



Post- Civil War Developments in Nigeria: Issues, Challenges and the Establishment of NATSINTA Army Barracks, Katsina, 1970-2020

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Abstract. The paper examines the post-Nigerian Civil War developments that led to the establishment of Natsinta Army Barracks, Katsina. Prior to 1966, the total strength of the Nigerian Army was merely 10,000. However, at the end of the war, the figure had risen to 250,000. This posed a serious challenge because the available barracks could not contain more than 10% of the personnel. In view of this, the Nigerian Army instructed the soldiers to leave the East because the region was saturated with artificial barracks. On the May 1, 1970 the 82-battalion arrived Katsina from Uli-Ahiala. They were accommodated at Sabongida, Gidan Kwakwa, Kayalwa, GRA and some hotels, as well as rented apartments in the city. By 1977, the project for a permanent barracks was completed at Natsinta Village. The barracks housed the 82 battalion and in 1996 the 35 battalion replaced them. The scope of the paper is 1970-2020 because it was in 1970 that 82 battalion arrived Katsina. The year 2020 is the terminal end of the paper because it was in that year that residential quarters for the personnel of 17 brigade was constructed in the barracks. The paper argues that the establishment of the barrack was a landmark in the history of modern Katsina metropolis. Natsinta had impacts on the socio-economic and security aspect of Katsina. Primary and secondary sources of historical research were used in writing this paper.

Keywords: Natsinta, Sabongida, Katsina, Army Barracks, Battalion, Civil war.

1. Introduction

Barracks accommodation is an essential component of logistics or welfare packages of the existence of any functional military in the world. Though permanent buildings had occasionally been used to house troops in earlier times, the custom of billeting in private houses, inns, and other existing facilities had taken

hold by the 18th century. Such “quartering of troops” was mentioned as an abuse in the United States Declaration of Independence. It was also considered bad for the soldiers’ morale, and a movement began for constructing permanent barracks wherever troops were regularly stationed. In the 19th century, such buildings, mostly of bricks, appeared all over Europe (Encyclopedia, 2023). Although, camping of troops in temporary shelters is still in practice, especially in wartime, most soldiers were living in permanent barracks. In Nigeria, for instance, the aftermath of the Civil War necessitated the building of many barracks to accommodate solders.

Natsinta Army Barracks, Katsina was one of the barracks established as part of the Nigerian government’s resettlement of soldier’s policies to address the Post- Nigerian Civil War challenges of barracks accommodation in the Nigerian Army. After the war, 82 Battalion relocated to Katsina on May 1, 1970. However, the construction of Natsinta Army Barracks started in 1973 and by 1977, the project was completed and commissioned. The barrack, located along Katsina- Jibia road got its name from a village called Natsinta. The paper therefore seeks to examine the establishment of the barracks. In this regard and for proper understanding of the events that necessitated the establishment of the barracks, the paper is in seven segments. The first segment is the introduction, followed by conceptual clarifications, a brief overview of the of Nigerian Army on the eve of the Civil War and the mobilization policies during the war that led to the over-bloated number of the force that created challenges of barracks accommodation in the country. The paper also discussed the Post-War resettlement policy of the federal government, the presence of 82-Battalion in Katsina, as well as the establishment of the barracks. The paper also assessed the socio-economic and security impacts of the barrack. The last section concludes the paper.

2. Conceptual Clarifications

2.1 Natsinta

Natsinta is a name of a community along the Katsina-Jibia road, just some few kilometers away from the main Katsina city. Interestingly, the barracks is located around the village. Prior to the establishment of the barrack, Natsinta was located at somewhere around the current main entrance gate and extended up to some areas inside the present barracks (Lawal, 2022). However, with the establishment of the barracks, Sabongari, Katoge, Garke, Tudun Dole and Natsinta villages had to relocate. Moreover, in 1984 the Government of old Kaduna State established Government Day Secondary School at Natsinta (Shehu, 2018, 379). Interestingly, the school was built inside the barracks. Hence, the people of Katsina metropolis often referred to the Army Barracks as Natsinta. Therefore, Natsinta community has a special connection with the barracks so much that, “Natsinta Army Barracks Katsina” written at the entrance gate of the barrack. Therefore, for the purpose of this paper, Natsinta refers to the barracks while Natsinta Village refers to the community.

