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## Contributors

1. Abdullahi A.M.<sup>1</sup>  
Dept. of Industrial Design,  
Ahmadu Bello University,  
Zaria.
2. Abdullahi I.M.<sup>1</sup>  
Dept. of Industrial Design,  
Ahmadu Bello University,  
Zaria.
3. Abdullahi J.A.<sup>2</sup>  
National Agricultural Extension  
and Research Liaison Services,  
A.B.U., Zaria.
4. Abubakar Sadiq<sup>1</sup>  
Dept. of Industrial Design,  
Ahmadu Bello University,  
Zaria.
5. Adelekun Isaac Abiodun  
Dept. of History and Diplomatic  
Studies Tai Solarin University  
of Education, Ijagun, Ogun  
State, Nigeria.
6. Adewale Adepoju PhD  
Dept. of History and Diplomatic  
Studies, Tai Solarin University  
of Education, Ijagun, Ogun  
State, Nigeria.
7. Azi I. Joseph<sup>1</sup>  
Dept. of Industrial Design,  
Ahmadu Bello University,  
Zaria.
8. Borok, Andrew Maren PhD  
Dept. of History and Int'l Studies,  
Federal University Lokoja.
9. Dalhatu, Abigail Musa  
Dept. of Languages and Linguistics,  
Nasarawa State University, Keffi,  
Nigeria.
10. Daniel Kofi Brako  
University of Cape Coast, College of  
Humanities and Legal Studies,  
Dept. of ~~Theatre~~ and Film Studies,  
Cape Coast, Ghana.
11. Daud A. Oniyide, PhD  
Department of Foreign Languages,  
Lagos State University.
12. Dayo Akanmu, PhD  
Department of Nigerian Language  
Education Lagos State University of  
Education Oto/Ijanikin.
13. Dr. Noah Lawal Jinadu  
Department of Foreign Languages,  
Lagos State University.
14. Eyiayo Damilola Omobowale Ph.D

15.	Francis Yede, PhD Dept.of English Language Education Lagos State University of Education Oto/Ijanikin.	23.	Oluwatobiloba Lawal Dept. of Linguistics, African Languages and Communication Arts, Lagos State University, Ojo, Lagos, Nigeria.
16.	Gambari, Muhammad Aliyu PhD Department of Islamic Studies, Kwara State College of Education, Ilorin.	24	Oseni, Aliu Kayode Dept. of Language Arts and Social Science Education, Faculty of Education, Lagos State University, Ojo.
17.	James Olusola Odedeji Ph.D Dept. of Religions and Peace Studies, Lagos State University, Ojo Lagos, Nigeria.	25	
18.	Jeremiah O. Memud Dept. of History & Int'l Studies, Federal University Lokoja, Kogi State, Nigeria.	26.	Oshewolo, Roseline PhD Dept.of History & Int'l Studies, Federal University Lokoja.
19.	Johnson Sennah Kofi Gilbert University of Media Arts and Communication (UniMAC), National Film & Television Institute (NAFTI), Film Artistic Department, Production Design Unit, General Post Office, Private Mail Bag, East Cantonment, Accra, Ghana.	27.	Peter L. Oyigebe Dept. of History & Int'l Studies, Federal University Lokoja, Kogi State, Nigeria.
20.	Joseph Gimba Nasiru Dept. of History & Int'l Studies, Kogi State University (Prince Abubakar Audu University), Anyigba.	28.	Professor S.O Abdulrahman Federal University, Lokoja, Head, Department of History & International Studies.
21.	Joseph Moyinoluwa Talabi Ph.D Dept. of Religions & Peace Studies, Lagos State University, Ojo Lagos, Nigeria.	29.	Sidiq, Uthman Okanlawon PhD Islamic Studies Unit, Dept. of Religions and Peace Studies, Lagos State University, Ojo, Nigeria.
22.	Ndahi P.A. <sup>3</sup> Institute for Agricultural Research, A.B.U., Zaria.	30.	Tubi Paul-Kolade PhD Dept. of Archaeology and Museum Studies, Federal University Lokoja.
			Uzoma S. Osuala Dept. of History & Int'l Studies, Federal University Lokoja, Kogi State, Nigeria.

