# NORTHERN ELEMENT PROGRESSIVE UNION (NEPU) AND NATIVE AUTHORITY RELATIONS IN KATSINA PROVINCE C.1952-1966

WAISU ILYASU
*Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina*

Abstract

*Northern Element Progressive Union (NEPU) was one of the political parties which emerged to fight against exploitation and oppression of Talakawa (common man) in Northern Nigeria. Soon after its emergence in Kano on 8th August, 1950, the party spread to many provinces in the region. One of the areas where the activities of the NEPU were seriously felt was Katsina Province. So, within a short period of time, NEPU ideas diffused to the nooks and crannies of the province. The Katsina Native Authority, threatened by the spread of the NEPU was a serious threat to its survival. As a result of this, the N.A decided to curtail the activities of the party in the province. It was in the course of this that NEPU clashed with the Katsina N.A especially on the issue of taxation, forced labour and freedom of expression/assembly. It is within this context that the paper discusses the relationship of NEPU with Katsina N.A. In doing so, the paper examines the origin of NEPU, its spread to Katsina province and how NEPU members suffered untold hardship at the hand of the Katsina N.A through taxation, imprisonment and forced labour. Thus, NEPU responded to this type of treatment meted out to their members through written petitions, filing court cases etc aimed at freeing their members from the atrocities of Katsina N.A.*

*Key Words: Northern Element Progressive Union (NEPU), Katsina Native Authority (N.A), Relations, Emergence and Clash.*

## INTRODUCTION

THE NORTHERN ELEMENT PROGRESSIVE UNION (NEPU) was one of the political parties in Northern Nigeria which emerged in 1950 to fight colonialism and struggle for the attainment of independence from the British.[1] NEPU therefore emerged to break the shackles of oppressive and exploitative system, which intercepted the wheel of progress to move

forth for a better political future for the people of Northern Nigeria. In its declaration of principles, known as Sawaba Declaration,[2] the founders of NEPU were very explicit about the mission of the party. It was established to end colonial rule and bring about freedom and justice in Nigeria. By extension, it means the emancipation of the Talakawa, the down trodden, from all forms of exploitation and oppression.[3]

Therefore, within a short period of time NEPU's ideas continued to spread very fast in most of the provinces in Northern Nigeria. As it happened everywhere in the region, NEPU was not welcome by Katsina Native Authority because the party was antithetical to traditional authorities. Therefore, the colonial government and the N.A from the onset placed obstacles on the spread of the party through imprisonment, flogging, beating and other corporal punishment, restrictions which were geared toward degradation of the self. But surprisingly, this did not prevent people to join NEPU in the province. As such, within a short period of time NEPU's ideology was diffused in the nook and cranny of the province through the activities of people like M. D Yusuf, Alhaji Datti Malamfashi and Sanda Kaita who were the first to join NEPU in Katsina province.[4] It was the efforts of these people that the first NEPU office was opened in Katsina province in 1952. It is in the context of these developments that NEPU clashed with Katsina Native Authority in the province. This is because NEPU dogged struggle against N.A by criticizing every aspect of the system.[5] It is therefore based on this that the paper aims to examine NEPU-N.A relations in Katsina province. The impact of this on the polity was that NEPU members suffered a lot of humiliation in the hands of Katsina N.A. In the long run, NEPU responded to the treatment meted out to its members through mobilization campaigns, written protest and dispersing people being forced to work against their will and without being paid. However, this did not stop people from joining NEPU due to the fact that the seeds of radicalism had already been sown in the province, and for this reason people found it difficult to dump NEPU for conservative Northern People's Congress (NPC) which the Katsina N.A cherished.

## THE SPREAD OF NEPU TO KATSINA PROVINCE

Right from the scratch, the founders of NEPU, with Abba Maikwaru spearheading the struggle, had no illusions about the enormity of the task before them, or pitfalls they were to encounter. But with faith in the cause of the struggle and determination to succeed, they set out courageously, fearlessly and proudly in their 'Forward Ever, Backward Never' motto towards the realization of democracy and social justice. Their first strategy was to intensify NEPU's mass appeal in every nook and cranny of Northern Nigeria through the propagation of the party's ideals, its values and expectations in a manner comprehensible to the ordinary people by way of lectures, handbills, party songs and opening new branches.[6] Thus, within a short period of time, NEPU succeeded in establishing branches all over the country with NEPU leaders travelling to several towns to deliver lectures and set up the organisation and established new branches. For example, from 1950 to 1955 many branches were established in Bauchi, Azare, Maiduguri, Benue and Jos. In most of the branches, NEPU preached a new brand of social welfarism through reforming the autocratic institutions of traditional rulers in Northern Nigeria.[7] Thus, within a short period of time, the activities of NEPU attracted the attention of many people from Katsina, Zaria, Sokoto and Keffi. As regards to the former, there were people like M.D Yusuf, Honorable Datti Aliyu Malamfashi and Sanda Kaita among others. These people were the first to join NEPU from Katsina province.[8] To this end Mohammadu laments that