2.2 Sabon Gida

The Sabongida is a royal residence built by Emir Muhammadu Dikko between 1933 and 1936. It started as a rest house that developed as a royal plantation. The size of the plantation extended up to the present Natsinta Army Barracks. Between 1936 and 1944, Sabongida served as a guesthouse to Emir Muhammad Dikko (Mijinyawa, 2015). The Gidan Sarki (royal residence) at Sabongida was one of the areas where 82 Battalion was temporarily accommodated when they arrived at Katsina from Uli-Ahiala on May 1, 1970. They stayed there up to 1977 when the construction of the barrack was completed and commissioned. Sabongida, in Hausa language, means a newly established house. The area now metamorphosed in to a community while the main royal residence is referred to as Gidan Sarki. Therefore, Sabongida is often used to mean both the royal residence and the community.

2.3 Katsina Metropolis

In traditional Hausaland, for a settlement to qualify as *Birni* (city), it must have a city-wall surrounding it and a central market. It also has to have a ruler or administrator resident in it. In this regard, right from

its formation in the 15th century up to the end of the 19th century, Katsina could be regarded as *Birni* for it had a ruler known as *Sarki*, a central market as well as city-wall. In the early 20th century Katsina city came under British colonial administration that led to the establishment of colonial structures and other structures outside the city wall (Shehu, 2012, 33). Katsina transformed into a metropolis that covers part of Batagarawa, Jibia and Kaita local government areas. Initially, the city was the capital of Katsina kingdom and later Katsina emirate. It became Local Government administrative headquarter in 1962. For the purpose of this paper, Katsina city metropolis refers to ancient city of Katsina and those areas that are under other Local Government Areas but now forms part of Katsina city. For instance, some parts of Sabongida, Filin Sukuwa and Natsinta Village where the barrack is located are under Jibia Local Government Area.

3. Nigerian Army before the Civil War

The Royal Nigerian Military Forces was formed in 1959 and the Nigerian Army in 1960 after the attainment of independence (Shaibu, 1996). According to Alabi-Isama (2013), after the attainment of Independence in 1960, the total strength of the Nigerian Army personnel was less than 8,000, which was relatively small for a population of about fifty-five million. By October 1960, there were only fifty-seven Nigerian Army officers of whom the North had only eight, the East had thirty-seven while the West had ten. Hussaini (2016) explained further that:

By January 1966, the Nigerian Army comprises about 10,000 and made up of five infantry battalions, two Reconnaissance Squadron, two Artillery Batteries and basic logistics support elements. This small Army was organized in to two Brigades, with two headquarters at Kaduna and Lagos respectively. The battalions were located at Enugu, Ibadan, Kaduna, Ikeja and Kano, while the Reconnaissance Squadrons were located at Kaduna and Abeokuta.

Therefore, before the outbreak of the Nigerian Civil war in 1967, the country has only two brigades with few battalions. The personnel of the Nigerian Army were sheltered at various barracks scattered across the country. However, the civil war led to the massive recruitment of soldiers to fight the war.

3.1 Mobilization Policies during the Nigerian Civil War

The Nigerian Civil war changed the mobilization pattern in to the Nigerian Army as more and more people were mobilized to fight the war. Mobilization

for the war began in earnest after the declaration of secession of the Eastern region by Col. Odumegwu Ojukwu. However, it was only in the North that such mobilization had any impact. This was because, at the initial stage, the Western Region appeared to be sitting on the fence and considered the war as being between the Hausa and the Igbo (Okon, 2017, 118). Although, this has changed when the war began, as many westerners joined on the side of Nigeria. On the order of, Commander-In- Chief of the Armed forces, the world war veterans, who were considered still fit for military duties were enlisted in to the Nigerian Army. The resultant enlistment enabled 1 Area Command that later became 1 Division to rapidly established new units and formations. By this time four of the six regular infantry battalions of the command Brigade of the Nigerian Army already re-designated 1 Area Command after Aburi (Okon, 2017: 49-50). About seven thousand World War veterans were turned up which formed the basis of another four battalions- 20, 21, 22 and 23 (Obasanjo, 1980).

Apart from the world war veterans, the personnel of the Native Authority Police Force (NAP) in the North were conscripted in to the Nigerian Army, given short training. They contributed greatly to the war effort particularly in 3- Marine Commando sector under Col. Benjamin Adekunle. For instance, during Bonny Operation, 740 Native Authority Police Personnel, trained in Jos and Bauchi to reinforce 1 Area Command, were merged with 6-Battalion and used for the operation following the Mid-West invasion. A further 600 Native Police Personnel received basic military training at Ikeja to form the nucleus of the 9-battalion that blocked areas stretching from Okene to Okitipupa in Ondo State (Okon, 2017: 189).