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## **Islamo-Jurisprudential Discourse on *Ghilah* (Murder by Deception): The 2001 Zaki-Biam Bloodbath in Nigeria**

*Sidiq, Uthman Okanlawon PhD*

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### **Abstract**

*Post-independence Nigeria has had a sizeable share of the challenges of statehood in Africa. Between 1963 when she became a republic and the dawn of democratic government in 1999, Nigeria witnessed series of ethno-religious and political crises which significantly threatened the fabric of the state, heightened mutual suspicion among ethnic nationalities, unleashed a regime of political assassination and extra-judicial killings especially under the military government, and flagrant disregard of fundamental human rights of her citizenry. In all of these, the mass of the people, civilian population and those in uniform, has been the greatest casualties, and in retrospect, important lessons may be learnt especially with the tensed security landscape in several parts of the country which validates continuous military engagement in internal security operations (ISOP) and consequent usurpation of the primary responsibility of the police. In this regard, this study interrogates the Zaki-Biam bloodbath of 2001 which led to the deaths of many lives and destructions of indeterminate properties. The discourse is historical and jurisprudential in methodology. The paper annotates the circumstances which led to the military occupation of Zaki-Biam and the aftermath. The paper also, probed the jurisprudential verdicts on the concept of Ghilah in Islam. The paper recommended among other things that, there is an aggressive need for the government to re-energise the funding of the police force which undeniably will limit the involvement of military in ISOPs.*

*Keywords:* *Ghilah, Killing by deception, Military, Bloodbath, Zaki-Biam, Jurisprudential Discourse*

## Introduction

THE AMALGAMATION OF NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN PROTECTORATES BY lord Lugard in 1914, which was considered in some quarters as an uneven marriage, led to the emergence of what is known as Nigeria today. The conglomerated empires, with over 300 ethnic groups were under the colonial masters until October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1960 when Nigeria officially became an independent nation.

Accountability, selflessness, purposeful, visionary, openness and resulted oriented fellow, were the qualities of founding fathers and nationalists at independence. They made ineffaceable mark in the unity of the country and in achieving the independence in 1960. The Civil war of 1967, had deleterious effects on the psyche and progress of the country.<sup>1</sup>

Irrefutably, Nigeria ever since the civil war had been characterized by series of altercation and social eruption. The people groaned under yoke of repressive government. The Military intervention in governance of country brought about the paradox box of ethnic rivalry, political instability, corruption and blatant abuse of fundamental human rights. Decrees of the Military rulers were in aberration to practical features of representative government. The incessant military rule till 1999, inhibited democracy, overwhelmed the normal legal process through draconian laws, elevated corruption and created an atmosphere of antagonistic civil societies, as well as citizens who believed that political objections can only be achieved through force and violence.<sup>2</sup> The paper interrogates the context of the crisis in Zaki-Biam in 2001; its cause and aftermaths of the kerfuffle will be cross-examined.

### *Al-Ghilah: A Contextual Discourse*

Unvaryingly, what is *Al-Ghilah*? What is the correlation between *Al-Ghilah* and the outrage committed by the men of Nigerian Army in Zaki-Biam similar to the Odi and indeed what are the canons or precept set in place by Islam whenever this type of death occurred?

Take not life, which God Hath made  
sacred, except by way of justice and  
law. This doth he commanded you,  
that ye may learn wisdom. (Qur'an  
6:151)

Just like the verse above, the Qur'an in several verses emphasizes the inviolability of man's life equating an unjust termination of human life to the termination of the entire humanity. However, there are different ways by which man's life is terminated of which *Al-Ghilah* is one of the ways.