NEPU lectures at the Rex Cinema Sabongari Kano soon attracted the attention of students from the School of Arabic. Students from Katsina, Sokoto and Zaria were recruited as active members of NEPU in 1952. From Katsina province many students from Katsina town, Malamfashi, Funtua and Bakori were registered as active NEPU members. That was why immediately when they finished their studies they came back home with new ideas of radicalism which the NEPU preach in Kano.[9]

To testify this assertion M.D Yusuf stated that before finishing his studies at the Arabic School he was influenced with the radical ideas of NEPU. This is why one day, Alhaji Isa Kaita, (Wazirin Katsina) a former friend to his father took interest in him and engaged in conversation with him. He said that Isa Kaita noticed some elements of radicalism on me. According to M.D Yusuf, Isah Kaita said that 'look I am going to take you with me to Kaduna. You will leave this place and come with me. You will come into my office as my clerk, eventually you will become my private secretary'.[10]

The above conversation clearly shows the extent to which radical ideas were spread to Katsina as far back as 1952. So, radicalism continued to gather momentum so much that the NEPU members in Katsina invited Malam Aminu Kano in 1952 to Katsina to commission an office. In return, Malam honoured the invitation by sending a delegation of eight (8) person that include Magaji Danbatta, Alhaji Musa Kalla, Abba Maikwaru, Baballiya Manager, Abdulukadir Na Adamu Danjaji, Bello Ijumu, Malam Baba Banule and Mudu Sipikin to commission the office.[11] The delegation came to Katsina in March 1952 and lodged at Malam Sani Yansiluru's house, Katsina. After they had a lunch, they preceded to Katsina NEPU office accompanied by other NEPU supporters in Katsina. In the usual practice of NEPU Magaji Danbatta delivered a lecture and introduced the Katsina NEPU officials under the leadership of M.D Yusuf, Malam Isah Buli Secretary, Alhaji Muhammadu Anda Funtua president Rundunar Samarin Sawa-ba (RSS) and Datti Aliyu Malamfashi as his secretary.[12] Alhaji Ibrahim Hayin Gada was made the Public Relations Officer (PRO) of the new branch. It was at this occasion that M.D Yusuf raised the NEPU flag for the first time in Katsina.[13]

Those that were present at the occasion were Darda'u Funtua, Sanda Kaita, Ali Zangi, Ganye Sawaba Malamfashi, Maritman Mai-wada Katsina and Gambo Kacha. Others were Lawal Maisaje Rijiya Maisiminti, Ikramu Malamfashi, Halliru Maligemu, Samban Barka, Wada Nass, Maibaka Guga, Sani Tela, Almu Sipikin Katsina, Balan Shaba Musawa and Bello Dan Nepu Rimi.[14] From that day, the leaders of NEPU in Katsina

under the leadership of M.D Yusuf continued to spread NEPU radical ideas.[15] Soon after the opening of Katsina branch in 1952, several other branches were opened in Funtua, Malumfashi, Danja and Dandume in 1954. Furthermore, by 1956 NEPU branches were opened in Dutsin-ma, Kankia, Musawa, Matazu, Jikamshi, Kankara, Bakori and Faskari district.[16] But it is noteworthy that, the meetings of the party were held in secret. This was because the Yandoka law enforcement agents prowled every street, waiting for signs of NEPU meetings to effect arrests.[1]

Having established branches in most of the towns in Katsina Province, the leaders of the branches adopted different forms of strategies to spread NEPU ideas. One of the strategies was through delivering lectures and house-to-house mobilization campaigns in order to spread the ideas of the party. In most of their campaigns they discredit the N.A and exposed their atrocities against the people of Katsina. To achieve this, they used speeches, poems and publications of Malam Aminu Kano and his disciples in attracting the support of new members.[18] In one of such speeches, Malam Aminu according to Whitaker was quoted to have said that 'we interpret democracy in its more traditional radical sense, and that is the rule of the common people, the poor, the illiterate, while our opponents (the NPC) interpret it in its more modern sense, that is the rule of the enlightened and prosperous minority in the supposed interest of the common people'.[19] It is interesting to note that the speeches and publications of NEPU were targeted to fight colonial oppression and the autocracy of the traditional rulers. That was why in Katsina province, the speeches and publications served as bible for the members of NEPU.[20] Some of the publications of NEPU include Manufoffin da Ka'idodin da Sharuddin fan'yar NEPU (1951), NEPU fan'iyar eton Talakatun (1959) etc. In fact, Musa Musawa a well-known NEPU activist in Katsina confirmed this when he was interviewed in Kaduna:

We tell our people that whatever Malam Aminu and his disciples said during campaign and rallies... Should serve as our guiding principles and manifestoes of NEPU members in their efforts to spread radicalism and

fight against oppression in Katsina. This strategy helped a lot in winning the support of the Talakawa in the area.[21]

It was therefore through these avenues that NEPU ideas were spread to the nook and cranny of the province which consequently led to the opening of many branches in the province.