There was massive enlistment of young able-bodied men in to the Nigerian Army to fight the Civil War. For example, in order to recruit more people in to the war effort, provincial administrators throughout the Northern region were put on alert by the Chairman of Interim administrative Services in the North (Obasanjo, 1980, 20). When the Civil War broke out, emirs, influential Native Authority figures as well as distinguished merchant class in different parts of Northern Nigeria were used by the Federal Government of Nigeria in persuading of young able-bodied men to come for the enlistment. Influential figures like, Madawakin Kano, Alhaji Shehu Ahmad, the Magajin Garin Shinkafi (District Head of Shinkafi) in Sokoto Division, were used by the government to encourage their subjects to volunteer enrolment in to the Nigerian Army. In Katsina, the Native Authority used district Heads through the village heads to persuade able-bodied youths (Hussaini, 2016: 81-82).

Town criers went round the towns announcing recruitment for those who are interested in helping the North fight the war. Thousands of people enlisted in to the Nigerian Army through the recruitment drive. Iro (2022) recounted:

In June 1968, I was at Zuru for a business trip when I heard an announcement over the radio that those interested in joining the war should converge in front of the palace. There, they selected a number of us and took us to Depot Zaria for training. Those considered fit for the service were enlisted in to the depot and the rest were taken back home. We spent some weeks in the depot receiving military training before moving to Amasari where we formed part of the 1- battalion.

Even non- citizens from the neighbouring Niger and Chad Republics were mobilized to fight the war. For instance, Adamu, a Nigerien national was one of those recruited. According to him, “I am a Nigerien. I was at Sokoto through Sabon-Birni border and decided to join the Army fight the war, taken to Igbo land after given 3 months training in Kaduna” (Adamu, 2022).

It is important to stress that, until the war, Nigerian Army Depot Zaria existed as the only recruit training center. As the war intensified and the units and formations increased rapidly, Recruitment Training Centers were established at Abeokuta and Ikeja. Thus, Depot Zaria, Abeokuta and Ikeja became the main source of replenishing 1-Division, 2- Division and, 3MCDO respectively. Similarly, at the start of the war, there was acute shortage of officers to operate the newly created commands. The Army embarked on emergency training of officers. By the end of the war, the Army had produced a large number of officers.

After the Mid-West invasion, Lt Col Murtala Mohammed was appointed the General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the newly formed 2-Division and assigned the task of evicting Biafran forces from the region. Mohammed built 2 Division from the scratch. He mobilized available Batmen, Clerks, cooks, other soldiers, and recruits from Ikeja with only few days training. Murtala even scraped dregs out of Kirikiri prison, given uniform to bolster personnel strength, given riffles and pushed to the front to fight (Okon, 2017: 188). Elsewhere in the 3 Marine Commando Area of Responsibility, in addition to special Forces Training, there was massive recruitment of men and women from the local areas from January to April 1968. Isaac Adaka Boro had recruited over 3000 swimmers from his native Ijaw area and Calabar area. Others such as women for intelligence gathering, the medicals, the infantry, the canoe peddlers and the drivers trained in various

training centers in the area (Alabi-Isama, 2013: 133-4). As Hussaini (2016: 102) further elucidated, "Soon after this operation, thousands of young Efik and Ibibio men came out and offered to serve their fatherland. The men received basic military training in make-shift depots and after their training together with men from the existing Battalions, 12th and 13th Brigades were formed".

As the war rages on, various departments and units such as agriculture, healthcare, town planning, forestry under the Native Authority instructed through their respective heads that they should forward names of able-bodied staff in their domain for enlistment in to the army. Moreover, school headmasters also instructed to persuade and enlist names of old aged pupils in their schools for the military service to the nation. What aided the enlistment was the support by important personalities. Baba Mai Dala, a prominent NA staff in Sokoto played a key role. He was responsible for paying the sum token for the enlisted after being medically examined. He claimed total figure of what he spent from the federal government through Native Authority at the end of enlistment of any batch. There was also the popular late Baba Maza-Maza in Zuru emirate. Alhaji Dankulu in Kaura Namoda, a popular merchant provided a place to Native Authority Police (NAP) for enlistment of the people. However, it should be noted that, this did not happen only in the North as Chief Awolowo, in the latter part of the war, also made use of his influence among the Yoruba through the traditional rulers to encouraged people to join the Army. A number of young people voluntarily joined the army. Some abandoned a well-paying job like Nigerian Port Authority. Similarly, many captured at markets, streets and other public places, examined medically and then send to NA Depot Abeokuta (Hussaini, 2016: 82-4)) It was probably through such announcement that Lance corporal Iro was enlisted in to the Army in Zuru in 1968.

