

By Mohammed Dahiru Aminu

“The task of the intellectual is not one of blending into the opaque consciousness of the tumultuous mob around him, his voice drowned in a cacophony of misdirected protests. His task is to remind them of who they are and what they ought to be. Our values are not to be taken from conduct of our adversaries but from the great heritage of our people.”— Sanusi Lamido Sanusi.

Once upon a time, the Nigerian Senate, and her hitherto skittish members have proved to Nigerians, how impromptu and unpremeditated their napping egos is relegated to what looks like a barrel of monkeys. It seems that to the “hallowed”, (that I now prefer to dub “vicious”) chamber of the National Assembly, “once beaten”, doesn’t by any delineation; portend the popular aphorism, “twice shy!” Perhaps it can be rightly elucidated that the Nigerian nation, senescent as it appears is unruffled in sending-to-Coventry, the luminously resplendent of minds—so that the most diffident of persons can fill in the rosy rubicund, albeit vicious chambers of Abuja’s three-arms-zone.

No wonder, one can safely unfrock these dull-witted, oddments as some unpackaged middlebrow implacable ogres—with few apologies to those members of the vicious chamber who are no doubt, out of the ordinary. For the vicious chamber, employing the machinery of tomfoolery and coercion is a regular line of track until they were made to appear codswallop under the imposing vividness of Lamido Sanusi, the ingenious economist, first-rate Islamic scholar and now Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria.

For a man of Lamido Sanusi’s standing, confrontation and intimidation shouldn’t be any source of fretfulness and panic attack. Thus when it is said that the vicious chamber would once again engage the CBN Governor in a melee of a kind following his recent utterances at the lately held 8th Convocation ceremony of Igbinedion University, no one should have been taken awash. Knowing that Lamido Sanusi had before now, on two occasions given the vicious chamber their merited third degree, misconstrued it would become of us, to think this time would be most dissimilar. Even though, on the level of circumspection, one might ask:

Is it the Lamido Sanusi who quotes everybody in the world from philosophers, to religious scholars, scientists, statesmen and journalists, etc, that the vicious chamber is going to debrief and then emerge exultant? The Lamido Sanusi who had commingled, even if, unusual as is thought, the best of western education alongside the most immaculate of Islamic scholarship? The Lamido Sanusi who is known across the academic world not as a banker but as an intellectual and thinker of repute who has been called upon to deliver topnotch lectures that has left his erudite voice being harkened across cities as, Accra, Cape Town, Bayreuth, London, and Provo?

The Lamido Sanusi who has dared popular academics in the likes of Kyari Tijjani, Peter Ekeh, Edwin Madunagu, Okey Ndibe, etc. even though for him being a banker, the three Rs are only a nonessential objective, as opposed to the denizens of the Ivory Tower who are, to stress the point of fact, remunerated to read and write?

A Lamido Sanusi who has quick-wittedly engaged the most revered of religious scholars of our time, and with no holds barred, brought out in the open, their undersized trifling intellectual