One basic principle that the colonialists promoted after the conquest and occupation of each emirate in the Sokoto Caliphate was the recognition of the Emir and his officials. The exception was in relation to those emirates whose emirs refused to cooperate with the colonial government. In such cases the emirs were deposed and new ones were appointed. This had happened in a good number of emirates.[22] By doing this, the colonialists were to look for emirs that could be completely loyal to them in their domination and exploitation of the emirates. The recognized emirs and their subordinates were referred to as Native Authorities consisting the emirs, district and village heads. Later on, the term came to refer to the bureaucracy of the Native administration.[23] To this end, Heussler noted that N.A. originally referred to the Chiefs themselves and soon came to mean the whole machine of local administration developed into financial and judicial bodies'.[24] This is contrary to what Yahaya refers to as N.A. system. According to him, it was 'a system of local government in Northern Nigeria which was based on the traditional institutions of the emirs, district heads and village heads'.[25] He further buttress the fact that the system emerged from the early days of British administration of the emirates which from the early days of British administration of the emirates which later developed into units of local government based on emirs and chiefs, and by the end of the Second World War, it had evolved into a powerful political system called N.A supported by a bureaucratic organisation known as Native Administration.[2] Whatever the case may be, the first major step the British took was to group the emirates into units under the control of a Resident. The duties of the Resident and his assistant were to control the province on behalf of the central government and implement its policies and advise the emirs on the day to day administration of the emirate. To further enhance effective administration, the emirates were sub-divided into districts and all

the former title holders who used to stay in the city with the emir were posted out to administer the new district.[27] In this system, emir were recognized by the British colonial administration as the sole authority and the spokesman of his emirate or domain. To achieve the whims and caprices of the N.A. system, the British promulgated an ordinance in 1906 throughout Northern Nigeria. The ordinance states clearly the duties of the residents and the emirs, district and village heads.[28]

At this juncture one can argue that the N.A. can be seen as a system of government based on the authority of the traditional rulers, which the British colonialists operated in Northern Nigeria during the colonial era. Under this system, Northern Nigeria was divided into a number of provinces under the control of the Resident. Thus, each province was a semi-autonomous political entity with full complement of state apparatus such as bureaucracy, Native Police, judicial courts system, prison and traditional council under the emir or chief and each department of the authority was under the supervision of a member of emir's council.[29] However, the powers of the N.A. were vast, ranging from the maintenance of law and order, administration of justice, land control, water supply and sanitation. Others were tax collection, forest and conservation, afforestation etc. In the process of executing their powers, the common man suffered untold hardship from the hands of the emirs, district and village heads.[30]

In Katsina emirate, the N.A. system was introduced in 1907 by Resident Palmer in which he created six departments that include taxation and general administration which was headed by the Waziri, Bait al-mal or the Native Treasury headed by Mutawalli Umar. Others were the administration of prisons which was headed by the Magajin-gari Abu Duwan, roads was headed by Sarkin Hanya, tree and forestry were under Sarkin Dawa Alhaji Hussaini and schools were under Balarabe. All these departments were represented at the district levels.[31]

It was within this ambit that NEPU members suffered a lot of hardship on the hand of the Katsina N.A. This was not enough, the Katsina

N.A devised ways to stamp out and deal with NEPU members in the province. Taxation was one of the most dominant theatre through which the N.A power was deployed. Taxation therefore represented not only the collection of taxes but in a more profound and far-reaching way it was a vital mechanism in controlling the peasants as well as in dealing with the opposition (NEPU) in the province.[32] This did not prevent NEPU members from challenging Katsina N.A. Therefore, by the time the relationship between NEPU and N.A was becoming sour, its relation with NPC was cordial due to the fact that most of the NA workers were pro NPC. This helped them to establish good relationship with the NA. This is true because the ideology of the NPC was geared towards protecting the rights and privileges of the traditional institutions in the province and the region at large. Looking the other side of the coin, the reason why the NA was anti NEPU was nothing but the party was aimed at uprooting the traditional institutions which the NPC intended to protect and preserved at all cost. For NEPU, the Talakawa should be allowed to choose their leaders through election and electioneering campaigns. By implication, the Talakawa should liberate themselves from the inhumanities of the NA as exemplified in taxation which was an instrument used to muzzle NEPU members in the province.

