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I was reading the report which Lord Lugard submitted to the British Parliament in 1917.

I graciously received the report from my egbon @araisokun during the week,

And a couple of salient issues struck me, which I will mention in this short thread,

1. The British analysis of

the basic character of Nigerians from various parts of the country (SW, SE/SS, NC, NE & NW) still holds true over a century later.

In other words, after a century of British assessment of our character, we haven't changed

2. The myth of a "rich" South and a "poor" North arose

from the stated reasons why Lugard decided to amalgamate the "countries" of Northern and Southern Nigeria.

The bureaucratic system was buoyant in the South due to its ability to generate excise duty from alcohol importation

Unfortunately, (alcohol being prohibited)

such taxes were unavailable in the Northern protectorate

Therefore, at the time of amalgamation, the colonial govt in the North was supported by an annual grant from the Crown, while the South was buoyant due to its income from alcohol taxes

However by 1917 when the report was

written, the coffers of the amalgamated Nigeria had been swollen exceedingly by receipts from the sale of Tin from Jos!

The "tables" had turned!

In other words, the ability of the colonial govt to rapidly achieve buoyancy in the South, was due to proximity to British monitored

trade (the coast)

On the other hand, the vastness of the North made it supremely difficult to build infrastructure that would enable effective harnessing of its resources

Therefore, the size of the North was its protection from British (& other international) exploitation

Unfortunately, as it was in 1917, so it remains today.

The North has remained undeveloped due to its sheer size, while successive govts have preferred to continue investing infrastructure in the South in order to gain opportunistically from its quick sale resources.

I will give an example.

The volume of trade between northern Nigerian states and their foreign neighbours is still largely hard to estimate due to chronic lack of infrastructure at the far-flung borders littered all over the North

Power, telecoms, roads, security installations

etc are many of the types of infrastructure lacking in those areas as compared to how well developed they are in the South

Its hardly surprising that terrorists find it easy to operate along the porous borders of the North

Lack of infrastructure is a glaring cause of insecurity

Therefore, when you are tempted to point at "poverty" in the North, it is important to understand that such poverty is not intrinsic to the North.

Neither should we be tempted to blame it on "northern elders"

The North suffers from chronic lack of infrastructure due to neglect

by the Nigerian state

The state is hamstrung by the vocal South in allocating resources for development

Which means that growth in the North will continue to be slow, as long as state resources are seen as "localized" (owned by communities) & "federated" (ie must be "shared

equally")

What Northern Nigeria needs is a massive state-backed infrastructure drive that cannot be achieved through the current

model of resource allocation we have adopted in Nigeria.

What our elite don't see is the massive value that can be generated for the entire country

from such an investment

Until we collectively begin to realize the potential value we are losing from our unproductive politics in Nigeria, we'll continue to fight with one arm tied behind our back

Our secret weapon & path to rapid growth is the development of Northern Nigeria

Download the report here

https://t.co/hsKG6Uttcv