With the astronomical rise in the number of the Nigerian Army personnel due to massive mobilization, there bound be a serious challenge of accommodation when the war eventually ended. During the war, the Nigerian defence leadership did not envisage this challenge as to make adequate provision of accommodation for the massively recruited soldiers during the war. The federal military government focused all its attention on how to win the war by any means possible. The problem of accommodation did not manifest during the war because most of the recruited soldiers were at the various warfront in the defunct Eastern Region, therefore barracks accommodation was not an issue. As soon as the war

ended, it became evident that the Nigerian Army is facing a serious challenge of accommodation. This is because the available barracks in the country could not contain more than ten percent of the total number of the officers and men of the Nigerian Army due to the increase in the numerical strength of the force (Hussaini, 2016: 197-8). The Nigerian government had to come up with various measures to address the challenges.

4. The Post- Civil War Resettlement Effort of the Federal Government

When the war ended in 1970, it down on the Nigerian leaders that the Nigerian Army is facing an acute shortage of barracks accommodation because the strength of the force has risen from merely ten thousand to about two hundred and fifty thousand and it was never the focus of the Army to establish new barracks during the period. As such, the federal government, must in a matter of urgency, devise means to either reduce the size of the force or find ways to provide accommodation for them.

When the war ended, the troops that had captured a particular town at that time were instructed to remain there while others that were in the forest were ordered to move to the next available town. They were mostly sheltered in a temporary accommodation built by zinc and wood. They stayed there for some years before permanent settlement was provided for them at the newly constructed barracks across the country. Iro (2022) a civil war veteran recounted:

When the war ended, we were ordered to move to an uphill area in the outskirt of Awka. From there later camped in Obollo, Port Harcourt. We built our shelter with our own money out of our salary. In our battalion, the company commandant allocate space to each soldier, to build a room, something we called 'up and down'- the fence and roofing- which is made of palm wood and leaves. We did same even when at Awka. We spent almost a year at Awka. In western Port Harcourt, we were given zinc and wood to build shelter too. We bought the nails by ourselves and built the rooms. We spent like two years in Port Harcourt.

Though the artificial barracks served as a temporary measure, it also created another problem of overcrowded number of soldiers among the civilian populace. This means that the government had to device another means for settling the large number of the surplus soldiers that was created by the just concluded Civil War. The federal government therefore had to come up with another solution. At a certain time, the soldiers instructed to leave Eastern

region because it was saturated with artificial military barracks. For instance, in May 1970, the men and officers of the 82 battalion were ordered to move to Katsina from Uli -Ahiala (Adamu, 2022). This seems to be the first solution, not long after, it was down on the defence policy makers that a permanent solution has to be found. This led to the second solution-establishing new and suitable barracks as permanent solution.

5. The 82 Battalion in Katsina

When the defunct eastern region became saturated with artificial barracks and the number of soldiers there became too much, the policy makers at the Defence ministry came up with a solution, albeit temporarily, to decongest the east. Some units of the Army relocated from the Eastern region to other parts of the country. For instance, some of them moved to Idah, Lokoja, Ankpa, Sokoto etc. In May 1970, through the influence of the then Chief of Army Staff Gen. Hassan Usman Katsina, the men and officers of the 82 battalion were ordered to move from Uli-Ahiala in Igboland to Katsina. They were temporarily accommodated at Sabongida, Gidan Kwakwa and Kayalwa and in rented apartments and hotels inside the city of Katsina. However, according to available records, the Gidan Sarki was the first occupied by the soldier of 82 battalion on the 1st of May, 1970 which suggest that the order by the federal military Government for 82 battalion to relocate to Katsina must have been given prior to the month of May. Kabiru (2022) recounted the arrival:

One day we wake up to see the area of Sabongida filled up with trucks of soldiers with their luggage and family. They were camped at royal residence here in Sabongida. Inside the residence, there were rooms for horses and cattle. The rooms were given to the soldiers to occupy and the available space was used to build additional rooms using mud bricks by the soldiers themselves. They employed the services of local builders who made mud bricks for them with which they used to build the rooms. Filin Sukuwa served as parade ground of the soldiers. The Maxim was located around this mahogany tree. However, the accommodation could not contain all of them as such A Company was stationed at Gidan Kwakwa and C Company at Kayalwa while some rented apartments in the city.