Primarily, the term *Ghilah* is an Arabic word which means "killing anyone by deception or by trick or by stratagem" for whatever reason. Going by the communique of the Board of Senior Scholars and permanent committee for scientific researches and religious verdicts seventh session which was held in *Ta'if* 1395 AH, the Scholars and Jurists present define killing by *Al-Ghilah* as:

That which is committed intentionally, by way of subterfuge and deception of the murder, whether it was committed, for money or violation of honour or fear of disgrace or his secrets being revealed or the like. Such as when a man deceive a person so that he trust him, and then he takes him to a place where no one can see him and kill him, or he takes a money by force, then kills him out of fear that he will seek the return of what he took from him, or such as when he kills him in order to take his wife or his daughter, or such as when the wife kill her husband in his bedroom or while he is sleeping, in order to be free from him, or vice- versa.<sup>3</sup>

The above jurisprudential definition of *Ghilah* shows that, any form of aggression in deception, which eventually resulted in the death of the victim is said to be *Al-Ghilah* in Islam. The military occupation in Zaki-Biam which will be interrogated in the next section is considered as *Al-Ghilah* in this paper and Islamic maxims on this homicide by deception shall be jurisprudentially discussed.

## **The Circumstances that led to Zaki-Biam Bloodbath**

Zaki-Biam is a town situated about 45 kilometres from Taraba State and in Benue State under the Ukum Local Government. This town with nineteen other communities was where the extermination orchestrated by the military took place around 22<sup>nd</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> of October, 2001. The origin behind the bloodbath in Tiv densely populated area was as a result of the killing of 19 men of Nigerian Army who were on peace keeping mission 10<sup>th</sup> of October, 2001 by the ethnic militias group belonging to the community.<sup>4</sup> The annihilation that took place was said to be an ingenious military operation attack, they were victims of collective punishment targeted on the basis of belonging to the same ethnic group i.e. Tiv. *Abi-Initio*, civil unrest between the Jukun and Tiv community prompted the federal government to send soldiers to the area in order to inundate the tension within the two communities. However, the soldiers who were ordered to maintain peace, law and order became the victims of the punch-up between the two communities.

Ironically, there were conflicting reports and accounts regarding the number of killed soldiers before the state burial on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of October, 2001. Initially, official report from the Army put the number of abducted and later slew soldiers at 16 but 19 were however buried in Abuja on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> of October, 2001.<sup>5</sup> Below in table 1, are the names and rank of 19 soldiers killed as released by Lieutenant General Alexander Ogomudia, the then Chief of Staff, the Nigeria Army to the press.

<b>SIN</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Rank</b>
1	<b>A. Mustapha</b>	<b>Captain</b>
2.	<b>Hiverlbok</b>	<b>Sergeant</b>
3.	<b>Haruna Samari</b>	<b>Corporal</b>
4	<b>Samuel Madabuchi</b>	<b>Corporal</b>
5.	<b>Yakubu Sanni</b>	<b>Corporal</b>
6.	<b>Abdul Usman</b>	<b>Corporal</b>
7.	<b>MuzzuLawal</b>	<b>Corporal</b>

8.	<b>Memoye Ommuku</b>	<b>Corporal</b>
9	<b>Ali Abdulazeez</b>	<b>Corporal</b>
10.	<b>Ado Yaloji</b>	<b>Corporal</b>
11.	<b>Bala Umar</b>	<b>Corporal</b>
12.	<b>AbdulAdamu</b>	<b>Corporal</b>
13.	<b>MarkOmije</b>	<b>Corporal</b>
14.	<b>Alamina Alasale</b>	<b>Corporal</b>
15.	<b>Mu'azulsah</b>	<b>Corporal</b>
16.	<b>Ahmeda Hassan</b>	<b>Corporal</b>
17.	<b>Ahmadu Yusuf</b>	<b>Corporal</b>
18.	<b>Ibrahim Abdullahi</b>	<b>Corporal</b>
19.	<b>Azeez Mutairu</b>	<b>Corporal</b>

**Table 1: showing the names and rank of 19 soldiers killed before military invasion of Zaki-Biam**

The defaced bodies of the afore-listed soldiers were found two days later on the 12<sup>th</sup> of October, in a primary school ground in Zaki-Biam, after their abduction in Vaase Benue State.