Therefore, the use of taxation as a mechanism to stamp out NEPU in Katsina Province took many dimensions. For example, there were cases of over-taxation and the taxation of children on the account of their parents' political affiliation, or of the parents on the account of their children political position.[33] This notwithstanding, the party leadership in most of the district in Katsina complained bitterly about excessive taxation and the repression of NEPU members by the N.A. to the British, but to no avail.[34] The reason for the British indifferent to NEPU was because of its ideology to fight for the common man in the province which the British was totally against. In the long run, they resorted to report their case to the National Headquarters of NEPU in Kano. A clear example was the 1952 Report against over taxation of NEPU members in Southern Katsina. The report reads as follows:

As a result of over-taxation, imprisonment and brutal flogging of NEPU members in Malumfashi, Danja, Maska and Pauwa districts the leaders of the party in these districts reported the case to the national headquarters in Kano. The national headquarters of the party sent a delegation to the Resident on 10th October, 1952 in which send a delegation to the Resident on 10th October, 1952 in which the Resident requested for details of NEPU's claims. NEPU presented five allegations against Katsina N.A that included over taxation, mass beating and brutal flogging of their members, undue restriction from holding party meeting and deliberate refusal to grant permission to NEPU members to hold meeting and the grants support of the Alkali courts against NEPU in and out of the courts. But surprisingly, this did not stop the N.A from terrorizing NEPU members in Katsina[35]

However, the significance of taxation as mechanism of unleashing terror against NEPU members in Katsina cannot be over-emphasized. Thus, it was a common practice among N.A officials in Katsina to use taxation as an instrument of attrition, a weapon to degrade NEPU's membership to a level that members must support the NPC. In some certain instances, there were explicit threats that taxes were doubled to increase more hardship on the tax payer.[36] Even though according to Kuna this had been the practice in most of the provinces in Northern Nigeria. In this regard Kuna argues that

Over taxation of NEPU members had been prevalent in most of the provinces in Northern Nigeria...Sokoto, Kano, Zaria, Borno, Gombe and Katsina were the ones mostly heat(sic) by this problem. In Maska district of Katsina province the president of NEPU Muhammad Anda paid 30 shillings in the 1956/57 tax year, he was forced to pay £6 in the 1957/59 tax year. Similarly while eighteen (18) of NEPU members in the same town paid a total of £24 in the 1956/57 tax year, their total tax rose to about 300% (£70) in the 1957/58. The same picture obtained in Kano, Zaria and Borno.[37]

By 1958 there were many cases of over taxation in Katsina than in the previous year. In another letter to the Resident of Katsina NEPU president Bello Nagoggo itemized some cases of over taxation in some district of Katsina province a few of which are as follows:

1. Balan Shaba of Musawa was ordered to pay £8 for the 1959/60 taxation. He was detained for being unable to pay the assessment.
2. Sani Gwamna, a NEPU activist in Malumfashi who did not farm this year at all due to ill health, had been ordered to pay £9 for the 1959/60 taxation simply because he was a member of the NEPU.
3. One Bello Kato, a poor bicycle repairer in Matazu who had neither a house nor farm has been ordered to pay £5 for the 1959/60 taxation because he was a NEPU member, and now he had paid the said assessment with the sympathetic assistance of his relatives and friends.[3]

The problem of over taxation and extortion of NEPU members were not only practiced by the district heads alone, but also the village heads and other N.A officials working in the district. As early as 1958 when the Resident toured the province, he discovered that more than eighty village heads in Southern Katsina had collected money in excess of the actual assessed. The excess was from £50-80 pounds. He further noted that

In many if not most cases, the amount actually paid in tax by the NEPU members in the province were in excess of those brought to account. For I have little doubt from what I have seen in the emirate as a whole, and Southern Katsina in particular every NEPU member paid at least more than the tax assesses every year simply because of their political difference.[3]

Over taxation of NEPU members in Katsina was not only the issue. Across the districts, there was evidence of children taxed due to their parents' political affiliation. The table below illustrates child taxation in Katsina.

Table:1 Child taxation in Katsina Province in 1951

| Name | Age | Village | District | Amount | Remarks |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Audu Nabala | 7years | Kakumi | Makama | £1:15:09 | Receipt-ed |
| Umar Nag-wani | 8 years | Gyaza | Kankia | £1:10:0 | " |
| Lawal Malam | 11 years | Radda | Yandaka | £1:02:0d | " |
| Garba Na- | 10 | Jikamshi | Musawa | £1:04:0d | " |

80 NSUKKA JOURNAL OF HISTORY, VOL. 3, (2016), pp. 71-89

| dushe | years | | Galadima | £1:02:0d | " |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Iro Saiyadi | 9 years | Kafur | Marusa | £1:10:0 | " |
| Sani Tsalha | 10 years | Duwan | | | |
| Audu Nagaje | 7 years | Ketare | Pauwa | £1:01:0 | " |
| Yakubu Dano | 9 years | Hamcela | Durbi | £1:02:0 | " |
| Ya'u Nasale | 7 years | Kankara | Kogo | £1:02:0 | " |
| Kabir Namato | 8 years | Tamilo | Iya | £2:09:0 | " |
| Iron Sambo B. | 9 years | Dandume | Maska | £2:04:0 | " |
| Sani Ishiye | 7 years | Bazanga | Makama | £1:01:0 | " |
| Dano Naya-kubu | 8 years | Karaduwa | Musawa | £1:02:0 | " |
| Samusi Gwan-da | 10 years | Wa-warkaza | Pauwa | £1:03:0 | " |