The royal residence at Sabon Gida was established between 1933-1936 by emir of Katsina Muhammad Dikko to serve as a rest house that later developed in to a royal plantation. This is against the view that the house was built because of the Polo racecourse located in the area. The residence was opposite Polo

racecourse along Jibia road. Contrary to the popular view that the royal residence was given to the Nigerian Army by Emir Usman Nagoggo to settle free of charge, documents available revealed that the house was actually rented by the Army. On the 5th of January 1976, in a letter signed by his secretary, A.I Bakori, the emir of Katsina Usman Nagoggo, sent to the permanent secretary Ministry of Defense at Lagos requesting for settlement of the sum of N1200.00 being the outstanding house rent dues. This was in response to a correspondence referenced No.Ad/CL/166/1/103 of 26th October 1974. The letter seeks to inform the secretary, Defense Ministry that the emir had confirmed the assessment of N 900.00 per annum made by the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing in respect of the emir's House in Katsina which is occupied by the Army personnel. The details of the rent dues with effect from the 1st May 1970 when the House was first occupied read (KLCS, 1976, 23):

- The rent dues as from 1st May 1970 to 31st December 1975 is equal to 5 years, 8 months at the rate of N 900.00 per annum or N75 per month = N 5100.00
- Amount of rent paid to the owner as referred to in your letter = N 3900.00
- Payment outstanding to be made to the owner = N1200.00.

However, it is possible the emir had initially wanted to give the house rent-free for the soldiers to occupy but later either the provincial government or the Federal Military Government decided to pay the emir. What is important is the fact that payment has been made to the emir that proved the house was never given to the Army to occupy free as against the popular view.

It is interesting to note that the labourers that built the rooms for soldiers at Sabon Gida hired from among the host communities. (Liman, 2022) narrated that: When they were first camped at Sabongida, it was our people that that built the rooms for them using mud-brick. The thatch roofing was produced at Garke community. The people of the south don't trust thatch roofing, so they don't pay for it until they pour water on top of it, enter the room to ensure that the water is not leaking. They set up the rooms to live with their wives as temporary shelter.

The A company was stationed at Gidan Kwakwa. There was a building there opposite Dutsen-Safe low-cost called Bachelors'. Each block has 10 rooms with a kitchen and a toilet. (Kabiru, 2022) argues that the house was established purposely to accommodate the soldiers of the 82 battalion, as it was just a virgin land before. However, this claimed could not be

substantiated. Further, there were those that lived in a place opposite Garin Abba. The building extended to Malali up to a school called Gidan Kwakwa down to Gidan Taki. The C Company was stationed at the present Kayalwa Primary school inside the city (Kabiru, 2022). There were also those camped at Gidan Taki near Bachelor's (Liman, 2022).

The officers were accommodated Government Quarters in Government Residential Area (GRA), Katsina. For instance, as at December 1974, Captain A. Abubakar, the battalion commanding officer was housed at no. 8 The Crescent, GRA Katsina. Other officers like Lt. F.A Grillo who lived at 17 Circle Road, GRA and FD/LT Conrad Kpev who lived at No. 6, Payne Road GRA (KLCS, 1974: 21-22).

Other soldiers were sheltered at some hotels inside the town. For instance, various correspondences have shown that there were soldiers accommodated at the Republic Hotel, Katsina. Complete rooms in the hotel hired at 300 pounds per months by the Nigerian Army to accommodate its soldiers. Similarly, complete 14 rooms house for staff of the hotel were also hired at 28 pounds per month from 1st of June to 31st of October, 1970 (KLCS). The arrangement was that, the Nigerian Army in Katsina hired the Hotels through the District officer Katsina as authorized by the Provincial Secretary, Katsina. However, the relationship about settlement of bills was not very smooth as the Hotel Manager on various occasion resorted to persuasion for the bills to be settled. It was as if the Army was doing him a favour by occupying his hotel. In one of such correspondences dated, 26th of October 1970, sent to the Commanding Officer, 82 Battalion by the Manager, Republic Hotel and copied to Provincial Secretary, Katsina read:

I should be very pleased to inform you that since the above-mentioned Hotel and the House were completely hired by the Nigerian Army Katsina, through the district officer Katsina, authorized by the Provincial Secretary etc occupied by the Nigerian Army 82 BN, Katsina from 1st June, 1970, at blower rate of 300 pounds per month and 88 pounds per 14 rooms House per month, up to now no payment or any part of payment has ever been made to[sic].