The Governor of Benue State, George Akume, in a live broadcast earlier before the burial of the soldiers, tendered unreserved apologies to the president in particular and Nigerians in general over the death of the soldiers and equally called on the federal government to probe the circumstances behind the deployment of Army to the area without prior knowledge of the chief security officer of state or that of Ukum Local Government Chairman.

The military invasion of some of the communities in Benue State was due to the civil turmoil. There has been a ceaseless communal clatter between the Tiv and Jukun communities in both Benue and Taraba state respectively.<sup>6</sup> The communal melee was an age long crisis. However, the one which led to military

invasion started on the 8<sup>th</sup> of September and eventually reach its crowning around 22<sup>nd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> of October, 2001, after the burial of the decapitated soldiers.

The real bloodbath was orchestrated by the troops from 23<sup>rd</sup> Armoured Brigade Yola, Adamawa State. This was on the heels of an ultimatum by President Olusegun Obasanjo to security agents during the state burial of the butchered soldiers to track down all those persons who abducted and exterminated the men on peace keeping mission. The president ordered them to fish out the perpetrators of the crime for prosecution and assured Nigerians that no such slaying of soldiers in the country would ever happened again. The declaration of the president was, indeed in conformity with the resolution of National Security Council Emergency Meeting held Abuja, Monday, October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2001.<sup>7</sup>

On Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> of October, three days after the arrival of men of 23<sup>rd</sup> armoured brigade in 8 armoured vehicles. They summoned the residents of Gbeji community to amass for a meeting. The people were informed that they were in their community on a peace mission and the meeting was aimed at discussing, ways of restoring long lasting solution to the incessant crisis in the area.<sup>8</sup>

Indubitably, after sufficient member of people had been gathered, the army separated the men from the women and children. Thereafter, it was purported that, the soldiers open fire on the men shooting intermittently. Thereafter, they poured petrol on to the dead and injured men and set them ablaze. Some died from the gun bullet while some died has a result of being burnt alive. The soldiers equally, went rampageous and on frenzy mood destroying houses and other building.<sup>9</sup> According to the Human Right Watch, more than 150 people were killed in Gbeji including at least four women. In its April report titled "Military Revenge in Benue", the Human Rights watch writes:

Among the various towns and villages targeted in the military operation in Benue, the largest number of Gbeji. This was one of the first places targeted by the army and the population was taken completely off guard. Between 150 and 160 people were killed there, including at least four women and eighteen children, some as young as twelve years old. Among those missing were children

as young as five and seven. Some of the victims' bodies were reportedly so badly burnt that they could not be identified.<sup>10</sup>

The murderous slaughter of the people of Gbeji community and destruction of their properties by the soldiers was just a tip of the iceberg on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of October 2001. This is as a result of other irrational, unjustified, misguided, distasteful and despicable pogrom which continued from Gbeji to Vaase, Zaki-Biam, Ise-Adoor, Sankera, Anyin and Kyado all within the period of 22<sup>nd</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> of October. Ise-Gube a community close to Gbeji was attacked the same day Gbeji was attacked. The indigene of the community was asked to assemble just like that of Gbeji before the soldiers open fire on the men. Causalities in this town unknown due to the death of some in the bush and many were missing.<sup>11</sup>

Vaase community was not safe from the inhumaneness of the Nigerian Army. In fact, this is the town in which the nineteen decapitated soldiers were initially abducted, before their mutilated bodies were found in Zaki-Biam. On Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> October, the same day with Gbeji and Tse-Gube, soldiers held the men of the town. The commander blew whistle and the soldiers started shooting. Fifteen (15) men and two (2) women were reported to be the actual causalities in the Vaase Bloodbath.<sup>12</sup> Several people were reported injured, houses burnt in Kyado community but relatively no one was killed. The initial threat by the soldiers on the people of the community on the 19<sup>th</sup> of October and the immediate intervention of men of Nigerian Army from Benue saved the people of Kyado community from being killed. Although, their houses, shops and other building were not saved from been burnt.

