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#NigerianPolitics: The inter-tribal hostilities presently brewing in the south-west of Nigeria ■■ between Yoruba & Fulani people need not happen if all parties are ready to shun dishonesty & allegiance to primordial tribal sentiments. We must not allow an escalation.

That there is a problem of criminals hiding in SW forests is beyond a doubt.These criminals are known to disguise as Fulani people carrying out legitimate cattle herding business in the region. Some of the criminals have also been found to be fulani in times past & recently.

Previous engagements between governments of the region and leadership of the Fulani cattle herders association has not yielded the expected result of reduction in kidnapping along the highways of the region while survivors have always said the kidnappers look 'fulani.'

I have not been kidnapped before but I have had former co-workers who have been kidnapped along the Akure-Owo expressway. They gave similar reports about the ethnicity of their kidnappers.

We must not discount the harrowing experiences of these Nigerians in the name of politics.

Now the simple solution to this not too complex problem has been made surprisingly complicated by the peculiar nature of our politics in Nigeria:

1. We want all solutions to states' problem to come only from Abuja even though we run a federal system.

2. Their is still deep ethnic sentiments among the over 250 ethnic groups in the country. This mutual suspicion cuts across educational attainment & socio-economic status.

3. Politicisation of issues pertaining to the RESTRUCTURING question.

The recent Garba Shehu quick response to Gov. Akeredolu's order concerning vacation of forest reserves by herders contain elements of the above identified problems. It was gratifying when the Fulani leader in the state rose up to defend the position of the governor.

Hardly had the Ondo state episode died down than the Sunday Igboho fiasco in Oyo state started...and it has been ugly, putting every rational mind in the region to shame!

We didn't need to wait for a thug to begin to lead the discussion in a nuanced issue like this.

Let's be clear, Mr Sunday Adeyemo(Igboho) has great & illustrious people behind him. We can not afford to have another separatist group in our southwest.

The killing/kidnapping/ herders problem in the southwest must be handled with utmost caution.

Finding a solution will involve each person, commentators, government official and agencies to revisit the constitutional basis of our coexistence as a multilingual, multicultural nation-state: federalism not unitarism!

The state governments have rights and responsibilities to their people. The FG has not always seen things in this light but it is the only way forward if Nigeria would survive as a united entity.

The FG still has to lead the discussion of the many strands of this conflict.

In the meantime, we must appeal to tribal associations and unions to desist from rhetoric that may further inflame an already delicate situation.

Peace is everything in the society.