As it is now the time for repairs, maintenance and re-decorations for the minor damages made by rain to the above premises mentioned, I should therefore be happy to urge my request of help to you to pass the attached bills for early settlement as to enable me to do the above-mentioned repair (KLCS, 1970).

The payment has not been settled up to the end of the year 1970. This necessitated writing another letter as a reminder to the earlier one. There were also those that were accommodated in rented apartment at private

houses various quarters such as Galandanci, Yar'adua, Kofar Guga, Kerau, Sabon Layi, Bakin Kasuwa, and other areas in the city (KLCS, 1971).

6. The establishment of Katsina Army Barracks

The relocation of the soldiers from the east to some other parts of the country provided a temporary relief to the federal military government. Soon after, it became apparent that the soldiers could not continue to live in temporary shelters forever. A solution has to be found. The federal government had to embark on the establishment of new Army Barracks across the country to accommodate the soldiers. A new policy was initiated whereby the federal government allocated the sum of eight million pounds to all the state governments across the country in building new and suitable barrack accommodation for the soldiers. The permanent Secretary Federal Ministry of Defense announced the grant in Kaduna. Four million pounds was earmarked to the six states in the South and another four million pounds to the six Northern states. There were eighteen different locations for the project all over the country (AHK, 1970). In some instances, State Governments constructs barracks to provide accommodation for the soldiers because the Federal Government was overwhelmed. Notable example was Kano when the Audu Bako administration built a well-equipped Army Barrack and donated it to the Federal Government. The barrack has a landmass of 640 acres and cost about 360,000 pounds (AHK, 1979: 9).

In Katsina, construction of a new Army Barrack to accommodate the men and officers of the 82 battalion started in 1973. When the contract for the construction of the barrack was awarded the chosen site for the project was a virgin land outskirts of the city, just some few kilometers away, along Jibia road. The barrack met some settlements that were there for hundreds of years. Some of the settlements included; Sabongari, Katoge, Garke, Tudun Dole and Natsinta. The establishment of the barrack led to the dislocation of these settlements. While some of them moved further and settled, others migrated to various areas and settled. For instance, in Garke village, those whose farm or homes were affected by the project either moved in to the city, some went to an area north of the barrack called Rijiyar Hamza while others moved and settled in a village called Fura Girke north of the present location of Garke village. There were those that moved to Gadari. Some migrated to as far as Balma in Bauchi (Haladu, 2022).

Kabiru (2022) gave a brief description of locations of the settlements that were dislocated and where they migrated. He described:

A round the site of the present Brigade Headquarters (under construction) was a settlement called Sabongari where we had our Quranic education. The people of Sabongari moved in to the city and settled around Kofar Guga, Farin Yaro, Kofar Marusa and Kofar Kaura respectively. There was also a settlement around the present Mammy Gate called Katoge. By the north-end there was a settlement called Garke just close to the barrack but did not fall within the catchment area of the barrack. In the north-eastern side, there was Tudun Dole whose people moved further away because they were too close to the barrack. Natsinta settlement moved from present main entrance gate of the barrack to the North of the barrack where Emir Usman Nagogge gave them land to establish a new settlement.

Whereas Kabiru (2022) asserts that the project did not affect Garke, the people of Garke maintained that the project indeed affected them as compensation was paid. What is clear from the foregoing was that, the construction affected them because there was evidence that compensation was paid to some of them as such it is safe to say that they were indeed affected. What can be deduce from the foregoing is that, the settlement had to migrate further away because the barrack was too close to them coupled with the fact that some of their farmlands were taken away, hence the compensation.