Similarly, at Anyin just like Kyado houses, shops and other buildings were purportedly burnt by the soldiers but no one was killed due to the fact that the people of the community had fled away from their houses after eavesdropping the purported soldiers' exploit in other communities. The table below, shows a chronological details of solder's assaults in these communities.

**Table 2: The Chronological Details of Army Attacks on each Village**

SIN	Name of Town/Village	Date of Attack

1	Abako	3 <sup>th</sup> September - 2001
2.	Dooshima I	3 <sup>th</sup> September - 2001
3.	Dooshima II	3 <sup>th</sup> September - 2001
4.	DanAnacha	19 <sup>th</sup> October - 2001
5.	Peva	19 <sup>th</sup> October - 2001
6.	Kyado	19 <sup>th</sup> October - 2001
7.	Gbeji	22 <sup>nd</sup> - October 2001
8.	Chembe	22 <sup>nd</sup> - October 2001
9.	Ifer	22 <sup>nd</sup> - October 2001
10.	Jootar-Shitile	22 <sup>nd</sup> - October 2001
11.	Abeda - Shitile	22 <sup>nd</sup> - October 2001
12.	Mchia	22 <sup>nd</sup> - October 2001
13.	Lorja	22 <sup>nd</sup> - October 2001
14.	Vaase	22 <sup>nd</sup> - October 2001
15.	Zaki-Biam	23 <sup>rd</sup> - October - 2001
16.	Tse-Adoor	23 <sup>rd</sup> - October - 2001
17.	Sarnkera	23 <sup>rd</sup> - October - 2001
18.	Anyin	24 <sup>th</sup> October - 2001
19.	Ayilamo	24 <sup>th</sup> October - 2001
20.	Abaji	24 <sup>th</sup> October - 2001

From the table above, it is evidently lucid that the assault occurred in twenty (20) different communities. Zaki-Biam and Gbeji were the two worst hit communities by the soldiers' frenzy killings and burning of building and shops. Although, the pogrom on Zaki-Baim took place on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of October a day after the attack on Gbeji, Chenbe, Ifer, Vaase, Mchia, and Jooter - Shitile to mention but a few. According to media, the attack on Zaki - Biam was said to have taken place in the popular Yam Market in the community where an eye witness gave account of the incident as follows.

There were thirty-four vehicles in total including about eight armoured tanks. They (The soldiers) parked the first vehicles at the entrance to the market, the other at the extreme end (Sic). Then they jumped down and surrounded us (...). We have never witnessed this before. They killed about eighteen people inside the market and about six outside. After a week we discovered about three bodies in the bush. Those who were killed include several market traders, farmers and a pastor..... They destroyed many houses there.<sup>13</sup>

The town of Tse-Adoor was equally attacked the same day with Zaki-Biam. Tse - Adoor was the village of Victor Malu who happens to be the retired Army General and Former Chief of Army Staff. Although, the attack came at the time he was in London but the village head of the community and his wives were not safe from the army's indiscriminate blood bath. Pa Adoor is the uncle of Victor Malu who was in his late 80s and his two wives Kutser Pev and Rebecca Doom Pev were among the causalities in Tse-Adoor.<sup>14</sup> Victor Malu's house, and other buildings were burnt. When the news men interviewed him, he related the contemptible manner at which the soldiers carried out the attack in his village in the following statements.