pedestals, while still focusing and underlining on the impartial tenacity to educate Muslims against the abuse of their religion from otherwise oblivious scholars? The Lamido Sanusi who taught us that for one to effectively preach and proselytize Islam, he must be clued-up to a solid foundation in the social sciences, philosophy, theology and jurisprudence, while being as dispassionate as possible, so as to accost issues not from a dogmatic credence but from a very deep-seated holistic conviction. A Lamido Sanusi from whom we learnt, how to yearn and be proud of our identities, and by no way be ethnocentric; for identities are an immoral category. A Lamido Sanusi who refused to be cringed in fear, perplexed and browbeaten by the scar-faced brutish crank behind the dark spectacles known as Sani Abacha? A Lamido Sanusi, who has battled the best brains from across Nigeria and arguably, in all, emerged a dominant celebratory. Lamido Sanusi who believes the problems of Nigeria is not one between Muslims and Christians, but between the elite and the poor—the oppressor and the oppressed. A man who is not ready to vote into office a Muslim who simply professes to practice the Muslim faith but a certain kind of person who, is sincerely guided in politics by certain positive moral values. Lamido Sanusi who bared the facts to us by revealing cleverly, to the inexistence of anything as a Muslim or Christian representative but a Nigerian representative, since within a particular religion, there are disagreeing issues, e.g. of ethnic or class concerns. For him, the only way out, as Nigerians, is to demonstrate an assured concomitant contrapuntal receptivity to the innumerable (sporadically concordant, habitually cacophonous) implications of this polyphony. A Lamido Sanusi who knows that in all societies and across all cultural and religious barriers, there are good people and there are bad people. And that this “goodness” or “badness”; is an attribute that is itself distinct from the race, or the tribe, or sexual category of a person. A Lamido Sanusi whom we all understand is a giant of a man who outstandingly analyses and opines from suppositions of Ricardo, Smith, and Marshall, etc, and proceeds with an aura of self-assurance, embedded in clear words, into the philosophies of Aristotle, Kant, Marx, Socrates, etc. Still not enough, he would stoically cross-examine the devout views of Malakites, Hambalites, Mu’tazilites and Shi’aite schools of thought. His unflinching steadfastness would also take him through the magnum opera of Majid Fakhry, Sohail Hashmi, Kwame Anthony Appiah, Segun Gbadegesin, Fatima Mernissi, to name but a few.

Nonetheless, we still have a man who was unwilling to say: “the bank has failed”, but instead said “the bank was killed”, as opposed to “the bank is dead”. To use the term “death” according to Lamido Sanusi; is akin to exculpating us Nigerians, from the obligation of finding the killers and bringing them to justice! Yet again, the term “death” is an easy way to which any unsavory CBN Governor can side with the well-heeled and potent, so that depositor’s money can be looted and expended, and the criminals remained unchecked to a plausible denouement. Are we asking about Lamido Sanusi, the Marxist, who found a mentor in his uncle and frontline radical intellectual, in the grandee personage of late Dr. Yusufu Bala Usman? A Lamido Sanusi, who would identify with Bala, to not shy away from the truth and call a spade by its name, as perceptible along these lines:

“Do not say that government money had been stolen. Name the thief. We named human beings—the management that stole the money in the name of borrowing, the gamblers that took depositors funds to speculate on the stock market and manipulate share prices, the billionaires and captains of industry whose wealth actually was money belonging to the poor which they ‘borrowed’ and refused to pay back”

Blessed is a man whom Nigerians have learnt to be pleased about, whom was recently called upon by US legislators, to teach them, to rescue their economy, making America to hit the

## Lamido sanusi: In the bowels of a vicious chamber

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books, for the first time from the Nigerian collectanea.

With all this never-ending intrinsic worth, some groups of otherwise itsy-bitsy minded individuals in the vicious chamber, perhaps acting out of bliss discomfiture, muddle up such an uncommon pristine with derision, even though he has and would continue to win the vote against them, come what may. It could be reminisced that the first time, it was a screening exercise that opened up to the vicious chamber and her elements, an avant-garde era; the second time it was on how legitimate the stimulus plan was approached—ending up as a landslide conquest; the third and still ongoing is about the plethora of our nation's resources remitted to the vicious chamber—another one-off merriment! Most excitingly, the first and key thing to be noted is that a larger majority of the vicious chamber are school certificate holders, degree mill alumni and as a matter of attention, some barely-educated misanthropists.

And how best to conclude this piece than to tell the vicious chamber—if they care to pin the ears back—thus far, and for us the larger number of Nigerians, Lamido Sanusi has set apart a place for himself alongside our heroes, both the sentient and the departed, among them Ahmadu Bello, Murtala Muhammed, Muhammadu Buhari, Umaru Yar'Adua, Gani Fawehinmi, Wole Soyinka, Yusufu Bala Usman, Mahmud Modibbo Tukur, Nuhu Ribadu, etc.

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