As mentioned earlier, the Natsinta covered from around the main entrance gate of the barrack up to some areas inside the barrack. It was a relatively big yet scattered settlement because in most settlements outside the vicinity of the city, people lived in farmhouses with their family and animals (Dayyabu, 2022). Garke, Tudun Dole, Ziri and Gafan were once under Natsinta. Garke started as a place where the people of Natsinta kept their animals and gradually people moved there to settled permanently. One striking thing about Natsinta village is the fact that the settlement changed location twice (Lawal, 2022). The people of Natsinta were provided with land by the government to settle. During the period, the Native Authority is handling issues dealing with land allocations. Dayyabu mentioned that:

The emir Usman Nagoggo sent the District Head who collaborated with the village head and the ward heads to allocate the land to the people of Natsinta. There was a vast land beside our farmlands that was distributed to the people. The Village Head and the

Ward Head worked together with some officials to allocate the land to build houses. More so, people were allowed to clear site and own farms at the eastern side of the Natsinta settlement. All they have to do is to seek for permission from the Ward Head and the village head (Dayyabu, 2022).

Before the commencement of the construction project, “officials were sent to measure the area. They entered even our room to conduct the measurement. Nobody knew what they intended to do. Suddenly site clearing commenced. Never knew that it was barrack they want established” (Liman 2022). It was AD Saude that was given the contract of clearing the site. The people in the communities around were employed to carry out the clearing and were paid two kobo as their wage. Those that served in the block factory are paid seven shillings and an ounce in a week. There are those that saved the money to buy Cattle while some purchased Farms. Ten Shillings can buy one a bag of millet or corn (Haladu, 2022). The companies awarded the construction contract were late BarauYaro, Late AD Saude, Barade, Ghali Daura etc. Some of them produced blocks for the construction. People of the host communities served as the labourers.

With regard to the payment of compensation, most of the villages have no problem with that. (Kabiru 2022) confirmed that compensation was paid, “We know for sure compensation was paid but we were young to know the amount since that time parent rarely confide in their young children. No one complain that he was not paid to the best of my knowledge”. This concurs with what the people of Garke said that they indeed received compensation. One of the people compensated went to the city to buy a land and built a house that can accommodate seven People. The amount he built the house was just 600 Naira. The ones with a big farm are given six hundred Naira and those whose houses are affected were given the same amount (Liman 2022) However, Dayyabu refuted the claim that everybody was paid compensation. According to him:

Some people were initially a paid, but when the state government, during the first tenure of Governor Umaru Musa Yar’adua, wanted to fence the barrack, some people bitterly complaint that they were never paid compensation and hence they will not allow the fence to be erected. The agitations became so intense that Ali Usman, the then District Head of Dandara asked me to investigate and compile a list of those that were paid and those claiming that they were never paid. I was the ward head then. The state government paid us. I cannot recall the exact number of the people that were paid because it has been long. I can only

confirm that everyone has been settled. (Dayyabu, 2022).

The building of the barrack took about four years to be completed. Started in 1973, the barrack was commissioned in 1977. It has about 1,620 housing units including officer's quarters, senior non-commissioned officers and non-commissioned soldiers. There was a block for offices, a market, an officer's mess, two churches, a mosque and general arrangement for water supply. However, the barrack was not fenced until during the first tenure of Governor Umaru Musa Yar'adua.

7. Socio-economic and Security Impacts of the Barracks

Since inception, Natsinta Army Barracks have developed as a community and have an impact on the people of Katsina metropolis and even beyond in different spheres ranging from education, job creation and provision of social amenities, sports, religion, medical outreach services, social relations as well as internal security role. It is in the area of education that the Natsinta Army Barracks have one of its biggest impacts. The presence of the barracks has immensely contributed in the development of the communities around such as Katoge, Garke, Sabongida, Natsinta, Filin Sukuwa as well as Katsina city as people send their children to be educated there. There are four schools located inside the barrack. These are; Army Children Primary School Natsinta, Government Day Secondary School Natsinta, Government Junior Secondary School Natsinta and Nigerian Army Officers' Wives Association (NAOWA) International School. The NAOWA International School has both the primary, Junior and Senior secondary school sections.

Interestingly, though the Army Children School Natsinta, was established to cater for the children of Army personnel, they have the least percentage in the school, as civilian population constitutes the majority of the students. The children of Army personnel are not more than 20 percent and 80 percent are from the host communities. The catchment area that has the highest number of children is Katsina town with about 60 percent, about 20 percent from within the Barrack while the remaining 20 percent comes from communities around the barrack (Sunusi, 2022). As for the secondary school, most of the students are from among the civilians. Out of the over 4000, less than 10 percent came from the barrack. The rest of the over 90% are from communities such as Bugaje, Dandara, Kusa, Kaura, Sabongida, Garke, Katoge and Natsinta Village (Shinkafi, 2023). The Imamate also runs an Islamic school for both children and women with 10

classes of about 800 pupils for the children section. The students are mostly from Katoge because of proximity (Danjuma, 2022).

