

### **Criteria for Nomination**

To guide the search for the Community Leader, there was the need to design criteria for the nomination of potential candidates. The criteria for the nomination included the following:

- i. son of Zaarland,
- ii. patriotic son of Zaarland,
- iii. person of strong Christian conviction,
- iv. a man of proving integrity,
- v. widely accepted throughout the land,
- vi. a person that cannot be cowed,

- vii. possesses good leadership qualities,
- viii. have the unity and progress of the Zaar people at heart,
- ix. is vocal,
- x. is one that can effectively represent the interests of the Zaar Nation,
- xi. a person that has at least a secondary school certificate or its equivalent,
- xii. must be someone not giving to partisan politics,
- xiii. must be someone not giving to drinking,
- xiv. must be someone fit to be a role model,
- xv. must be a visionary, and
- xvi. any other commendable tendencies.

### **The Committee Members**

Because we have the unalienable right to self-determination based on the core principle of international law (Deci and Ryan, 2012; Kelsen, 2003). We, the Zaar people, took our destiny in our own hands. This was exactly what the Committee did. After its inauguration, the Committee in its wisdom expanded its membership to eleven (11) to ease the dissemination of information. The expanded memberships are hereby referred to as co-opted members. The members of the Committee included the following:

- i. Mr. Thawus Maigida – Chairman
- ii. Pst. Isaac Istifanus – Secretary
- iii. Mr. Yohanna Yelmi Mbishida – Member
- iv. Mr. Emma Hakuri Gidado – Member
- v. Mr. Jerry I. Abarshi Mbwar (late) – Member
- vi. Mr. Silas Komo Marti – Member
- vii. Mr. Adamu Mato – Member
- viii. Mr. Polycarp Irmiya – co-opted Member (ZAYODA Kaduna)
- ix. Mr. Yusuf Siman Rinas – co-opted Member (ZAYODA Lagos)
- x. Mr. Yusuf Yohanna – co-opted Member (ZAYODA Abuja)

- xi. Mr. Yohanna Magaji (late) - co-opted Member (PRO ZAYODA Bogoro Branch)

We believe that experience is the best teacher. So, our people have learned over time to invoke divine power in their affairs and the search for a Community Leader was not an exception. Understanding that there are spiritual forces against the liberation of the Zaar Nation, the Committee decided to embark on prayer and possibly fasting to ask for God's guidance and strength. During the time of seeking God, some prayer groups in the Land were asked to back up the Committee with prayers. It was gathered that one of the groups that met regularly to pray was called the "Zaar Elders of the Land".

### **Powers of the Committee**

The Committee derived its powers from the Zaar people because they were a product of the people, by the people, and for the people. Other sources of power include the white paper of Justice Babalakin's Commission of Inquiry created by the then military Head of State Gen. Ibrahim Babangida. The Commission of Inquiry was constituted to investigate the remote and immediate causes of the 22 April 1991 crisis at Puji. The white paper was released in February 1992. One of the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry was the creation of a separate Chiefdom for the Sayawa (Zaar) People out of the Bauchi Emirate and the Bauchi State Government should work out the modalities for the actualisation of the Sayawa (Zaar) Chiefdom (Wadam, 2014). Understandably, most of the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry were implemented by the Bauchi State Government except for the creation of a separate independent Chiefdom from the Bauchi Emirate for the Sayawa (Zaar) People. One will wonder why the Bauchi State Government has continually delayed or seemingly refused to implement this singular demand of the Zaar people.

## Consultation of Zaar Stakeholders

Afterwards, the Committee mapped out a strategy to consult Zaar leadership groups, elites, and some prominent Zaar sons and daughters. The Zaar leadership groups consulted included the then *Zauren Baba Gonto* (9 surviving members as of 2009), the ZDA, the ZAYODA, the NUZAS, the *Guth Yalth*, the *Nigerian Legion* Tafawa Balewa and Bogoro LGAs, the *Zaar Council of Elders*, the CAN Bogoro and Tafawa Balewa LGAs, the *Zaar Council of Traditional Rulers*, and the neighbouring *non-Zaar Traditional Rulers*. The visitation and consultation lasted for several months.

For the record, the Zaar stakeholders consulted directly or indirectly (not in any order) include but are not limited to the following:

- i. Gung Bernard Bako (Village Head of Walgi),
- ii. Gung Adamu Shirya (Village Head of Marsgh),
- iii. Gung Nuhu Tafida (Village Head of Bogoro),
- iv. Gung WO David Gambo Yarda - rtd (Hamlet Head of Mwari),
- v. Gung Titus Godiya (Hamlet Head of Kurum Dodo) - late,
- vi. Gung Samaila Landi (Hamlet Head of Mundu),
- vii. Baba Garba Vurmi (late - the then Chairman of the Zaar Council of Elders),
- viii. Hon. Barr. Bukata Zyhadi (the then Secretary of the Zaar Council of Elders, now late),
- ix. Hon. Barr. Yakubu Dogara (the then HoR Member representing Bogoro/Dass/Tafawa Balewa Federal Constituency),
- x. Baba Boyi Bar (the then Chairman of Zauren Baba Gonto was consulted but declined to see the Committee - late),
- xi. Yabra Y. Isah (then Secretary Zauren Baba Gonto),
- xii. Barr. Istifanus Bala Gambar (then ZDA National President from 2007-2017, now late),
- xiii. Mr. Polmi Ibrahim (the then ZAYODA National President),
- xiv. Mr. Darabo Danja (the then ZAYODA National Secretary),