Source: NAK/Katprof/3014/1951

A close look at the above table indicates that the assessment of tax was not simply arbitrary but a deliberate effort to further victimize NEPU members and their children. The argument is that it was aimed at ruining them economically and those who could not afford to pay tax were imprisoned. Such imprisonment inspired the NEPU members not just the degradation of the self, but also dispossession, particularly of land and property. In fact, the interviews conducted in Dutsin-ma, Kankia, Malumfashi, Bakori, Musawa and Kankara demonstrated this trend in most of the districts of the province.[40] In an oral interview with Halliru Tela, he narrates how tax was collected in Katsina. He said people failed to default in payment not just due to imprisonment, but also due to humiliation. If one

refuses or fails to pay he was chained to a heavy wood and paraded throughout the ward or hamlet half-naked. In some cases the native police beat and poured cold water on him.[41]

Another way which the Katsina N.A used to undermine the spread of NEPU was imprisonment and other corporal punishment through the institution of Alkali courts. In discussing this type of scenario Ingawa contends that

Soon after the emergence of NEPU to Katsina the N.A resorted to arbitrary arrest and imprisonment of NEPU members in the area. There were reports of mass arrest in most of the districts. Thus, prominent local leaders were arrested without a justifiable cause. Local leaders like Muhammadu Anda Funtua, Alhaji Ikramu Malumfashi, Balan Shaba Jikamshi, Halliru Makwala, Dankande Guga and Maibaka Layin YamNEPU. The story was not different in other districts. From Kankara to Kogo district many people were arrested. They included Yusuf Mairuwa, Uzaira Yankara, Idris Mabai and a host of others who suffered humiliations from the hands of Katsina N.A.[42]

Therefore, members of NEPU were throughout the province subjected to various forms of corporal punishment. Such punishments included flogging. These were done to weaken their morale and in some cases to have them declare for the NPC. A clear example of this kind of treatment is the case of Balan Shaba a native of Musawa:

On several occasions, the district head of Musawa had authorized his courtiers to beat Shaba until he couldn't move. The following day he would go back to NEPU's cause for which he was battered the day before. Balan Shaba was once sentenced to death, and when his executioners took him to the outskirts of the town, they pleaded with him to abandon his cause and they would in return set him free. He promise doing that, and they allowed him to go. In less than a month, however, Balan Shaba was back in the town, and back to NEPU struggles.[43]

In fact Kuna corroborates this idea when he argues that:

...in Katsina province, the districts of Danja, Malumfashi, Kankia, Kankara and Kogo were particularly notorious in flogging NEPU members. In Kankara specifically, the district head ordered the beating of the NEPU local president for pointing out that the district head was not entitled to vote under the electoral laws which specified that a person had to pay three years tax before he could vote, since the district head paid just once.[44]

In addition to flogging, there were other tactics employed by N.A to repress NEPU. Such tactics include mass arrest and imprisonment especially on the eve of election. In 1958 alone, NEPU estimated that about one hundred (100) of its members in Katsina were behind jails.[45] Both documentary and local evidence had it that the central reason given by N. A for these arrests were unlawful assembly. The table below summarizes the number of NEPU members imprisoned by Katsina N.A from 1952 to 1958.

Table 2 Cases of Imprisonment of NEPU Members in some selected Districts of Katsina Province 1952 to 1958

| S/n | Name | District | Offence | Sentence | Remarks |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| 1 | Balan Shaba | Musawa | Attempt to rescue prisoners | 9 months | 12/3/1953 |
| 2 | Samban Barka | Maska | Unlawful assembly | 9 months | 4/8/1954 |
| 3 | Dankule Darjuma | Kankia | Incident, unlawful assembly | 6 months | |
| 4 | Darda'u | Durbi | Obstructing police and rescue and incitement to resist N.A order | 6 months | |
| 5 | Idi NEPU | Kogo | Obtaining money by false pretence | 3 months | 22/10/1952 |
| 6 | Baba Tilo | Ruma | Resisting lawful order on N.A farming rules | 3 months | 26/4/1954 |
| 7 | Gwamatse Chindo | Makama | Assaulting village head and inciting others | 6 months | 13/10/1956 |

| 8 | Jamu Mani | Yandaka | Attempt to rescue prisoners | 6 months | 18/3/1953 |
| 9 | Siba Sani | Durbi | Refusing to obey forced labour order, Tsetse clearing and contempt of the court | 3 months | |
| 10 | Kalo Sale | Galadima | Sedition of Chief Imam | 3 months | |
| 11 | Mal. Mijinya-wa | Marusa | Attempt to rescue prisoners | 6 months | |
| 12 | Nagoma | Kogo | Obstructing police officer | 3 months | 17/5/1958 |
| 13 | Salame Bature | Yarima | Holding ille- | 3 months | 21/9/1954 |



| 14 | Sabe musa and Muhammadu | Pauwa | gal court obtaining money Calling village head liar, preventing arrest of prisoners | 6 months | 6/11/1954 |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| 15 | Kato Nasanda | Iya | Political meeting assaulting village head and inciting others to refuse to pay bicycle tax | 6 months | |