The first place they entered was the house of the village head, he was a blind 85 years old man, and they shot

him together with his wife. Then they moved to my own house and started the systematic destruction of the house. They demolished the house using the armoured vehicles. They demolished my late father's house and burnt all the building on my own side of the village. As the first set of soldiers left, the second came and completed the destruction of those building that were still standing.<sup>15</sup>

The attack on Tiv people coincided with the call by the president on the security agents to search killers of soldiers during the state burial of the slammed armies but it's imperative to note that fishing-out criminals does not warrant the commando style invasion of the armies with bazookas, machine guns and armoured vehicles. The invasions were purportedly believed in some quarters as genocide, ethnic-cleansing and total bloodbath of Tiv populated communities. The horrendous atrocity of the army was captured by Newswatch magazine editorial as follows:

When we relived the news that Tiv  
Militia killed 19 soldiers in October,...  
Philips and Taiwo Idowu, Senior  
Photographer went to the theatre of  
war. The sight that greeted them was  
something from hell. Not quite with so  
many sinners willing to spend eternity  
in hell. It cannot be deserted  
... I came across dead bodies almost  
everywhere.<sup>16</sup>

Due to the assault by the soldiers, an impromptu meeting was held by the Benue people, on October 26, 2001 in Makurdi. The Governor, George Akume, and members of National Assembly from Benue State were all in attendance. At the end of the meeting, a communique was read by one of the Senators representing the state, Senator David Mark, where he personally condemned the use of armed

forces against the defenceless and unarmed citizens, which led to the brutal unprecedented and heartless genocide. The communique made available to the news men by Senator David Mark declare this as follows:

The selective, hasty and excessive deployment of forces to quell the crisis by the army to carry out what should be a purely constabulary matter, we strongly condemned the shameful dismal by the federal government of the atrocities committed by the armed forces and the deliberate cover-up of the invasion of Benue and the bloodbath of thousands of innocent and unarmed defenseless citizens. We, especially condemned such attitude in the face of the massive use of sophisticated weaponry such as armoured tank against citizens.<sup>7</sup>

Ironically, the federal Government on their part ordered the arrest of the Ukum Council Chairman for alleged complicity in the killing of the nineteen soldiers. The minister of information and National orientation made the assertion in Abuja. Reverend Mathew Hassan Kukah, posited that having leaders with military background was the genesis of this crisis.<sup>18</sup> The killing in Zaki-Biam, Gbeji, Vaase and Tse - Adoor to mention but a few; to the world is another extermination reminiscent of that which took place in the town of Odi in Bayelsa State around November, 1999, it was even denoted to as genocide according to Sidiq (2019:74).<sup>19</sup>

### **An Appraisal of 2001 Zaki-Biam: A Jurisprudential Discourse on *Al-Ghilah***

The clashes that often occurred between two communities sharing boarders mostly lead to loss of lives and properties. Paradoxically, the clashes of the farmers and the Fulani herdsmen often resulted to the murder of each other deliberately or through deception. Similarly, the bandit often result to the killing of their kidnapped victims most times the family members couldn't provide what they

asked for. The attempt in this section is to interrogate the activities of the Nigerian Army personnel in Zaki-Biam and its environment.

*Al-Ghilah* is one of the criminal way in which both the ethnic-militias and the militancy in Niger-Delta exterminated their unlucky victims. The act of killing innocent souls unjustly, is forbidden in Islam.

The genesis and reverberation of Zaka-Biam military invasion can be linked to killings by *Al-Ghilah* i.e. killing by deception. Most especially, the initial disappearance of the military men and the attitude of men of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Armoured Brigade Yola, Adamawa State on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of October, 2001 where Human Right reported that more than 150 people were killed by deception, and deceit. The Qur'an declared:

Indeed, the penalty for those who those who wage war against Allah and His Messenger, and strive upon earth (to cause) corruption is none but that they be killed or crucified or that their hands and feet be cut off from opposite sides or that they be exiled from the land. That is for them a disgrace in this world; and for them in the Hereafter is a great punishment.