- xv. Sgt. Sake Dariyen - rtd (the then Chairman of the Nigerian Legion Tafawa Balewa LGA),
- xvi. Sgt. Ayuba Madaki - rtd (late - the then Chairman of the Nigerian Legion Bogoro LGA),
- xvii. Mrs. Keziya Akawu Magani (then Guth Yaathl Leader),
- xviii. Rev. Ajiya MaiLere (Representative of Sara Village Area),
- xix. SP. Mugana Sarki - rtd (Representative of Sara Village Area),
- xx. Rev. Ishaku Komo (late - former RCC Chairman Tafawa Balewa),
- xxi. Rev. Markus Musa (the then CAN Chairman Tafawa Balewa),
- xxii. Bishop Wakili Power,
- xxiii. Rev. Yusuf Waziri (former COCIN RCC Chairman Bauchi),
- xxiv. Rev. Daniel Shermi (late),
- xxv. Rev. Yusuf Daniel Gizo,
- xxvi. Rev. Mugana Dazai (the then reverend in charge of COCIN Kagadama Bauchi),
- xxvii. Rev. Lawi Pokti,
- xxviii. Prof. Suleiman Bogoro,
- xxix. Hon. A. A. Zabs,
- xxx. Hon. William Wadni,
- xxxi. Barr. Joseph Kolchi Gwarangah (late),
- xxxii. Chief Danjuma Bulus Yabra,
- xxxiii. Hon. Elisha Tula Gwamis,
- xxxiv. Pharm. B. B. Bukar (former ZDA National President from 2003 to 2007),
- xxxv. Mr. Simon Taimako (former Caretaker Chairman of Bogoro LGA),
- xxxvi. Barr. Jonathan Kadiri Manzo (late),
- xxxvii. Hon. Habila Bako Lumana,
- xxxviii. Pharm. Yohanna Adamu Ryaghan,
- xxxix. Hon. Rifkatu Samson Danna (then member representing Bogoro LGA BSHA),
- xl. Baba Kura Gonto (late),
- xli. Mr. D. Kushi Jang,



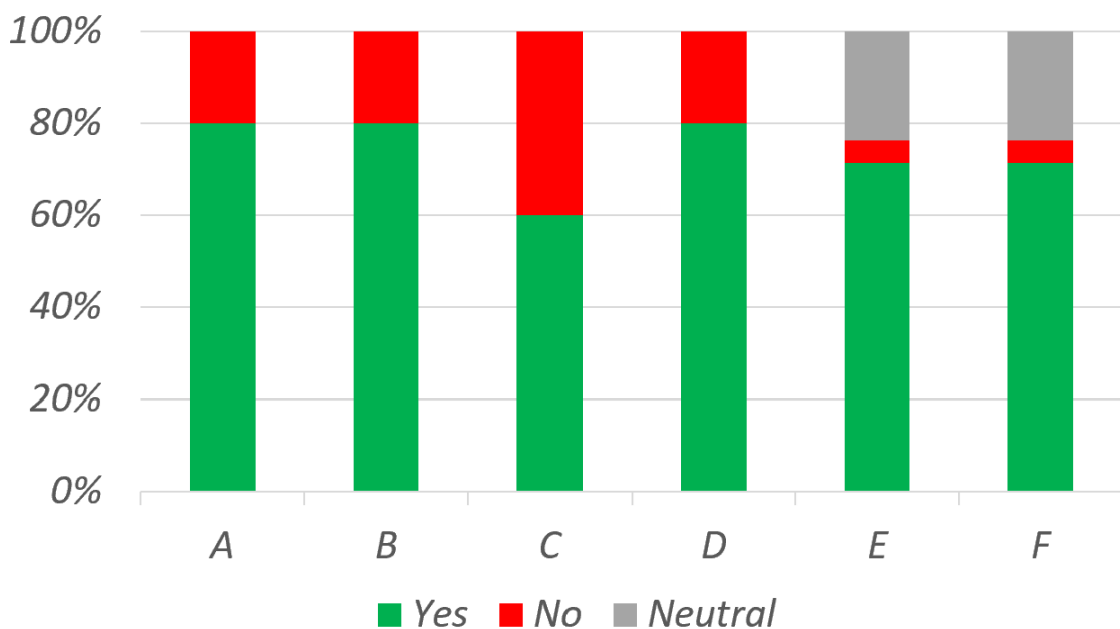
- xlii. Mr. Anaja Yohanna Namchi (late)
- xliii. etc.