Source: Adopted from A. Yakubu, 'Internal and External Sources for the Study of Political History of the Nigerian Emirates 1950: The Significance of British and Nigerian National Archives', Y.B Usman and A. G Kwaranshie, Inside Nigerian History, 1950-1970 , (Zaria: ABU Press, 1995), 326-335

Another way which the Katsina N.A undermined NEPU members was through transfer of N.A. workers who were said to be NEPU activists. This type of scenario had been captured by Wada Nass in his pamphlet NEPU and Katsina N.A .[46] So, repression of NEPU members in Katsina did not stop there; for there were many more similar incidences as the Katsina N.A resorted to forced labour in colonial projects in and outside the province. Oral interviews revealed that quite a number of NEPU members were conscripted and taken to railway, roads construction and the tin mines in Jos-Plateau.[47]

## RESPONSES OF NEPU AGAINST KATSINA NATIVE AUTHORITY

NEPU did not fold its arms to allow Katsina N.A. molest its members, but rather it responded through the following ways: One, was mobilization campaign to educate the people to refuse to be forced to work for the N.A. In some cases, the party resorted to writing petitions to the Resident, protesting on behalf of specific members of the party, the flagrant abuse of their rights by forcing them to work on the roads and railway without pay. In 1953 for example, the president of NEPU in Katsina sent a letter to the Resident of Katsina on behalf of the party protesting the imposition of forced labour on its members and supporters. In the letter, the attention of the Resident was specifically drawn to the use of forced labour to clear bush for road construction in the districts of Kaura, Yandaka and Kogo.[48]

However, when NEPU realized that written protests were not respected by the Katsina N.A. they adopted the strategy of dispersing people being forced to work against their will and without being paid. This was a direct challenge against the N.A. The enforcement of this policy led to conflicts, arrests and imprisonment of NEPU members in Katsina.[49] One example of such cases was contained in the report sent to the Civil Secretary, Northern Region by the Resident of Katsina Province. In this report dated October 1957, the Resident said:

On the 10th of October, 1957 a gang of labourer employed by the N.A to clear the site of the cotton market in Daudawa was approached by Samban Barka who told them that they should not do useless work for the N.A and should disperse. The labourers did disperse and the Malam in charge call in the Native Police. The N.P arrested Samban Barka and detained him for fifteen days (15) in Funtua prison.[50]

In discussing the nature of the prison, Malam Sale Dandume could adequately remember his experience in prison when he says:

I could remember the terrible experience of imprisonment in Maska district. One day we were arrested and taken to the prison. We spent the night in the prison. There was an anthill in our cell, and later in the night guard came and spread sorghum all around the anthill. I immediately saw the implication, for a short while later, ants trooped out, and it was a terrible night for us. Early in the morning we were flogged by the guards and tied to a tree with our legs dangling just above ground. We sought we are going to be killed the next day. The following day we were taken to Katsina along with the representative of Galadiman Dandume, Idi. On our arrival to Katsina, we were taken to the emir's palace and detained in a small cell. When the emir came out we were brought before him and he asked what happened. The representative of Sarkin Maska briefed the emir. Without wasting time the emir instructed the N.P. to take us to prison until the next day. Instead of taken us back to the emir we were taken before an Alkali court. The Alkali charged us with public disturbance and contempt of the court. We were sentenced to five months imprisonment. I shall never forget this in my life.[51]

NEPU also responded to the oppression of Katsina N. A. through appeal to the national headquarters in Kano. In response to the appeal, the national headquarters inaugurated a committee under Mudi Sipikin to move to trouble spots to investigate reported cases, confront local brutes, take up the cases with the local chieftains or file proceedings in Alkali courts.[52] A clear example was the imprisonment of Samban Barka of Dandume by an Alkali court in Katsina, on the ground that he refused to obey the orders of Sarkin Maska and the village head on the relocation of Dandume market which the people resisted against. Consequently, Samban Barka was charged and imprisoned for nine months. On hearing this verdict the National Headquarters in Kano filed an appeal before the Supreme Court of Nigeria on 13th August, 1956. The appeal stated that:

Reference your telegram no. W1486 dated the 12th August, 1956 in the case of Katsina N.A vs Samban Barka who was convicted and sentenced to nine month imprisonment by the court of the Senior Alkali Court Katsina. We are dissatisfied with the decision in the matter and wishes therefore to appeal to the Supreme Court.[53]

In fact Magaji Danbatta corroborated this idea when he says that:

NEPU fought against injustice through many ways like writing petitions, exposing injustices of all kinds or open mass meeting. The national headquarters usually petitioned the local Alkali courts, and sometimes appealed to the superior courts or to the colonial office in London. We also filed cases at British administered Magistrate and High courts where we could hire lawyers to appear for our victimized member.[4]