Another significant impact is on social relationship. A number of the soldiers got married to civilians within the host communities and now have children and grandchildren. There were several examples of such marriages conducted. For instance, some years back, Halima Gide, Zainabu Idris and Halima Haladu Sani, natives of Garke community, were married to soldiers in the barrack (Haladu, 2022). In Katoge community, Samira Mati married to a soldier some 15 years ago. Similarly, Dayyiba also got married inside the barrack about 10 years ago (Bala, 2023). However, information gathered at Natsinta reveals that there was no marriage ever conducted between soldiers and civilians in that community.

The civilians have access to the barrack and since the Army is an amalgam of diverse tribes with different socio-cultural background, the interaction had an impact on the social life of the host communities especially on morality. For instance, Katoge has a number of soldiers both serving and retired that built houses in the community. People like Garba Abu and Ibrahim Sanda, retired Warrant Officers, and Corporal Tasiu. The soldiers are not the only ones living in Katoge. There are quite a number of non-indigenes conducting their trading activities in the barrack. Some of them rented apartments in Katoge because of its proximity with the Mammy gate. These set of economic immigrants have influenced the mores and social construct of Katoge. As result of this, Katoge transformed in to a cosmopolitan settlement. The community now has about four churches of different denominations.

In terms of medical services outreach, the health care centre in the barrack offers free medical services to the villages as part of their corporate social responsibility. The villages that usually patronize the hospital are Katoge, Garke, Tudun Dole and Natsinta (Hayatuddeen, 2023). As a proof of the Army willingness to assist the host community in healthcare delivery, Wednesdays of every week was set aside to treat patients from the host communities. The number of these patients is between eleven and fifteen. Moreover, Tuesdays are also set-aside for pregnant women to have antenatal care [ANC]. The pregnant women are usually enlightened on ways to take a good care of their hygiene and wellbeing. The general number of patronages for the barrack occupants on daily basis is usually between twenty-five and eleven and sometime 10 (Raji, 2023). During every commemoration of the Nigerian Armed Forces

Remembrance Day, the Army usually offer free medical outreach and renovated some health facilities in the host communities as they did in Natsinta village. For instance, in 2019, during one of such commemoration, Natsinta Army Barrack opened its doors for scores of residents to receive free medical services (Ojoye, 2019).

In addition, the Army also provide security to communities around the barrack. Soldiers numbering about ten patrol the area on a daily basis. They covered areas from Katoge up to new Yar Kutungu market and to areas around the newly established housing estate. The patrol is every morning hours and during the night just to ensure the safety of the people. The soldiers also patrol the famous market at new 'Yar Kutungu on Market Days (Garba, 2023). This can also ward up any attack on the barracks.

Natsinta Army Barracks have also contributed immensely in the economic activities of Katsina metropolis. The construction of the barrack was one of the important landmarks that influenced the emergence of commercial blocks industries in Katsina during the time as the huge project needed blocks for the construction purposes and this increased the demand for cement blocks in Katsina by contractors (Lawal, 2018). This has a multiplier effect on the social and economic life of the host communities as more and more cement block factories were set up. Coincidentally, it was a period of oil boom and the Gown administration's 3Rs saw the construction of many infrastructural projects in the country that further led to the establishment of block factories to service many construction projects thereby creating job opportunities among the youths of Katsina.

Another aspect of job opportunities is the issue of domestic servants. There are quite a number of women working as cleaners, house-helpers or domestic servants in the Natsinta Barracks. The wives of soldiers a time demands people that help them in house chores as washing of dishes, clothes etc. They are mostly from Natsinta and are mostly widowed such as, Abu the wife of late Malam Iliya and Habi. However, there are women such as Huraira Umaru and Zaitu Chibus whose husbands are still alive but found job in the barrack because of harsh economic condition (Dayyabu, 2022).

8. Conclusion

The paper has examined the background, establishment and the development of Katsina Army Barrack. It has specifically studied the mobilization

policies of the Federal Military Government that resulted in to the over-bloated number of Nigerian Army Personnel because of the increase in the numerical strength of the force, as well as the post-civil war resettlement in Katsina in May 1970.

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