Furthermore, the Committee consulted Zaar stakeholders in various places including Bauchi, Abuja, Zaria, Taraba, Adamawa, Plateau, Lagos, etc. In addition, some very important personalities in Nigeria were contacted for advice. Besides, the Committee equally consulted communities with similar experiences within the Middle Belt Region (Merem et al., 2017).

While in consultations, the Committee asked the respondent(s) a few questions. For instance, whenever the Committee consulted a Zaar man or Zaar group, the questions were:

- Do you support the search for a Community Leader? Give reasons.
- Any nominee? Give reasons.

### Statistics of Data Collection



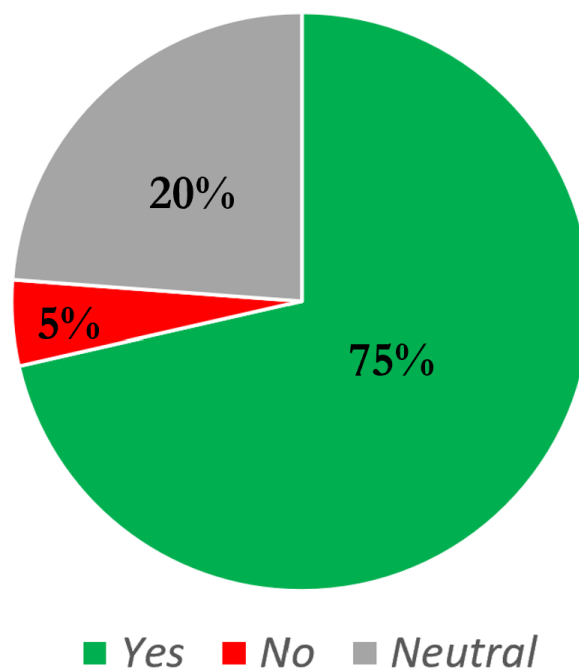
***Legend***

*A – Ex-leaders, B – Hamlet Heads, C – Leaders, D – Individuals, E – Groups, F – Summary*

**Figure 1.** Result of the statistical analysis of the quantitative survey (2009)

It is important to mention that the Committee conducted a statistical survey while on consultations. Figure 1 shows the result of the analysis of the data collected in the form of a survey. The percentage “Yes” is indicated by the green bar, the percentage “No” is represented by the red bar, and the percentage “Neutral” is shown by the grey bar. To support the understanding of the spread of the respondents, a legend at the bottom of Figure 1 was included. This provides an interpretation of the alphabetic letters shown on the horizontal axis. Parameters on the vertical axis are the percentage of the responses generated from the given respondents.

In Figure 1, the results of the survey show that around 80% of the ex-leaders consulted accepted the search for a Community Leader while 20% rejected the move. 80% of the Hamlet Heads accepted while 20% rejected. About 60% of the then leaders in Zaarland accepted and 40% were neutral. 80% of the individuals (Zaar sons) consulted accepted while 20% rejected the need for the actualisation of the Community Leader. As for the various groups consulted, 75% accepted, 5% rejected it completely, and 20% did not respond.



*Figure 2. Summary of the survey results conducted by the Committee on the total respondents*

Therefore, going by the results of the survey, 75% of the total respondents accepted the move for the actualisation of the Zaarland Community Leader, 20% did not respond, and 5% rejected the move. Refer to Figure 2 for the summary of the survey results. Overall, the result of the survey shows that the majority of the Zaar people were in support of the actualisation of the Zaarland Community Leader.

### **Nomination and Shortlisting of Candidates**

For the records, five (5) persons were nominated for the position of Community Leader. The nominees were Baba Kyauta Banike (now late), Baba Rev. Iliya Mailafiya (now late), Rev. Markus Musa, Hon. Habila Bako Lumana, and Air Cdre Ishaku Komo (rtd). The name of Ishaku Komo was later included because some Zaar stakeholders advised that, for security reasons, a retired responsible senior military officer should form the list. Baba Kyauta was dropped because of old age. Rev. Iliya Mailafiya was screened out for political reasons. At the end of the screening, three (3) names were shortlisted. The three (3) shortlisted nominees were Air Cdre Ishaku Komo (rtd), Rev. Markus Musa, and Hon. Habila Bako Lumana.