## CONCLUSION

By and large the paper has discussed the relations between NEPU and Katsina N.A, the spread of NEPU to Katsina and how the N.A. used every avenue to inflict harm on the members of the party to suppress it. The paper also examined the responses of NEPU on the treatment meted out to its members in the province. Therefore, it should be understood that the overall machinery of N.A was geared towards suppressing all forms of oppositions to the British colonial rule in the province. This is why the local authorities considered the repression of NEPU and all other forms of opposition a standard operational practice that must be carried out. In fact Dan Amarya Bakori could remember the treatment meted out to him by the N.A. in similar ways. He said 'in the course of our struggle we saw hell. NEPU members were called dogs, despite the honour and dignity of the human beings. We experienced terror and persecution by the Katsina N.A so much so that most of us never expected to live long enough to see days like these. In those days, our members had to undergo torture when they were falsely accused of causing commotion and disturbing the dead in cemeteries. We were falsely accused of disturbing the fish in the pond. We

were also forced to trek from Funtua to Katsina, a distance of near-ly 200 kilometres long'.[5] In the final analysis, it was these treatments that eventually laid a fertile ground for the confidence of NEPU members and for their subsequent struggles throughout the colonial period.

**NOTES**

1. M. L. Danbazau, Tantun Gunguanniyar NEPU da PRP , Gaskiya Corporation, Zaria, 1981, p.3 See also A. Alkasum, The Northern Elements progressive Union and the Politics of Radical Nationalism in Nigeria 1938-1950 , (Bauchi: Ramadan Printers, 2007), 113.
2. Ibid, 40.
3. A. Alkasum, The Politics of Principles in Nigeria: The Example of NEPU , (Zaria: CEDDERT, 2000), 10.
4. Interview with M.D Yusuf, 80 years, former police officer, Katsina 9/12/2014.
5. Interview with Sanda, Kaita, 75 years, Katsina 10/11/2014 Datti Malamfashi testify this when interview.
6. M. Danbatta, 'The Emergence of NEPU and Its Struggles for Democracy: Reminiscences of a Founding Member' A. M. Jega, et. al, Reminiscences and Recollections of Four NEPU-PRP Activists , (Centre for Democratic Research and Training: BUK, 2004), 5-6
7. Interview with Maitama Sule, 85 years, Kano, 2/3/2015 Balarabe Musa testified this when interview in Kaduna, 12/1/2015 See also A. Abba, The Politics of Malam Aminu Kano , Kaduna: Vanguard Printers,1993), 34-35.
8. Interview with M.D Yusuf, a retired Inspector General of Police, 85 years, Katsina, 10/1/2015
9. J. A. Muhammadu, Rayaour Talaka da Gwunguninnyarsa , (Zaria: ABU Press, 2008), 169. See also G. E. Emeke, The Ideas, Thought and Teachings of Malam Aminu Kano , (Kano: Oluseyi Press, 2000), 7-16.

10. Interview with M. D. Yusuf, op. c.it See also A. Opadakin, Aristocratic Rebel: The Biography of M.D Yusuf former Inspector General, Nigerian Police Force , (Lagos: Bonafidea Publishers, 2006), 22-24.
11. M. Danbatta, Pull of Fate: A Biography of Magaji Danbatta , 30.
12. Interview with Halliru Maigemu, op. cit.
13. Interview with Ibrahim Hayin Gada, Bakori, 78 years, Farmer, 28/2/2015. See also Tankom Yakasai, The Story of a Humble Life , (Zaria: ABU Press, 2012), 30.
14. Interview with Halliru Maigemu, 80 years, Katsina, politician, 11/1/2015
15. A. A Mijinyawa, Nagarta Gkin Aminna: Renyaour M.D Yusufu , (Kaduna: Choice Publishers, 2012), 66-86.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid.
18. Interview with Malam Shehu, 80 years, Karaduwa, Farmer, 22/12/2014
19. C.S Whitaker, The Politics of Tradition Continuity and Change in Northern Nigeria ... op. cit, p. 407
20. A. Jega, et.al, Malam Aminu Kano: Selected Speeches and writings 1950-1982 , (Kano: Centre for Democratic Research and Training, 2002), 23-31. See also S. Y. Danasabe, et.al, Bandan Nonan Yanzi: Tarlin Rayawaar Alhaji Muhammadu Danjani Hadeja , (Kaduna: Books Africana, 1995), 16.
21. Interview with Musa Musawa, 75 years, Kaduna, 5/1/2015 For details on the publications of NEPU see M.L. Danbazau, Tantun Gunguanniyar NEPU da PRP , 28-29.
22. M. M. Tukur, "The Imposition of British Colonial Domination on the Sokoto Caliphate, Borno and Neighboring States 1897-1914: A Reinterpretation of Colonial Record Sources", PhD Thesis History , ABU, 1979, 20. For details see A. Rufa'i, 'The Exile Emirs in Lokoja, 1900-1915, Kano Studies , vol. 4. no. 1, (2000), 7.
23. F. Lugard, The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa , (London: Frank Cass, 1965), 40. See also F. Lugard Political Memoranda ,

(London, 1918). C. L Temple gave details on the N.A system in his book Native Races and Their Rulers , (Cape Town, 1918). See also A.H.M Kirk-Green, The Principles of Native Administration and their Application , (Lagos: Government Printer, 1934). Charles Orr also discussed extensively on the N.A. System in his book The Making of Northern Nigeria , (London, 1914).