(Qur'an 5:33)

The above commandment establishes different punishment or penalty for whoever is considered as a mischief maker in the community. The one who disobeyed laid down rules and regulation governing a community, disobeyed constituted authority or is an advocate of disorder are to be sentenced to death, or crucified or amputated or banished and/or made to face public humiliation. The unfortunate killings of the military personnel deployed to forestall law and order is nothing but killing by deception. Similarly, the military onslaught in these communities is nothing but killing by deception. The Islamic dictum on killing by *Ghilah* is "*Al-Qi'a*" i.e. (retaliation, an eye for an eye, ear for ear etc.) or it should be *Al-Ifadd* "execution of the offender"<sup>20</sup> in order to serve as deterrent to others. The scholars at the conference however, submitted that the execution should be seen as punishment for the crime and not in retaliation.

Sayyid Qutb in his exegesis of the above verse equally concur with the submission of the scholars at the conference by stating that, the verse addresses the rebellion against a Muslim ruler just as the ethnic-militias rebels against the government of the day. Qutb maintain further that these group causes fear among the people and equally commit aggression against their lives and properties. Hence, any one shamefaced should be killed.<sup>21</sup> Killing by *Ghilah* is a form of waging war, so anyone guilty of it should be killed as punishment.

Ibn Kathir, on the mischief of killing by *Ghilah* and in his interpretation of the above verse, argues that the phrase "Wage War" means those who "oppose and contradict" the established government of the day through the act of treason, terror, waylaying and all other acts which can brings insecurity. Ibn Kathir interpreted the term "*Fasiidan*" in the verse as "illicit actions" such as killing by deception;<sup>22</sup>

Ibn Kathir buttress his argument with the submission Ibn Jarir record that Ikrimah and Imam Hassan Al-Basir, opines that mischief makers must not be allowed to go scot free and for that case killing by *Ghilah* constitute waging war against Allah so the killer must be made to face the full wrath of the law.

According to Ibn Abbas, the phrase "*Wage war against Allah and spread illicit acts on the land*" means that the unbeliever, not only did they disbelieve but they equally perpetrate all sort of mischievous acts like armed robbery, kidnapping, killing by deceit (*Ghilah*) and waylaying.<sup>23</sup> This opinion was supported by Yusuf Ali in his commentary of the verse, that the act of treason or terror is crime against the state and against Allah. Hence, based on their unconcealed criminal actions four alternative punishment should be applied according to the circumstances. These are: execution, crucifixion, maiming or even exile.<sup>24</sup> According to Abu-Qilabah, the tribe of cukl or Uraynah disbelieved, killed by deceit (*Ghilah*), and wage war against a constituted authority, hence, they were made to face the full wrath of the law.<sup>25</sup>

Consequently, it is imperative to note that one who murder another fellow human being by deception or deceit must have an ulterior motive. Hence scholars, aside the reference to the verses analysed above, made a further argument to buttress their submissions with an evidence that was confirmed in the two most authentic took of *Ahiidith* that a Jew crushed the head of his slave girl because of some silver jewellery or ornament which she owned. When the report got to the Prophet (PBUH) the Jew was seized and the messenger of Allah ordered that the Jews' head be crushed between two rocks. He was killed for being

guilty of *Al-Ghilah* and the Prophet did not refer the matter to the family of the slave girl.<sup>26</sup> It was not *Qiṣaṣ*, hence, there is no need to inform the slave girl's family.

Unfortunately, if the law enforcement agencies had thoroughly done their investigation with the political support from the Bayelsa, Taraba, and Benue State Government and chairman of the affected local government and Traditional rulers, the killing by deception "*Ghilah*" from the men of Nigeria Army in Gbeji, Zaki-Biam and Odi in Bayelsa could have been averted outrightly.