### **Election of Gung Zaar**

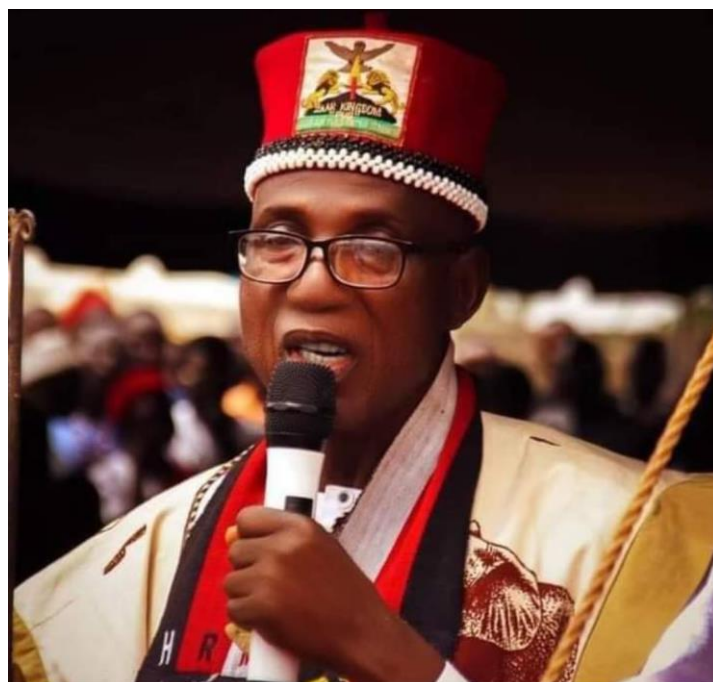
The Committee sent out invitations to various leadership groups in the land for a Congress on Sunday 6 December 2009 at the Vocational Training Centre Tafawa Balewa (Puji). The Zaar leadership groups that attended the Congress included ZDA (to be confirmed), ZAYODA, the *Zaar Council of Elders*, and the *Zaar Council of Traditional Rulers* (Village Heads and Hamlet Heads). The meeting commenced at about 09:00. To begin, the Committee asked the ZAYODA President to chair the meeting. The people present were to elect one (1) person as the

Community Leader from the list of the three (3) shortlisted candidates. To quickly add, none of the candidates was in attendance.

### Adoption of the Title “Gung Zaar”

At the joint meeting of ZAYODA and the Zaar Council of Traditional Rulers (ZCTR), there was a suggestion from members that the title of the Community Leader should be called the “Gung Zaar” in Zaar. Because the position was cultural, the title should be cultural. Overall, the suggested title was overwhelmingly ratified by the meeting. Thus, the title of the Community Leader will be “Gung Zaar” in Zaar.

After the title of Gung Zaar was ratified by the meeting, voting was the next item on the agenda. At the end of the voting by voice vote combined with the raising of the hand, Air Cdre Ishaku Komo (rtd) was unanimously elected as the Gung Zaar by the Hamlet Heads and Village Heads in Zaarland. This was so because before the emergence of the imposition of rulers by the Emirate System, the Zaar Nation was operating Autonomous Community Areas (ACA). See Figure 3 for the picture of the Gung Zaar of Zaar Chiefdom.



*Figure 3. Air Cdre Ishaku Komo (rtd) the Gung Zaar of Zaar Chiefdom*

After the election, the meeting ended at around 19:00. No objection whatsoever after the emergence of Air Cdre Ishaku Komo, the Gung Zaar of Zaar Chiefdom. The election process was free, fair, credible, and transparent. Nothing can be more “due process” than this.

### **Names of Village/Hamlet Heads that Elected Gung Zaar**

It was gathered that the most senior Hamlet Heads of the autonomous communities within the Zaar Kingdom were present at the meeting. To mention but a few, the names of the Village/Hamlet Heads (not in any order) that elected the Gung Zaar were as follows:

- i. Gung WO David Gambo Yarda – rtd (Hamlet Head of Mwari – leader (Village Head of Walgi – the former Chairman of the Zaar Traditional Rulers Forum of Tafawa Balewa and Bogoro LGAs),
- ii. Gung Bernard Bako (Village Head of Walgi),
- iii. Gung Titus Godiya (Hamlet Head of Kurum Dodo) – late,
- iv. Gung Bulus Liga (Hamlet Head of Gambar Zugum),
- v. Gung Samaila Maigida (Hamlet Head of Mborshi Davan),
- vi. Gung Jondi Kadiri (Hamlet Head of Kwablang Lusa),
- vii. Gung Markus Kamata (Hamlet Head of Dunga Puji) – late,
- viii. Gung Dauda Ido (Hamlet Head of Mhrhm) – late,
- ix. Gung Habila Nuhu (Hamlet Head of Tafare) – late,
- x. Gung Ibrahim Pawali (Hamlet Head of Mingil Fada) – late,

After the emergence of Air Cdre Ishaku Komo (rtd), the Gung Zaar, ZAYODA leadership delegated some of its members to take the news to FM Station Jos 90.5 and AIT Jos for public announcement.

To quickly add, such a leadership position comes with duties, roles, and responsibilities. The Gung Zaar shall have duties, roles, and responsibilities which Include:

- Defending the Kingdom,
- Promoting the interests of the Kingdom

- Building and developing the Kingdom,
- Uniting the people of the Kingdom,
- Leading the people with justice and righteousness,
- Consecrating (not TURBANING) of *Gungse Vahrangshi* (District Heads equivalent), *Gungse Dlei* (Village Heads equivalent), *Gungse Dahdi* (Hamlet Heads equivalent), *Mhn Nalghn Gungdh* (Traditional Title Holders – Builders and Developers of the Institution),
- Appointment of the Secretary of the Zaar Chieftdom,
- Etc.