24. R. Heussler, The British in Nigeria , (London, 1968), 50 See also M. Crowder, West Africa under Colonial Rule , (London, 1968), 208.
25. Yahaya, The Native Authority System , 20. See also M. Perham, Native Administration in Nigeria , (London, 1962), 45.
26. Ibid. See also I. A. Abba, 'A Consideration of the indirect Rule System in the Emirates of Northern Nigeria with Particular Reference to the district Head system', Kano Studies , Vol.3, No. 1, (1987/88). 10. See also F. Lugard, The Dual Mandate , 160.
27. H. R. Palmer, 'A History of Katsina Province', The Gazetteers of Northern Nigeria: The Provinces of Kano, Katsina, Zaria and Sokoto , (London: Frank Cass, 1970), 30 See also P. J. Shea, 'How Indirect Rule was the Direct Rule' Kano Studies , vol. 2. no. 3, (1985)," 50.
28. For details on the ordinance see F. L. Lugard, Political Memorandum . See also I. A. Abba, 'A Consideration of the indirect Rule System in the Emirates of Northern Nigeria with Particular Reference to the District Head System', 10-12.
29. Ibid. See also Tukur, "The Imposition of British Colonial Domination," M. M. Adamu, 'The Role of the Native Authorities in the Colonial Economy: A Case study of Kaska District, M.A History Dissertation , ABU, Zaria, (1995), 30.
30. Ibid.
31. A. Lugga, Katsina the Great Province , (Katsina: Lugga Press 2006), 40. See also Adamu, "The Imposition of British Colonial Domination."
32. Interview with Musa Musawa, op. cit.
33. Ibid.

34. Ibid.
35. NAK/SNP/15/NO.350, NEPU Security, vol. 2, 10.
36. Ibid.
37. M.J. Kuna, "Violence and State formation in Northern Nigeria," 375.
38. NAK/Katprof/2058, Quarterly Report for the year 1959 . Sani Gwamna Malamfashi testified this when interview, 4/2/2015.
39. NAK/Katprof/1586/Monthly Reports, 1958. For details see Adamu, 298
40. Group interview in Malumfashi, Funtua, Bakori, Danja, Musawa and Kankara, 1st 10th March, 2015.
41. Interview with Halliru Maigemu, Katsina, op. cit
42. T. B. Ingawa, "A Study of Rural Economic History of the major Cotton District of Southern Katsina, 120.
43. Interview with Iro Bala, 51 years, Musawa, 4/3/2015.
44. Kuna, "Violence and state formation in Northern Nigeria," 376.
45. Interview with Audu Tela, 82 Years, Maska, 3/3/2015.
46. W. Nass, NEPU and Katsina Native Authority, A Pamphlet , 2000, 1-6. While among us who worked under the N.A were frequently transferred and effectively watched especially on our interaction with people in the place of work. He added that there was in existence at the time an oppressive system of administration imposed on the people by the Katsina N.A through the collaboration of the colonial administrators in the province. Peasants were compelled to work on the farms of the top brass of society without being paid for their labour or share in the harvest. There were instances where some NEPU members went to prison for refusal and indeed, only a few dared to refuse. Apart from this, heavy taxation was imposed on the people so much so that many had to sell substantial portion of their land or farm produce in order to meet up.
47. On the issue of forced labour in Katsina province see B.S Mohammed, 'The Phenomenon of Labour Migration in Funtua, c. 1906-1960', M.A History Dissertation , UDU, Sokoto, 2000, p. 20.

See also Adamu, "The Role of Katsina Native Authority", 98. See also M. I. Mukhtar, "British Colonial Labour Policies and the Changing Roles of Labour in Kano Emirate, c. 1903-1960", PhD Thesis, History , ABU, Zaria, 1994, 212.

48. NAK/Katprof/4055, Annual report, 1957.
49. Ibid.
50. NAK/Katprof/3040/Monthly Reports, 1957, 2. See also A. Abba, "The Significance of NEPU in the Politics of Nigeria, 1950-1960", PhD Thesis History , ABU, Zaria, 2000, 225.
51. Interview with Malam sale Dandume, 75 years, Farmer, 4/3/2015.
52. Interview with Tamai Tsaunin Kura, 79 years, Kafur, 5/2/2025.
53. NAK/Katsina/File/W4841/ Annual Report, 1956, 146.
54. Danbatta, Pull of Fate , 40.
55. Interview with Dan Amarya, Bakori, 75 years, 12/12/2014.