Either by butchery, carnage, homicide, lynching, bloodbath, assassination, annihilation and slaying to mention but a few, any intentional or deliberate elimination of any soul irrespective of the victims faith is forbidden in Islam except on a just cause. This is because Islam recognizes and celebrates the inherent dignity of human life bestowed by Allah upon all human being irrespective of his race, religion, gender, or ethnicity. Inarguably, the act of deliberately killing another man or intentional murder is best defined by Adetona in the following statement as:

This is the form whereby another man's life is intentionally terminated without having committed an offence just to get rid of him... This of course will also include the termination of pregnancy, the killing of one's children for fear and maintaining...<sup>27</sup>

We cannot but agreed in totality with the above definition of intentional murder. The Qur'an and the Hadith accentuates the sacredness of human life, it considered terminating a man's life unjustly as terminating the entire humanity. This is contained in the following verses

...if one slew a person unless it be for murder or spreading mischief in the land. It would be as if He slew the whole people: and if anyone save a life, it would be as if he saved the life of the whole people... (Qur'an 5:32) <sup>28</sup>

Exegetically, Ibn 'Abbass considered the verse above as relating to the murder of Habil by Qabil the two sons of Adam. But he however argues that the term "*unless*

*it be for murder or spreading mischief in the land*" should be interpreted as a deliberate murder and such murderer will be condemned to hell fire and for he who saved a life, it is onus on him to be admitted to paradise because he had saved the whole humanity from extraction.<sup>29</sup> He interpreted the term "*Fasad*" in the verse as either associating partners with Allah or a grievous act of intentional homicide.

Ibn Kathir argues that saving of life in this case occurs by not killing a soul that has been made forbidden by Allah. He postulated that whoever kills a soul without justification, such as retaliation for murder or for causing mischief on earth will be as if he has killed all men.<sup>30</sup> Doi, on the verse advanced that only a competent judge can pronounce death sentence on one guilty of murder.<sup>31</sup>

Yusuf contends that to kill or seek to kill an individual because he represent a race or belong to different ideological set up is to kill all the race or uphold the ideology respectively, hence, Allah forbid such actions and He rather orders that life must be saved, and whoever does that have saved the whole humanity.<sup>32</sup> Qurtabiyy equally argues that Allah outrightly condemned intentional killing of another soul irrespective of the victim's faith, race, ethnicity or even social status, except on a just cause.<sup>33</sup> Islam abhors this as it equally forbids intentional termination of pregnancy and considered it as the same as intentional killings.

It is significant to review the Islamic precept on the intentional killings along with the exegetical appraisal discussed above. This is because its onus on the killer of a victim, to note that there are three rights connected to such atrocious crime. These include; the right of Allah, the right of the murdered victims and the rights of the relatives of the murdered victim.<sup>34</sup>

## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

An attempt has been made in this paper to interrogate, document and establish what led to the killings by the military personnel in Zaki-Biam community in 2001. The community was grappling with incessant communal conflict and youth's restiveness and this led to the killings of some military men.

This study unequivocally condemn the callous actions by a few member of the community, it is quiet worrisome and unfortunate that the reverberation result of military invasion of the communities. One of the fundamental roles and responsibilities of the military is to protect the territorial integrity of the country from both internal and external aggression. The pogrom that took place in Zaki-

Biam and other twenty communities orchestrated by the men of Nigerian Army, cannot be justified as normal military engagement in anyway. It was disastrous and indeed a rancorous mission. This is why the mission is tantamount to Al-Ghilah, an abominable act in Islam. Anyone found culpable of this act after thorough investigation, the penalty is death. Despite public uproar locally and internationally, to condemn the military inhumane act, the military denied what the public and international communities tagged as "bloodbath, pogrom or genocide" in Zaki-Biam.

Invariably, due to circumstances which led to the crisis and repercussions, this paper recommends as follows:

- There is a need for the government to re-energise and aggressively fund Nigerian Police force. This will make the force to be more active in inhibiting breakdown of law and order.
- There is need for continuous training and retraining of military personnel involved in internal security operations.
- The paper also recommends that, men of the Nigerian Army should involve less in internal security operations.
- Aggressive orientation should be a continuous exercise to educate Nigerians particularly the youths on the need to respect and obey the laws of the land. Security personnel must be respected and honoured at all time.
- There should be a severe penalty for anyone who manhandled or disobeyed any law enforcement officers not to talk about maiming them.
- There is need for continuous synergy among law enforcement personnel in the country.

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