It was gathered that the seat of the Zaar Chieftdom should be rotated between Bogoro and Tafawa Balewa LGAs. For example, if the present Gung Zaar hails from Bogoro LGA, the next Gung Zaar will emerge from Tafawa Balewa LGA.

### **Spiritual Dimension**

It is no longer news that Zaar Nation is a nation that is built and sustained by prayer. We are a nation that prays because we recognise the power of prayer. We are aware of several prayer groups in Zaar Nation. We are thankful to God for those who have volunteered to pray for the peace, prosperity, and welfare of Zaar Nation. Worthy of mention is the daily prayer meeting group of retired reverends, pastors, elders, etc. The prayer group was informed by the 2001 crisis. Our people decided to confront the enemy using the power of prayer and fasting. Since 2001 to the present, the elders have been meeting to pray for the Land and its people. Another prayer group are those that meet every Wednesday on Mount Puji to intercede on behalf of the Land. Glory be to God.

According to reliable sources, in 2002, seven (7) people devoted themselves to seeking the face of the LORD on behalf of the Zaar Nation. We do not wish to mention their names they might not wish to be known by name in this fashion. They climbed Mount Puji and dedicated themselves to seven (7) of days dry fasting and prayer. They

did not come down until the seven (7) days were completed. It was there that the LORD gave them 2 Chronicles 7:14 *“Then if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and restore their land.”* We thank the LORD for the light and restoration the Land is experiencing today.

Furthermore, during the annual prayer programme of the Zaar Land Healing Prayer Project (ZLHPP) of 2004, there was a specific prophecy by Apostle Emmanuel Nuhu Kure. It was reported that the same Man of God ministered at Puji for three consecutive years at the ZLHPP from 2002-2004. According to Apostle Kure, the LORD showed him Air Cdre Ishaku Komo (rtd) to be the “Olive Tree of the Land”. This prophecy is deep and those with spiritual understanding would see the emergence of Ishaku Komo, the Gung Zaar of Zaar Chieftdom, as its fulfillment. Hence, his emergence was divine which implies that the Living God is behind it.

### **Acceptance**

News of the election of Air Cdre Ishaku Komo (rtd) Gung Zaar reached him at his Kaduna residence. Recall that he did not want to accept the position in the first place. However, after prayer and due consultation, Ishaku Komo, in humility and love, accepted the call of his people. It was not an easy decision to take especially for someone that did not canvass for the highest position in Zaar Chieftdom.

### **Arrival and Homage**

The Gung Zaar was brought to our ancestral capital Puji on Saturday 12 December 2009. Those who went to Kaduna to bring home the Gung Zaar where he resides after his retirement from military service were representatives from various leadership groups in the Land. They

included the representatives of the ZDA, the ZAYODA, the Zaar Council of Elders, the ZCTR, the Guth Yaathl, the Nigerian Legion Tafawa Balewa and Bogoro LGAs, and friends of Zaar Kingdom. It was six (6) days after the election. His arrival was well greeted by Zaar sons and daughters, friends of the Zaar Kingdom, and other tribes within Zaar Chiefdom. What a memorable day in the history of the Zaar Nation! Tears of joy, songs and dances, and jubilation were everywhere. It was like our long-awaited dream had come to pass.

In addition, it was gathered that most prominent Zaar sons and daughters came to register their presence and pay homage to Air Cdre Ishaku Komo (rtd) the Gung Zaar. Among the people that paid homage to Gung Zaar included Barr. Istifanus Bala Gambar (the then ZDA National President), the ZAYODA leadership, members of the Zaar Council of Traditional Rulers, members of the Zaar Council of Elders, members of the ZDA, members of the Guth Yaathl, members of the Nigerian Legion Tafawa Balewa and Bogoro LGAs, the nine (9) members of the then Zauren Baba Gonto, members of the CAN Bogoro and Tafawa Balewa LGAs, some of the Zaar stakeholders consulted by the Committee, etc. Besides, Hon. Rifkatu Simon Danna was present on that faithful day and spoke for and on behalf of Zaar stakeholders. Thus, all the people present gave their solidarity and loyalty to Air Cdre Ishaku Komo (rtd), the Gung Zaar of Zaar Chiefdom.

### **Historical Court Decision**

The election of Air Cdre Ishaku Komo (rtd), the Gung Zaar seriously disturbed and provoked the Bauchi State Government. In a typical fashion, the Government used the Police to arrest some Zaar people on flimsy grounds. Four (4) persons including the only Zaar member of the State House of Assembly were arraigned before the Federal High Court Bauchi with suit number FHC/BAU/ISC/2010. The fifth (5th) accused person in the case was Air Cdre Ishaku Komo (rtd) who was alleged to be at large. Because of the serious objections filed by our lawyers to the



jurisdiction of the court to entertain the case, the Bauchi State Government quickly withdrew the case. The Bauchi State Government used the Police to declare said Air Cdre Ishaku Komo (rtd) wanted by a public notice published on page 31 of Leadership Sunday Newspaper of 17 January 2010 with his picture exhibited in the said public notice.

Because of this, the said Air Cdre Ishaku Komo (rtd) responded quickly by instituting a legal action in court. Thus, in the same month of January 2010, he filed a case as quoted earlier with suit number FHC/KD/CS/16/2010 against the Inspector General of Police, the Commissioner of Police of Bauchi State, the Bauchi State Government, the Attorney General of Bauchi State, seeking for the enforcement of his fundamental rights as enshrined in the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria.

In its judgement delivered on 22 March 2010 in his favour, the Federal High Court Kaduna granted him the following reliefs: in the circumstances, this honourable Court holds as follows:

- i. That the act of harassing, intimidating, and threatening to arrest and detain the applicant by the Respondents without due process constitutes a violation of the Applicant's fundamental rights as enshrined under the Constitution.
- ii. That the continued harassment, intimidation and threat of arrest and detention of the Applicant by the Respondents without due process is a violation of his fundamental rights under the 1999 Constitution.
- iii. The applicant is awarded the sum of Two Hundred Thousand Naira (N200,000) only as damages against the Respondents for unlawful violation of his fundamental rights by the Respondents.

Therefore, the Respondents are ordered to comply with laid down legal procedures in carrying out their Constitutional duties.

Again, the May 2023 unlawful detention and imprisonment of Air Cdre Ishaku Komo (rtd) was a repeat of the history of the continued harassment and intimidation of our people by the Bauchi State

Government. Gung Zaar was arraigned in High Court No 10 before Hon. Justice M. M. Abubakar in a matter between: the Commissioner of Police Bauchi State-Applicant and Air Cdre Ishaku Komo (rtd) Gung Zaar the Respondent. In its sitting of 1 June 2023, the judge ordered as follows:

- i. That the suspect is hereby released from custody
- ii. That the suspect shall not travel outside Nigeria except on medical grounds having informed the Commissioner of Police Bauchi State in writing.
- iii. That the suspect shall be attending the Registry of this Court for the next 12 months, bimonthly to sign a register that he is still in the country and available for his arraignment if at all any charge is filed within the next 12 months.

On that same day, the Gung Zaar was received at our ancestral capital Puji by mammoth supporters and loyalists from Tafawa Balewa and Bogoro LGAs and beyond. It was a memorable triumphal welcome for the Gung Zaar of Zaar Kingdom.

### **Ratification of the Gung Zaar**

To ratify the election of Air Cdre Ishaku Komo (rtd) the Gung Zaar, Apostle Emmanuel Nuhu Kure called him and his wife at the 2013 Lemp Zaar at Puji. This was about four (4) years after his election. In the presence of everyone present, Apostle Kure asked the gathering: Do you all accept Air Cdre Ishaku Komo (rtd) to be the King (Gung Zaar) over the Zaar Kingdom? All the people echoed yes; we do. This was repeated three (3) times for emphasis. If you agree and accept him, I want to see everyone in a standing position. The whole people rose in agreement. In the presence of all, including some notable Zaar elites, Air Cdre Ishaku Komo (rtd) was consecrated as the Gung Zaar of Zaar Chiefdom. What we are awaiting is the coronation and presentation of the Staff of Office to Air Cdre Ishaku Komo (rtd), the Gung Zaar. Glory to God.

## **Summary of the Process and Procedure in Search of Gung Zaar**

Thus, the process and procedure in search of the Gung Zaar of Zaar Chiefdom include the following:

- i. Constitution and the inauguration of the Committee by the ZAYODA National body,
- ii. Expansion of the membership of the Committee,
- iii. Prayers were offered for the success of the assignment,
- iv. Visitation and consultation of individuals and groups, including very important personalities in Nigeria,
- v. The consultation was vast, involving not only Zaar people but non-Zaar people as well,
- vi. Nomination of candidates,
- vii. Shortlisting of nominated candidates,
- viii. Election of the three (3) shortlisted candidates by the electorates (the Hamlet Heads and Village Heads),
- ix. Media briefing on the outcome of the election by the ZAYODA leadership,
- x. Notification of Ishaku Komo as the elected Gung Zaar,
- xi. Acceptance of his election as the Gung Zaar after a few days of prayer and consultation,
- xii. The arrival of the Gung Zaar to Puji (Tafawa Balewa) on Saturday 12 December 2009,
- xiii. Paying homage by Zaar sons and daughters, neighbouring tribes, friends of Zaarland, and well-wishers,
- xiv. Presentation, recognition, acceptance, consecration, and declaration of the Gung Zaar were conducted by Apostle Emmanuel Nuhu Kure on Saturday 2 November 2013.

## Reflection

We can all see that it took a long time of planning, implementation, and evaluation to achieve this milestone in the annals of Zaar Nation. We can see evidence of patience, determination, sacrifice, and unity of purpose by members of the Committee, the ZAYODA, the ZCTR, the Zaar Council of Elders, and the ZDA, among others. If we stand united and speak as one people with one voice, nothing we set out to do will be impossible. It took about eight (8) months from the constitution of the Committee to the homage. It took around four (4) years before the Gung Zaar consecration at Puji in the presence of the Zaar people and the friends and well-wishers of the Zaar Nation.

If we, the Zaar people, do not question or challenge the process, procedure, or methodology for the emergence or election of Emirs or other related titles, why should anyone, group, the Bauchi Emirate, or the Bauchi State Government question or challenge ours? Are we not covered by the United Nations Human Rights Article 2 Section 4 “Persons belonging to minorities have the right to establish and maintain their own associations” and Article 3 Section 2 “No disadvantage shall result for any person belonging to a minority as the consequence of the exercise or non-exercise of the rights set forth in the present Declaration”? Are some animals more important than others? Where is justice, equity, and fairness?

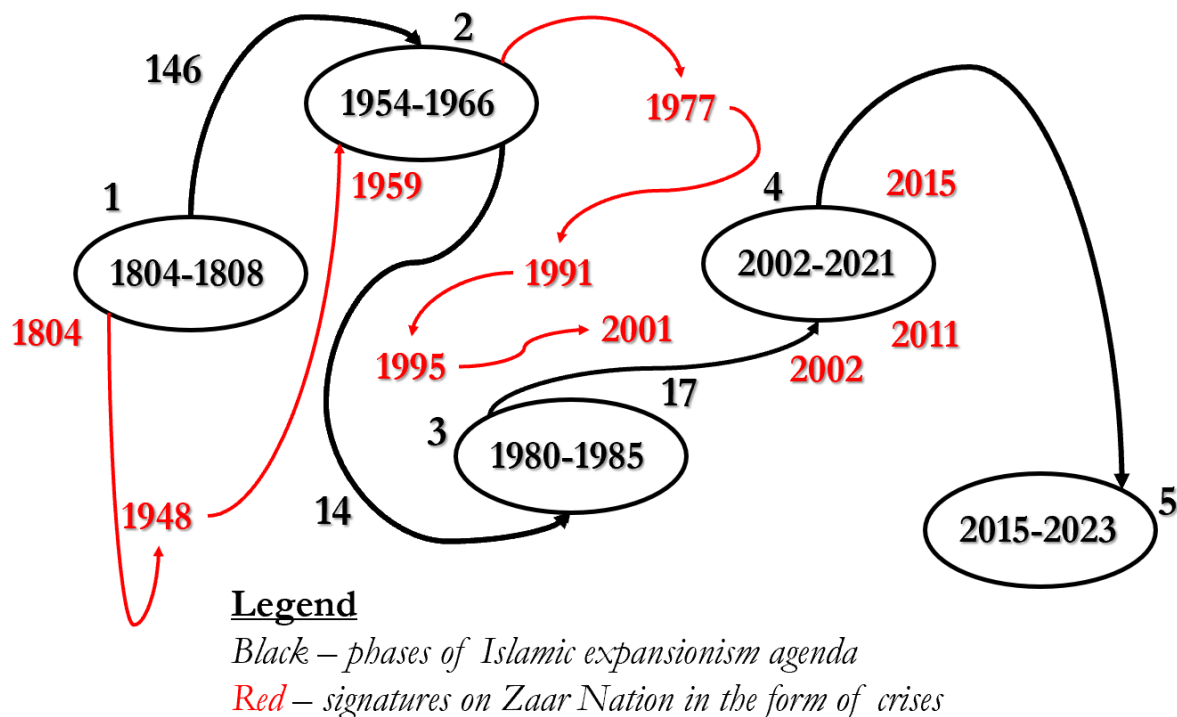
*“We use God’s mighty weapons, not worldly weapons, to knock down the strongholds of human reasoning and to destroy false arguments.” – 2*

*Corinthians 10:4*

*“For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.” – Ephesians 6:12*

*“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge...” – Hosea 4:6*

*“Knowledge makes a man unfit to be a slave.” Frederick Douglass*



**Figure 4.** Phases of Islamic expansionism in Nigeria carried out in the form of jihad and the corresponding signatures on Zaar Nation

We cannot forget God’s help when all hope seems lost. In many instances, suddenly God appears in the scene to save the Zaar people. According to Psalm 20:7, “Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; But we will remember the name of the Lord our God.” No wonder if God be for us, who can be against us? No one. Glory Hallelujah! Recall the crises of 1804, 1948, 1959, 1977, 1991, 1995, 2001, 2002, 2011, and 2015 (Nmah and Amanambu, 2017; Logams, 1985, 1987; Wadam, 2014). See Figure 4.

Figure 4 shows the different phases of the Islamic expansionism agenda from 1804 to the present. Phase 1 to Phase 5. The writings in black, including the curve paths, are representatives of those phases which are historical and important in the understanding and interpretation of the stages. In Figure 4, there are also red writing and curved lines. They are symbolic of different phases of crises brought by the Islamic jihadists in the space belonging to the Zaar people. The curve paths revealed how rough and hard our people navigated throughout the periods of the

crises. Figure 4 would be expanded upon in subsequent contributions. However, through all these, we are more than conquerors.

## **Findings**

- i. The process and procedure for the search for the Gung Zaar of Zaar Chiefdom were done during the tenure of Barr. Istifanus Bala Gambar (then ZDA National President) and Mr. Polmi Ibrahim (then ZAYODA National President),
- ii. The Committee was a product of the Zaar people, by the Zaar people, and for the Zaar people.
- iii. Lots of resources, time, energy, prayer, and sacrificial giving were invested in the assignment by the Committee and patriotic Zaar.
- iv. The Committee derived its powers from the Zaar people, the International Laws, the 1957 Willink Minority Commission Report, and the Justice Bola Babalakin Commission of Inquiry Report of 1992, among others.
- v. Different leadership bodies in Zaarland, including Zaar sons, were consulted by the Committee.
- vi. 75% of the total respondents accepted the search for the Community Leader, 5% rejected it, and 20% were neutral as indicated in Figures 1 and 2.
- vii. Five (5) nominees were reduced to three (3) shortlisted candidates before the election.
- viii. At the 6 December 2009 Congress meeting of all the Hamlet Heads and Village Heads, the title “Gung Zaar” of the to-be-elected paramount leader was unanimously agreed upon and ratified by the meeting.
- ix. Air Cdre Ishaku Komo (rtd), the Gung Zaar of Zaar Chiefdom, was elected not selected.
- x. The election or emergence of Ishaku Komo, the Gung Zaar of Zaar Chiefdom, was divine. This can be inferred from the prophecy by the Apostle Kure, among others.

- xi. The election was done by the Zaar Council of Traditional Rulers (Hamlet Heads and Village Heads) in the presence of the ZAYODA.
- xii. No one or group objected to the election of Air Cdre Ishaku Komo (rtd). Thus, he was unanimously elected as the Gung Zaar of Zaar Chiefdom.
- xiii. The process and procedure for the election of Gung Zaar were free, fair, transparent, and credible. Those who hide under “due process” should be informed and guided that nothing can be more “due process” than that.
- xiv. The Gung Zaar was brought to Puji from his Kaduna residence by Zaar Community.
- xv. The Gung Zaar was well received at Puji on Saturday 12 December 2009 by the Zaar people, friends, and well-wishers of Zaarland.
- xvi. Air Cdre Ishaku Komo (rtd) was consecrated and declared at the 2013 Lemp Zaar by Apostle Emmanuel Kure on Saturday 2 November 2013.
- xvii. The process and procedure for the emergence or election of the Gung Zaar of Zaar Chiefdom is completely distinct and separate from the Emirate (the Bauchi Emirate) system.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the journey of the Zaar people is likened to the journey of the people of Israel from the land of bondage (Egypt) to the Promised Land (Canaan). Our story is the story of a people who have, throughout their journey, enjoyed the undeserved mercy and grace of God. Remove God from our story, we are the most miserable of all tribes. Our story would have been of defeat, hopelessness, and darkness. We understand from our ancestors and those who lived before us that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is our rock, shield, hope, and salvation. Even when we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, we fear no evil because God is with us as He was, He is, and will always be with Israel.

We recognise that the battle we fight is more spiritual than physical. And this explains why the Committee, like other committees and bodies in the Land, have petitioned the Almighty God who rules over the affairs of men (in power and influence) to intervene. We are living witnesses of the great wonders and mighty acts of God when our enemies rise before us like a mighty storm. There are numerous visible manifestations of the Hand of God “*Taaschong*” in our Land. We have records of many divine interventions when our enemies seek to destroy us through wars and coordinated attacks.

Finally, all through these years, God has been faithful to His promise. They were defeated and will always be defeated right in our eyes when we make the Most High our LORD and King.

God bless Zaar people

God Bless Zaarland

God save Gung Zaar (3 times)

*Written and compiled on this day Sunday 11 of June 2023 by Dr. Habila Mormi John (jonnymormiv@yahoo.com). This contribution was supported by Mr. Thawus Maigida (Chairman of the Committee), Mr. Yohanna Yelmi Mbishida, Mr. Emmanuel Hakuri Gidado, Barr. Istifanus Bala Gambar, Prince Balewa Johnson, Dr. Timothy Gwami Ishaya, and other patriotic Zaar sons and daughters.*



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